

LUTHER

A Two-Act play
by

ANTHONY E. GALLO

CHARACTERS:
MARTIN LUTHER
KATHERINA VON BORA
CARDINAL CAJETAN
ELECTOR
EVA
URSULA
MADELINE
HENRY THE EIGHTH
THOMAS MORE
JOSEL OF ROSHEIM
THOMAS MUNTZER
PASTOR ELIZABETH
POPE LEO
DEVON
CARDINAL PETRUCCI
PHILIP MELANCHTON
VOICE

ACT I

SCENE 1 WITTENBERG UNIVERSITY CONFSSIONAL 1516

We hear bells ringing six times
in the background.

Martin Luther sits on one side
of the confessional and Ursula
sits on the other side.

LUTHER

And for your penance, you will recite five Our
Fathers and five Hail Marys.

URSULA

Thank you, Father.

LUTHER

Now go in Peace.

URSULA

Thank you, Father Luther.

LUTHER

Ah, I have one small question for you.

URSULA

Yes, Father.

LUTHER

Yours is the first confession I have heard today. And it is close to 5 in the afternoon and confessions will be over for the day. Last week I had only had two. Can you tell me why? Have folks stopped sinning?

URSULA

You know why.

LUTHER

I do not.

URSULA

Many people do not feel that they have to go to confession anymore. Except for the poor.

LUTHER

Oh?

URSULA

Most people are buying indulgences, Specially the St. Peters indulgences. They are being sold at a discount this week. A big sale I've been told.

LUTHER

How much of a discount?

URSULA

Twenty five percent. You don't know about it?

LUTHER

I have heard rumors.

URSULA

My sister-in-law who has more money than she knows what to do with has purchased so many indulgences that the joke in the family is that they will have to build a higher tier in heaven for her.

LUTHER

From whom does she buy her indulgences?

URSULA

Father Tetzal. He is the most successful seller of indulgences in Germany.

LUTHER

He is in charge of selling all indulgences in Germany. Not very bright either. What would you expect! He's a Dominican. He is definitely Pope Leo's bagman. He has a cute poem which he uses as a sales gimmick: "As soon as the gold in the casket rings, The rescued soul to heaven springs."

URSULA

Father Tetzal claims that he has one indulgence for sale that would wipe away the sin of a man guilty of raping Mary, Mother of God.

LUTHER

Ha!

URSULA

This week he is selling a special indulgence for sins not yet committed.

LUTHER

Let me tell you a joke about that one. A nobleman asked him if it were possible to receive a letter of indulgence for a future sin. Tetzal quickly said yes, but that the payment had to be made at once. The nobleman paid at once. When Tetzal left Leipzig the nobleman attacked him along the way, gave him a thorough beating, and sent him back empty-handed saying it was the future sin which he had in mind.

URSULA

Father Tetzel says you made that one up.

LUTHER

You can NOT buy your way into heaven. Read Holy Scripture.

URSULA

I can not read in Latin.

LUTHER

That will have to change too.

URSULA

I can not learn Latin. I'm a farm woman.

LUTHER

No. The Bible will have to be written in German.

URSULA

That would be nice.

LUTHER

And it WILL happen.

SCENE 2 OCTOBER 31, 1517 DOOR OF CASTLE CHURCH
WITTENBERG

Bells ring the background. We hear Mendelssohn's Reformation Symphony. Martin Luther and Philip Melcanchton step in font of the church and nail a post to door.

LUTHER

There it is. Hanging from the door of Old Castle Church.

PHILIP MELANCHTON

On this Vigil of All Saint's day.

LUTHER

The 95 theses. HERE I STAND!

PHILIP MELANCHTON

Written only as Martin Luther can write them.

LUTHER

With inspiration from above.

PHILIP MELANCHTON

The hierarchy will be in shock.

LUTHER

Only those who hate Christ will be in shock.

PHILIP MELANCHTON

Agreed.

LUTHER

Surely God will side with us.

We hear heavy thunder and
lighting. And then we hear a
chorus singing "All Praise to
Thee, Eternal God." Then
we hear the shouting out and
getting louder with each
repetition.

ENSEMBLE

LUTHER! LUTHER! LUTHER! LUTHER! LUTHER! LUTHER!
LUTHER! LUTHER! LUTHER! LUTHER! LUTHER! LUTHER!
LUTHER!

LUTHER

They shout louder and louder.

PHILIP MELANCHTON

Shouts of joy!

ENSEMBLE

Save us, Pastor Luther! Save us..

LUTHER

A new day.

We again hear the Reformation
Symphony.

SCENE 3 AUGSBURG 12 1518 OCTOBER -

Martin Luther stands alone
before Cardinal Cajetan.

CAJETAN

You have posted 95 abominations! Do you recant!

LUTHER

I do not.

CAJETAN

You commit grave sin!

LUTHER

Here I stand!

CAJETAN

STATE YOUR CASE.

LUTHER

Selling indulgences to finance the building of St.
Peter's is wrong.

CAJETAN

A common treasure of Christendom.

LUTHER

The revenues of all Christendom are being sucked into
this insatiable basilica.

CAJETAN

Nonsense! And coming from the mouth of no one more
than one insignificant Augustinian friar.

LUTHER

Why doesn't the pope build the basilica of St. Peter's out of his own money? He is richer than Croesus.

CAJETAN

IS THAT YOUR CASE!

LUTHER

I have more.

CAJETAN

I am willing to listen.

LUTHER

The pope has no power over Purgatory. Papal indulgences do not remove guilt.

CAJETAN

Recant!

LUTHER

Buying indulgences gives people a false sense of security and endangers their salvation.

CAJETAN

Who are you to question the authority of the Pope!

LUTHER

Those persons are damned who think that letters of indulgence make them certain of salvation. God works by contraries so that a man feels himself to be lost in the very moment when he is on the point of being saved.

CAJETAN

You question the priests and ecclesiastical authorities.

LUTHER

He who does not have this is lost even though he be absolved a million times by the pope, and he who does have it may not wish to be released from Purgatory, for true contrition seeks penalty.

CAJETAN

Now listen! The Holy Father is willing to forgive you.

LUTHER

I am not willing to forgive him.

CAJETAN

And he also called for the cessation of selling spiritual indulgences. From now on indulgences are only temporal-for this world.

LUTHER

Both are fraudulent. I regret having put an end to the Church's most profitable enterprise.

CAJETAN

Relent!

LUTHER

Only if he abdicates.

CAJETAN

The Holy Father is very kind. There are those who want you assassinated.

LUTHER

I have a hundred troops to defend me. That pervert will not succeed in assassinating me!

CAJETAN

You are damned forever!

LUTHER

You are no more fit to handle his case than an ass is fit to play a harp.

CAJETAN

You will burn in hell.

LUTHER

And Germany will cease being a cash cow for the Church Princes. Ha!

CAJETAN

A thief also.

LUTHER

The fruit of the labors of the German people will remain in Germany.

CAJETAN

And the Church property you have confiscated?.

LUTHER

Yours no more.

CAJETAN

St. Peters is a chapel for Christ and Peter.

LUTHER

St. Peters is a no more than a palace with a large art collection and an adjoining altar.

CAJETAN

For the love of the people. Enough!

LUTHER

Enough!

CAJETAN

And I understand you intend to publish the Bible in German.

LUTHER

As certain as Jesus is the Savior of mankind.

CAJETAN

And that you intend to obliterate St. James.

LUTHER

Man can be saved by faith alone. Salvation through good works is a lie made up by Satan. And I think he wrote the Epistles of James.

CAJETAN

You are the son of Satan!.

LUTHER

I do not think so.

CAJETAN

And I remember when you came to the Vatican and knelt for six hours, kissing the ground and thanking Providence for Leo. And pledging your total allegiance to him.

LUTHER

I was foolish. And this Leo --by the devil's choice-- was made a cardinal at 13 and a pope at 29 Did he ever have time to become a priest. HE IS THE ANTI-CHRIST. HE WILL BURN IN HELL.

CAJETAN

YOU ARE MAD.

LUTHER

The discussion is over.

CAJETAN

You will be excommunicated.

LUTHER

Return this silly excommunication decree to the Girlie pope.

SCENE 4 THE VATICAN A MONTH LATER

Pope Leo and Cardinal Petrucci
are seated.

LEO

My brother in Christ.

PETRUCCI

Your Holiness.

LEO

Please express what is on your mind?.

PETRUCCI

I express my apology a thousand times.

LEO

And I accept it.

PETRUCCI

I have sinned. I committed wrong in the eyes of the Lord and the law.

LEO

Your apologies are accepted.

PETRUCCI

Then why have I been imprisoned. Am I not a Cardinal of the Church.

LEO

Yes you are.

PETRUCCI

Oh, my Lord, you have forgiven me.

LEO

I must.

PETRUCCI

Even though I tried to assassinate you. I now ask for mercy.

LEO

It is granted.

PETRUCCI

Oh! My Lord!

LEO

One caveat.

PETRUCCI

Yes. Your Holiness

LEO

You must still be executed.

PETRUCCI

What!

LEO

Mercy yes. But the punishment still exists.

PETRUCCI

Meaning?

LEO

You will be executed by decapitation at midnight tonight.

PETRUCCI

You promised me safe passage.

LEO

There is no safe passage for assassins.

PETRUCCI

I was your earliest supporter. And ardently.

LEO

That is right. But then betrayed and hired Europe's most ruthless assassins to kill me.

PETRUCCI

And I erred.

LEO

Die you must, but you will be offered last rites.

PETRUCCI

Thank you, Your Holiness.

LEO

And your executioner will be a Moslem. We do not use Christian executioners in the Church.

PETRUCCI

Yes, your Holiness.

LEO

Now please go to the anteroom room until the executioner guides you to your cell.

PETRUCCI

Yes your Holiness.

Petrucci exits. Cajetan enters.

CAJETAN

Your Holiness.

LEO

My dear Cardinal Cajetan.

CAJETAN

So the traitor has admitted to his dastardly attempt!

LEO

Indeed. And he will be executed shortly.

CAJETAN

And the other conspirators?. Will they also be executed?

LEO

No, we are merciful.

CAJETAN

His Holiness is too kind.

LEO

However, they are each being fined 20,000 ducats.
But their lives will be spared.

CAJETAN

That will go a great way in reducing our debts. But
if they don't pay?

LEO

They know the alternative.

CAJETAN

Some claim to be innocent.

LEO

Irrelevant. They all pay.

CAJETAN

And do they retain their offices?

LEO

As long as they pay. Now about that German friar.

CAJETAN

News on the German heretic is not good.

LEO

The whole world is against him and yet he survives!

CAJETAN

I think an assassination would be in order here. He
recants nothing.

LEO

How could he have gone so far astray!

CAJETAN

The work of the devil.

LEO

But the Lord has sent help indeed. Dear King Henry of England is publishing a major work which will make him defender of the faith.

CAJETAN

Good works indeed. Henry must be officially granted title of Defender of the Faith.

LEO

What a magnificent idea. But that German monk will still not recant. What shall we do?

CAJETAN

We know what we must do?

LEO

Along with prayer.

CAJETAN

Yes your Holiness. But can we, the Church, assassinate.

LEO

Yes. When it is the devil's representative on earth.

CAJETAN

Of course!

LEO

I am glad you agree.

CAJETAN

But we may not succeed. He has a hundred troops defending him now, and the protection of the Elector.

LEO

And the protection of the devil.

SCENE 5 PULPIT 1523

Luther stands before the
congregation.

LUTHER
No more priestly confessions!

ENSEMBLE
Yes!

LUTHER
The priesthood of all believers!

ENSEMBLE
Amen!

LUTHER
No more Papal collections!

ENSEMBLE
Yes!

LUTHER
Now God can enter the Church which will only be a
house of worship!

ENSEMBLE
Yes!

LUTHER
You can see God clearly now!

ENSEMBLE
Yes!

LUTHER
I thank you in the name of the Lord and in the name
of Jesus.

ENSEMBLE
Amen!

LUTHER

My beliefs are simple.

EVA

Pastor. What is your central belief?

LUTHER

First salvation is there for all men who ask for it. But salvation comes from God alone. And Salvation is based on Faith and faith alone. We are saved only by God's intervening love.

ENSEMBLE

Amen.

EVA

What do you have to say about the pope?

LUTHER

He is the anti-Christ. I have done more harm to the pope while sleeping than all the princes and emperors.

ENSEMBLE

Luther! Yes!

LUTHER

The office of the Pope was a creation of the devil.

ENSEMBLE

Amen.

LUTHER

And we must fight the devil with our whole heart and soul.

EVA

How do we get away from the devil?

LUTHER

Prayer.

ENSEMBLE

Oh?

LUTHER

And sometimes I even know how to get rid of him with a fart.

ENSEMBLE

Ha! Ha! Ha!

LUTHER

It was five years ago that we first stood up the devils in Rome, and today we have hundreds of thousands of followers.

ENSEMBLE

Hurrah!

LUTHER

And my life is in constant danger. Through the protection of our elector, I am now defended by a hundred soldiers. I thank God for them.

ENSEMBLE

Amen.

LUTHER

And you do realize there are no more heretics in the eyes of the Pope.

ENSEMBLE

Oh!

LUTHER

Now all heretics are called Lutherans. They are now synonymous.

ENSEMBLE

Ha!

MADELINE

What about the Jews?

LUTHER

A new day is beginning.

ENSEMBLE

Pray tell.

LUTHER

We must welcome the Jews in our midst with open arms.

URSULA

A change?

LUTHER

A big one. The Jews are God's chosen people.

ENSEMBLE

Indeed!

LUTHER

We must receive them cordially, and permit them to trade and work with us.

ENSEMBLE

Yes!

LUTHER

Justinian wrote: "Absurd theologians defend hatred for the Jews. ... What Jew would consent to enter our ranks when he sees the cruelty and enmity we wreak on them.—"

ENSEMBLE

Yes.

LUTHER

If I had been a Jew and had seen such dolts and blockheads govern and teach the Christian faith, I would sooner have become a hog than a Christian.

ENSEMBLE

Yes!

LUTHER

If the apostles, who also were Jews, had dealt with us Gentiles as we Gentiles deal with the Jews, there would never have been a Christian.

ENSEMBLE

Yes!

LUTHER

We are Gentiles; they are blood relatives, cousins, and brothers of our Lord.

ENSEMBLE

Amen!

EVA

When will we see the Bible in German?

LUTHER

I am nearly done! Written in Wartburg while in exile.

ENSEMBLE

Hallelujah! Hallelujah! .

LUTHER

You will be able to read the Bible in our own German language.

ENSEMBLE

Yes! Yes!

LUTHER

And have direct access to the source of all truth. Rather than the interpretation from some old priest who badly reads Latin.

ENSEMBLE

Yes!

LUTHER

That is what I like to hear. And now so many of you have asked me about sex and celibacy.

ENSEMBLE

YES!

LUTHER

Celibacy, no. Sex, Yes.

ENSEMBLE

Hurrah!

LUTHER

Does anyone object?

ENSEMBLE

No!!!!!!

MADELINE

Do you still have a voluptuous appetite?

LUTHER

Along with my constipation.

The audience laughs.

EVA

Do you wrestle with God as you say?

LUTHER

Daily.

ENSEMBLE

Why?

Like Jacob?
LUTHER

Ha!
ENSEMBLE

LUTHER
And I have gotten God into a headlock. Like Jacob, I have a great sense of humor which helps me win against God. Then I control. God has already surrendered himself.

EVA
Can you explain?

LUTHER
We will save that for another time.

MADELINE
Did you ever say relying on good works to get you salvation is a sin?

LUTHER
Most definitely!

ENSEMBLE
Why?

LUTHER
Salvation is a free gift of God, and no man could do a thing to merit it.. Faith is the assurance of the forgiveness Christ offered his people.

URSULA
Can we be sure of our salvation!

LUTHER
The notion that to be unsure of one's salvation is wrong, You must be defiant and triumphant in your faith.

EVA
And how about the dissenters from our order.

LUTHER

False prophets teach heresy such as the equality of man, adult baptism, and Christ's imminent return.

ENSEMBLE

And how about Copernicus?

LUTHER

The man who says the world is round?

URSULA

Yes.

LUTHER

He is stupid. This fool wishes to reverse the entire scheme of astronomy, but sacred scripture tells us the sun travels around the earth.

MADELINE

Does the Pope support Copernicus?

LUTHER

That Queer Leo says he is open-minded about it. In fact he asked Copernicus for a demonstration of his foolish thesis. I am sure that even the Antichrist Cardinals who prevail will condemn Copernicus' folly. He reverses the entire scheme of astronomy.

URSULA

Thomas More called you a heretic, and said that the Lutheran Reformation is rooted in your lust for sex.

LUTHER

I should like to remind that English oaf that Virginity stinks.

MADELINE

Do you love dogs as they say?

LUTHER

I have owned twenty. I love the beasts.

EVA

Do you believe in miracles?

LUTHER

No. Enough said.

URSULA

Do you believe in the divine right of governments?

LUTHER

Yes I do.

ENSEMBLE

Why?

LUTHER

Because let no man take apart, what God has put together. Government is a divine agency.

URSULA

And soldiers in defense of governments?

LUTHER

Soldiers are the carriers of righteousness.

URSULA

Do you suffer from melancholy?

LUTHER

I am an upset man. I am depressed at times, plagued by a dozen illnesses. I can not sleep. My friends become enemies, My enemies hate me more than even those who despise me are agents of Satan. I can not restrain myself. I stand against 1500 years. BUT GOD IS WITH ME!

URSULA

Do you still believe we are the Bride and Christ is the Groom?

LUTHER

More so now than ever.

MADELINE

What do you think of the situation in England?

LUTHER

Henry's Reformation is nothing more than a vanity separation from the church.

EVA

Doesn't love conquer all?

LUTHER

Jesus says that fulfilling the entirety of the law hangs on one action—loving our neighbor with our whole heart.

EVA

Can love alone save us?

LUTHER

Again I repeat, we only saved by God's intervening love. We have nothing to do with it.

SCENE 6 LUTHER'S OFFICE

Luther enters the room and a tall wiry man is seated at his desk.

LUTHER

Am I intruding?

DEVON

No, of course not.

LUTHER

You are seated in my chair.

DEVON

I know that.

LUTHER

Can you have the decency to get up?

DEVON

No.

What!

LUTHER

I am here.

DEVON

I know that.

LUTHER

You have a sharp tongue.

DEVON

Look who's calling the kettle black.

LUTHER

What can I do for you?

DEVON

Go away.

LUTHER

No.

DEVON

Go away!

LUTHER

Ha.

DEVON

You heard my orders.

LUTHER

First I am not going to go away. Second you can't excommunicate me from your dreams.

DEVON

Then who are you?

LUTHER

DEVON
I'll give you one hint.

LUTHER
Yes.

DEVON
On second thought I better not.

LUTHER
Why?

DEVON
It might alarm you.

LUTHER
Tell me.

DEVON
OK, then.

LUTHER
Go ahead.

DEVON
You once said you could kill me with a fart.

LUTHER
Get out!

DEVON
You have no power over me.

LUTHER
The devil himself.

DEVON
Yes. And I'm here to keep you company.

LUTHER
Get out of my sight. You scoundrel.

DEVON
Have you ever thought of farting to get rid of me?

LUTHER
Stop!

DEVON
Kill me with a fart as you said!

LUTHER
I have in the past.

DEVON
At least, so you thought!

LUTHER
Just leave me alone.

DEVON
No.

LUTHER
You torture me!

DEVON
Only because you think of it that way.

LUTHER
Go away!

DEVON
OK. For a while.

LUTHER
I mean permanently.

DEVON
Perhaps. We agree on one thing.

LUTHER
What is that?

DEVON
Martin Luther eats like a hog.

LUTHER
That is right.

DEVON

And he farts like a hog too.

LUTHER

Go away!

DEVON

Bye.

LUTHER

And do you have a name? Surely it must be Lucifer.

DEVON

I don't know which one of those lovey dovey blatherers gave me that name

LUTHER

What would you suggest?

DEVON

Oh just call me Devon.

LUTHER

Begone, Devon.

DEVON

Sweet dreams.

SCENE 7 GOOD FRIDAY

Luther enters from the
monastery and Philip
Melanchton runs up to him. We
see twelve herring barrels

PHILIP MELANCHTON

Martin! Martin! You see those barrels!

LUTHER

Herring barrels?

PHILIP MELANCHTON

Live herring! There's movement in those barrels.

LUTHER

Is this a Trojan horse? Shall we strike!

PHILIP MELANCHTON

Well.

Suddenly the lids of the
barrels open and we see that
nuns are in them.

KATHERINA

Stop! We are seeking refuge!

PHILIP MELANCHTON

From what!

KATHERINA

We are looking for Martin Luther!

LUTHER

I am he. What do we have here? Twelve Cistercian
nuns?

KATHERINA

We have reached our destination! We have risked our
lives to get here.

LUTHER

Welcome! You come from the home of my good friend
Walter Cranach.

KATHERINA

Will you have us?

LUTHER

With pleasure! You are free at last. What lead you
here?

KATHERINA

Our Mother Superior.

LUTHER

That is hard to believe.

KATHERINA

She read us your tract entitled "Why Virgins May Leave Convents with Divine Sanctions." And warned us we must avoid you. We agreed with her along with the other one hundred nuns and novices, recited the Rosary, and then went to our rooms and plotted our escape.

LUTHER

Aha! And what is your name?

KATHERINA

Katherina von Bora!

LUTHER

Welcome, Katherina. Von Bora. A noble family.

KATHERINA

An impoverished one. And we are ready to become wives and mothers. I have been in the convent for 15 years.

LUTHER

Impossible. You are no more than 23 years old.

KATHERINA

I am 24, and entered the monastery when I was nine.

LUTHER

So young.

KATHERINA

That Sister Matilda drove me there. She convinced my parents that I was a very Holy Child. To this day she is my bane. I prefer marriage.

LUTHER

I have a fine pastor who would make a great husband for you. A fine young man your age.

KATHERINA

I have my own ideas on who I want.

LUTHER

So be it. Now for some food and drink. You must be tired and stared.

KATHERINA

How did you know to prepare for us?

LUTHER

My lips are sealed. Suffice it to say that It was I who arranged for you to come in Herring barrels. Now come to dinner.

KATHERINA

Gladly.

LUTHER

It is a delight to dine with 12 virgins.

KATHERINA

Hopefully not virgins for much longer.

SCENE 8 LUTHER'S OFFICE

Martin Luther is seated at his desk. We hear shots and Thomas Muntzer enters.

THOMAS MUNTZER

MARTIN LUTHER!

LUTHER

Yes!

THOMAS MUNTZER

MARTIN LUTHER!

LUTHER

I know my name!

THOMAS MUNTZER

A shameful name! Oh flatterer of Princes. You have sold out to preserve your Reformation!

LUTHER

I think not!

THOMAS MUNTZER

Murderer! You cater to the powerful so they will help you! And abandon the people. JUDAS ISCARIOT!

LUTHER

I think not! The radical peasants are committing murder, rape, and theft!

THOMAS MUNTZER

You are not a reformer! You are a murderer! And a thief. You have seized your monastery as your own estate. You are worse than the popes!

LUTHER

How so? Reverend Muntzer!

THOMAS MUNTZER

You hear the shots, the screams, the crying! They are dying peasants.

LUTHER

They are sinful peasants who in their revolt commit the sin of sedition. They must be destroyed!

THOMAS MUNTZER

They ask for their rights and you shout "kill them."

LUTHER

Follow the example of our Lord. He accepted his lot and died on the Cross for us! He did not revolt against the Romans!

THOMAS MUNTZER

He did revolt against the Scribes and Pharisees! Christ is on our side!

LUTHER

So am I! But not the Government, albeit the princes.
Remember what the Lord said Render unto Caesar that
which is Caesar's and unto God that which is Gods.

THOMAS MUNTZER

You turn on us. And grant indulgences to soldiers
who kill the peasants. And you of all people who
wrote the theses to oppose the use of indulgences!

LUTHER

Because these soldiers preserve God's order.
Because they prevent chaos.

THOMAS MUNTZER

And you who published the theses to end indulgences
now grant them to killers.

LUTHER

I do so in the name of God.

THOMAS MUNTZER

Why oh why Martin Luther are you turning against the
poor people you once supported!

LUTHER

They have sworn to be true and faithful, submissive
and obedient, to their rulers, as Christ commands and
they are breaking this obedience,

THOMAS MUNTZER

What are they doing wrong besides standing up for
their rights.

LUTHER

They are starting a rebellion, and violently robbing
people and plundering and murdering.

THOMAS MUNTZER

You are a traitor!

LUTHER

For rebellion is not simple murder, but is like a great fire, which attacks and lays waste a whole land.

THOMAS MUNTZER

These people simply want their rights.

LUTHER

Right. But rebellion brings with it bloodshed, makes widows and orphans, and turns everything upside down, like the greatest disaster. Therefore let everyone who can, smite these rebels you...

THOMAS MUNTZER

And the rulers who do not accept the Gospel?

LUTHER

I will not oppose a ruler who does not accept the Gospel.

THOMAS MUNTZER

So you enjoy being a murderer!

LUTHER

My opinion is that it is better that all the peasants be killed than that the princes and magistrates perish, because the rustics took the sword without divine authority.

THOMAS MUNTZER

And no pity!

LUTHER

No pity!

THOMAS MUNTZER

The Anti-Christ is a kinder person than you are!

LUTHER

All my words are against the obdurate, hardened, blinded peasants.

THOMAS MUNTZER

May you burn in hell!

LUTHER

I do not teach, however, that mercy ought not to be shown to the captives and those who have surrendered.

THOMAS MUNTZER

I now go off to my death. I will be captured, imprisoned and hung. I do so gladly, and die a martyr to the peasant cause.

LUTHER

May God have pity on you.

THOMAS MUNTZER

YOU ARE THE BUTCHER OF WITTENBERG!

LUTHER

WHAT!

THOMAS MUNTZER

YOU ARE THE BUTCHER OF WITTENBERG!

LUTHER

WHAT!

THOMAS MUNTZER

YOU ARE THE BUTCHER OF WITTENBERG!

LUTHER

YOU ARE DISMISSED!

SCENE 9 KATHERINA'S HOME 1525

Martin Luther stands at his window. Katherina von Bora, his bride to be, enters.

KATHERINA
I love you, Martin Luther.

LUTHER
Katherina Von Bora, I adore you.

KATHERINA
We will be one today.

LUTHER
Our wedding day.

KATHERINA
At last!.

LUTHER
My bride.

KATHERINA
My groom!.

LUTHER
To be. And at 42, almost twice your age!

KATHERINA
I am 26. I repeat what I said 8 years ago. I WILL
HAVE NO OTHER BUT MARTIN LUTHER.

LUTHER
Your persistence paid off. And you have made me the
happiest man in the world.

KATHERINA
I will have it no other way.

LUTHER
We are united into eternity.

KATHERINA
Yes, my Love..

LUTHER

Your parents have even come.

KATHERINA

I knew they would.

LUTHER

You were a bride of Christ.

KATHERINA

Since I was nine.

LUTHER

Now, you will be married to both Luther and Christ.
And I will be married to both Katherina and Christ.

KATHERINA

I have always craved for a robust man. And
Katherine's cooking will make you even more robust.
I want all of you.

LUTHER

All of me is yours, each and every pound.

KATHERINA

And I will always be your humble wife.

LUTHER

A thousand years of man-made tradition of the
celibacy of priests will be broken.

KATHERINA

The happiest day of my life.

LUTHER

Marriage for priests should be obligatory. Celibacy
is a gift from the devil. .

KATHERINA

Ha! Ha! Ha!

LUTHER

And I know you want to handle and manage the farm.
Your husband to be is a dope about business.

KATHERINA

I will manage the farm, the dairy, the animals, the
servants. And the children. God chose my husband-to-
be to be his spokesman on earth. That is enough
work for one man.

LUTHER

One of them anyhow.

KATHERINA

Shall we open the window to hear what the crowds are
shouting.

LUTHER

Have we not heard it all before.

KATHERINA

Yes, but...

LUTHER

Do you have any fear? All my friends have advised
against it.

KATHERINA

None. But my aunt told my mother that Jesus was a
virgin.

LUTHER

We think his mother was, but I dare anyone to show me
anywhere in Scripture which says that Jesus was a
virgin.

KATHERINA

Let us open the window.

She opens the window.

PRO LUTHER ENSEMBLE

To the Bride and Groom!

ANTI LUTHER ENSEMBLE

A disgrace! Incest! Nuns and priests!

PRO LUTHER ENSEMBLE

May they live happily ever after.

ANTI LUTHER ENSEMBLE

They will both burn in hell.

PRO LUTHER ENSEMBLE

May they have a fruitful marriage.

ANTI LUTHER ENSEMBLE

God's kingdom is stained forevermore.

PRO LUTHER ENSEMBLE

We ask God's blessing for the new couple

ANTI LUTHER ENSEMBLE

Disgrace! Disgrace! Disgrace!

PRO LUTHER ENSEMBLE

Onward!

A Reformation only to satisfy his devil-driven lust!

SCENE 10 LUTHER'S STUDY

Luther and Philip raise their
beer glasses.

PHILIP MELANCTON

A HISTORIC DAY! The world now has the Bible in
German.

LUTHER

By God's Grace. .

PHILIP MELANCHTON

How did you do you write the greatest book of all time in the most beautiful German of all time?

LUTHER

I visited nearby towns and markets to listen to people speaking. I wanted to ensure that the Bible they read would be in their contemporary language.

PHILIP MELANCHTON

Amazing!

LUTHER

I made the Bible the people's book in church, school, and house.

PHILIP MELANCHTON

And you did this while you were exiled in Wartburg Castle! Almost imprisoned like Paul.

LUTHER

I did not do it all myself. I owe you much thanks. To you above all, Philip Melanchton, and then Erasmus and others. It was a collaborative effort. I will work on refining the translation up to the day I die.

PHILIP MELANCHTON

Do you feel comfortable in making some changes to the theology?

LUTHER

So few of them. I added the word "alone" to Romans 3:28 controversially so that it reads: "So now we hold, that man is justified without the help of the works of the law, alone through faith."

PHILIP MELANCHTON

But there were also others?

LUTHER

I do not believe that the Holy Spirit produced Hebrews, James, Jude, and the Revelation of John do not seem like Holy Books. .

PHILIP MELANCHTON

Agreed!

LUTHER

Our New Testament will be spread by printers so that all Germans can buy and read the Bible.

PHILIP MELANCHTON

Very correct.

LUTHER

Our vernacular Bible will also will play a role in the creation of a German national identity.

PHILIP MELANCHTON

And liberate all Protestants who have access to it.

LUTHER

And deprive the elite priestly class of exclusive control over the word of God.

PHILIP MELANCHTON

That Anti-Christ Leo is turning over in his grave. And burning in hell too.

Act 2

SCENE 1 A GERMAN BEER GARDEN

Luther , Katherina, Madeline, Eva, and Ursula are seated at a table drinking wine. Luther raises his glass.

LUTHER

Zum Wohl!!

EVA

Zum Wohl!

KATHERINA

Congratulations to all of you on your marriages during the next week. A toast: Wohl

URSULA

Zum Wohl

LUTHER

Cheers.

MADELINE

Salute.

LUTHER

And in a week your pastor husbands can begin using those organs which those Catholic priests can not use. Pastor' wives all three of you. I shall preside over all three ceremonies.

URSULA

Thank you Martin Luther!

LUTHER

No, thank God. And I will celebrate with your grooms tomorrow night! All fine men!

MADELINE

And because of you our husbands can now serve God as pastors and still have family and children.

LUTHER

An hopefully you will have many.

MADELINE

As you have had with Katherina.

LUTHER

She is God's gift to me. A toast to Katherina,
Ursula, Eva, and Madeline.

URSULA

We need some jokes. I have heard some of your women
jokes. They are the best in Wittenberg.

MADELINE

Please, Pastor!

LUTHER

The word and works of God is quite clear, that women
were made either to be wives or prostitutes. I am
glad you have not chosen the latter.

ALL

Ha! Ha! Ha!

LUTHER

Men have broad and large chests, and small narrow
hips, and more understanding than women, who have but
small and narrow breasts, and broad hips, to the end
they should remain at home, sit still, keep house,
and bear and bring up children.

ALL

Ha! Ha! Ha!

LUTHER

Even though they grow weary and wear themselves out
with child-bearing, it does not matter; let them go
on bearing children till they die, that is what they
are there for.

ALL

Ha! Ha! Ha!

LUTHER

God created Adam master and lord of living creatures,
but Eve spoilt, when she persuaded him to set
himself above God's will.

ALL

Ha! Ha! Ha!

LUTHER

'Tis you women, with your tricks and artifices, that lead men into error. We may well lie with what seems to be a woman of flesh and blood, and yet the time it is only a devil in the shape of a woman.

ALL

Ha! Ha! Ha!

LUTHER

No gown worse becomes a woman than the desire to be wise.

ALL

Ha! Ha! Ha!

LUTHER

Who loves not wine, women and song, Remains a fool his whole life long.

ALL

Ha!

LUTHER

And now good night, young brides. And always love and respect your spouses as I have loved and respected mine.

KATHERINA

And now for some men's jokes.

LUTHER

I look forward to hearing them.

SCENE 2 LUTHER'S OFFICE

Luther stands as Philip
Melanchton enters.

PHILIP MELANCHTON

My Brother in Christ.

LUTHER

Philip Melcanchton! My Brother in Christ.

PHILIP MELANCHTON

Your reform has spread. All through Germany, Norway, Sweden, Denmark and beyond.

LUTHER

Our reform now has millions of followers.

PHILIP MELANCHTON

God is watching over us. You are the charioteer of Israel.

LUTHER

Without you I would have accomplished nothing.

PHILIP MELANCHTON

Nonsense! You are Martin Luther. THE MARTIN LUTHER!

LUTHER

You have stood by me all the way in delivering God's message to the people. And you stood right by me when that evil Erasmus and that pugnacious John Eck both attacked me.

PHILIP MELANCHTON

You bloodied them both, Treatise after treatise. You knocked them both over. You will become a household word throughout the world. They will be but a minor footnote in long-winded history books.

LUTHER

Both wanted reformation and then crawled back to the Vatican. They are under the devil's spell. A shame, because I still say that Erasmus is the most brilliant man in all of Germany followed by John Eck. And so you have come to discuss the Bible problem?

PHILIP MELANCHTON

Yes. You Martin Luther gave the world the Bible in German. And now this.,.,

LUTHER

They will interpret as they may.

PHILIP MELANCHTON

All of Germany is now reading the Bible as we intended.

LUTHER

And some are misinterpreting. And now many Germans have their own interpretations, insisting that they begin their own religions.

PHILIP MELANCHTON

And oh what interpretations. They are having a field day with Revelation.

LUTHER

And we must show our moral authority and forbid such nonsense.

PHILIP MELANCHTON

The Catholics are saying we told you so.

LUTHER

So let them. Their approach of keeping the brethren in ignorance was worse.

PHILIP MELANCHTON

Agreed. But I come here today on a practical matter.

LUTHER

Yes, my brother.

PHILIP MELANCHTON

The Sin of Sodom.

LUTHER

Strange that you should mention this. Seems like an epidemic. The devil at work.

PHILIP MELANCHTON

Well I have experienced it myself lately.

LUTHER

How so, dear brother?

PHILIP MELANCHTON

Two wives among the brethren came to me and complained that their husbands were caught in bed together. And not knowing what to do they came to see me.

LUTHER

Poor women.

PHILIP MELANCHTON

And then one of the leaders of our church sought my advice because he has become suspicious about his wife and her best friend.

LUTHER

As you know, I was an Augustinian. And are you aware that even st. Augustine fell prey to this sin? In fact he had a male lover or husband for a year before he was saved by God's intervening love.

PHILIP MELANCHTON

My question to you, Brother Martin. Do you believe in the Sin of Sodom?

LUTHER

Yes! A disgrace, like other sins, has crept in through an foreign soldiers and merchants, still the rest of the people are unaware of what is being done in secret.

PHILIP MELANCHTON

Indeed!

LUTHER

The Carthusian monks deserve to be hated because they were the first to bring this terrible pollution into Germany from the monasteries of Italy.

PHILIP MELANCHTON

Ah yes. The Italian disease. So many in the Vatican.

LUTHER

Assuredly. That is why I refer to all the girlie Popes. And then Michelangelo! The devil has found green pastures in the Italian playground and made them what is altogether contrary to nature.

PHILIP MELANCHTON

It is therefore sin?

LUTHER

Undoubtedly from Satan, who after people have once turned away from the fear of God, blots out the natural desire.

PHILIP MELANCHTON

I do have one concern. Paul strictly condemned this desire.

LUTHER

Of course.

PHILIP MELANCHTON

But Jesus did not.

LUTHER

That is a discission for another time.

PHILIP MELANCHTON

So what do I do?

LUTHER

Advise them all that they have choice.

PHILIP MELANCHTON

Yes.

LUTHER

We all have choice. Nothing is predestined!.

PHILIP MELANCHTON

Agreed.

LUTHER

The same applies to unconverted Jews, peasants, and all sinners! Jews can convert, peasants must accept their lot, and sinners must stop sinning. And turn their life and will over to the care of God.

PHILIP MELANCHTON

Agreed.

SCENE 3 THE JEWISH MARKET WITTENBERG

Josef is selling oriental rugs.
Luther enters.

JOSEL

Pastor Luther, we welcome you.

LUTHER

I am pleased to be here.

JOSEL

Ah, yes. I was hoping you would come.

LUTHER

So you have decided to convert. I welcome you with open arms.

JOSEL

Thank you.

LUTHER

When is the day that we can begin lessons?

JOSEL

Pastor. We have considered your kind offer.

LUTHER

And?

JOSEL

We have changed our mind

LUTHER

I thought so. You are a stiff-necked people.

JOSEL

We have seriously considered your offer of conversion.

LUTHER

And?

JOSEL

Perhaps someday.

LUTHER

You are the chosen people.

JOSEL

We thank you!

LUTHER

I cant help but feel that you are pulling me on.

JOSEL

Why no! Good Pastor.

LUTHER

Now I know that you are being disrespectful.

JOSEL

Not at all. But we know why you want to convert us.

LUTHER

Do you not want eternal redemption?

JOSEL

We are the chosen people as you say.

LUTHER

Are you willing to accept Jesus as the Son of God?

MANN

We are all Son's of God.

LUTHER

God is awaiting your entry into his kingdom.

JOSEL

All of us.

LUTHER

Meaning?

JOSEL

We can all go to heaven if there is one.

LUTHER

You say that derisively.

JOSEL

Of course not.

LUTHER

Then will you listen to me

JOSEL

If you listen to us first?

LUTHER

I'm listening!

JOSEL

You want us to convert?

LUTHER

That's the idea.

JOSEL

We have another solution.

LUTHER

Yes?

JOSEL

Did you ever think of converting to Judaism.

LUTHER

No!

JOSEL

You should.

LUTHER

You jest.

JOSEL

We have listened to you It is time that you listened to us. You have shared with us. And now we think you should convert.

LUTHER

You will die for what you say.

JOSEL

We shall see.

LUTHER

You dogs!

JOSEL

We are God's chosen.

SCENE 4 THE PULPIT 1838

Luther stands at the pulpit

LUTHER

Today we publish the Catechism.! It is for you!

ENSEMBLE

At last!

LUTHER

Many of you have urged me to prepare this Catechism, or Christian doctrine, in this small, plain, simple form. Mercy! Good God! Now we have it!

ENSEMBLE

Thank you!

LUTHER

Many pastors are altogether incapable and incompetent to teach, so much so, that one is ashamed to speak of it. Nevertheless, they maintain that they are Christians, have been baptized and receive the holy Sacraments.

ENSEMBLE

Right

LUTHER

Yet they do not understand and cannot even recite either the Lord's Prayer, or the Creed, or the Ten Commandments; they live like dumb brutes and irrational hogs; and yet, now that the Gospel has come, they have nicely learned to abuse liberty like experts.

ENSEMBLE

What scum!

LUTHER

Oh bishops! To whom this charge has been committed by God, what will ye ever answer to Christ for having so shamefully neglected the people and never for a moment discharged your office?

ENSEMBLE

Agreed!

LUTHER

But those who are unwilling to learn should not be admitted to the Sacrament, accepted as sponsors at baptism, nor exercise any part of Christian liberty, but should simply be turned back to the Pope and his officials.

ENSEMBLE

Yes!

LUTHER

For although we cannot and should not force any one to believe, yet we should insist and urge the people that they know what is right and wrong.

ENSEMBLE

Of course!

LUTHER

After they understand the First Commandment well, then take up the Second, and so on, otherwise they will be overwhelmed, so as not to be able to retain any of them well.

ENSEMBLE

Makes sense!

LUTHER

After you have thus taught them this Short Catechism, then take up the Large Catechism, and give them also a richer and fuller knowledge.

ENSEMBLE

We will do!

LUTHER

For instance, the Seventh Commandment, concerning stealing, must be strenuously urged among mechanics and merchants, and even farmers and servants, for among these people many kinds of dishonesty and thieving prevail.

ENSEMBLE

Yes

LUTHER

Lastly, since the tyranny of the Pope has been abolished, people are no longer willing to go to the Sacrament and despise it as something useless and unnecessary. We are to preach in such a manner that of their own accord, without our law, they will urge themselves and, as it were, compel us pastors to administer the Sacrament.

ENSEMBLE

Blessed be Luther!

LUTHER

Hence, you must not make any law in this matter, as the Pope does. Only set forth clearly the benefit and harm, the need and use.

ENSEMBLE

Yes.

LUTHER

But Christ Himself will be our reward if we labor faithfully. To this end may the Father of grace help us, to whom be praise and thanks forever through Christ, our Lord! Amen.

ENSEMBLE

Amen

SCENE 5 ELECTOR'S PALACE 1840

Elector Charles is seated at
his desk. Martin Luther enters

LUTHER

Your Highness?

ELECTOR

Martin Luther. Welcome. I invite you because I have
heard troubling reports about you.

LUTHER

How so my Lord?

ELECTOR

Are you involved in sedition?

LUTHER

I am not.

ELECTOR

Are you aiding in the peasants rebellion?

LUTHER

I am not. But it is the fault of the nobility!

ELECTOR

How so?

LUTHER

We have no one on earth to thank for this mischievous
rebellion, except princes and lords; and especially
the blind bishops and mad priests and monks. The
peasants are mustering, and this must result in the
ruin, destruction, and desolation of Germany by cruel
murder and bloodshed, unless God shall be moved by
our repentance to prevent it.

ELECTOR

Explain!

LUTHER

It is not the peasants, your Highness, who are resisting you; it is God Himself. To make their sin still greater, and ensure their merciless destruction, some are beginning to blame this affair on the Gospel and say it is the fruit of my teaching...

ELECTOR

And if the peasants become violent.

LUTHER

Ah, then I will turn on them.

ELECTOR

That is good to hear.

LUTHER

Your Highness is kind to see me.

ELECTOR

Indeed. You are the Martin Luther, and have turned the whole world upside down.

LUTHER

Not quite, but our Reform has taken hold.

ELECTOR

To say the least.

LUTHER

That is why I have come to see you.

ELECTOR

Speak!

LUTHER

About the Jews.

ELECTOR

What about them?

LUTHER

They continue to flourish here.

ELECTOR

They always flourish.

LUTHER

But that must end.

ELECTOR

Why?

LUTHER

So that the Holy Empire will become one Christian entity.

ELECTOR

That is different from what you said a year ago when you said.....

LUTHER

I have given them that opportunity and they turned on me.

ELECTOR

You were most adamant. You said "Absurd theologians defend hatred for the Jews ...

LUTHER

My opinion has changed. In fact I made a request of you six months ago and never heard from you.

ELECTOR

What was that?

LUTHER

That a special tax should be imposed on Jews who do not convert.

ELECTOR

I never understood the basis of that request

LUTHER

Converted Jews-and they have my special blessing-are now cut off from their former brethren and need financial support.

ELECTOR

We considered your recommendation.

LUTHER

And?

ELECTOR

The Council turned it down flatly.

LUTHER

Why?

ELECTOR

It does not benefit the state.

LUTHER

So Christendom is to be ignored?

ELECTOR

Not quite. What other suggestions do you have.

LUTHER

That the Jews who do not convert must be expelled or leave Germany.

ELECTOR

How?

LUTHER

First, set fire to their synagogues or schools ... This is to be done in honor of our Lord and of Christendom, so that God might see that we are Christians .

ELECTOR

Seems extreme.

LUTHER

Second, I advise that their houses also be razed and destroyed.

ELECTOR

What else?

LUTHER

Third, I advise that their prayer books and Talmudic writings, in which such idolatry, lies, cursing, and blasphemy are taught, be taken from them.

ELECTOR

Anything else?

LUTHER

Fourth, I advise that their rabbis be forbidden to teach, And that safe-conduct on the highways be abolished, and that all their silver and gold be taken from them.

ELECTOR

Anything else.

LUTHER

I also recommend putting a flail, an ax, a hoe, a spade, a distaff, or a spindle into the hands of young, strong Jews and letting them earn their bread in the sweat of their brow

ELECTOR

(Interrupting)

Why do you hate the Jews so much?

LUTHER

We know that the Jews are God's chosen people, but they have disobeyed God's will. Therefore they must be persecuted.

ELECTOR

We will take your recommendations under advice.

LUTHER

That means you will do nothing!

ELECTOR

We will see.

LUTHER

And I shall be publishing my recommendations to you.

ELECTOR

What is the title?

LUTHER

On the Jews and Their Lies.

ELECTOR

How subtle.

LUTHER

Not at all. I am subtle neither with posting the 95 theses or on the Jews and their lies.

ELECTOR

So you object to Jews?

LUTHER

Yes. Only those who do not convert.

ELECTOR

And Catholics?

LUTHER

Only to those who remain under the influence of the Anti-Christ.

ELECTOR

And dissenters?

LUTHER

They create chaos, and under the devil's influence.

ELECTOR

Am I correct in assessing that you are calling for the persecution of Catholics, non-Lutheran Protestants, and Jews?

LUTHER

That is a simplification.

ELECTOR

So be it.

SCENE 6 LUTHER'S BEDROOM

Luther lies in bed. Katherina places a tray beside him.

KATHERINA

I will be back in an hour. Agatha is downstairs if you need anything.

LUTHER

Yes, my love.

KATHERINA

Now you are to rest. No work.

LUTHER

I am too feeble to work.

She exits. Luther falls asleep. And we hear angelic voices in the background. Then we hear a hymn. Suddenly thunder and lightening and trumpets blare out regal music. A large man in a kingly outfit appears.

LUTHER

Well look who's here!

HENRY

Venomous serpent!

LUTHER

I beg your pardon!

HENRY

I am here, oh execrable mind.

LUTHER

I feel so honored by this powerful and murderous king.

HENRY

Evil minded man.

LUTHER

Did you not come to me as you proceeded to behead your second wife. Now you attack me again.

HENRY

You are a peasant.

LUTHER

And I have read Assertio, oh Defender of the Faith! King Henry the Eighth!

HENRY

And?

LUTHER

I do not believe you are the author of the work!

HENRY

What!

LUTHER

Written by one of your hacks and aided by the devil.

HENRY

No it was written by me,

LUTHER

Thank you.

HENRY

For what?

LUTHER

There is something wonderful in a King of England having written against me, a simple Augustinian friar.

HENRY

Do not boast!

LUTHER

May I make a comment about you?

HENRY

Please do Friar Luther.

LUTHER

You are a shithead.

HENRY

Were this not a dream I would have you slain.

LUTHER

Without justification.

HENRY

Why!

LUTHER

If a King of England can spit forth his lying insults in my face, I have the right in self defense to thrust them down his throat.

HENRY

I will not indulge in a pissing contest with a simple friar. I am insulted in much about what you say, and especially your attack on Thomas Aquinas.

LUTHER

Wait a minute Did you not correspond with me when you were breaking with Rome, oh Defender of the Faith?

HENRY

Who are you to challenge the majestic tribunal of the Saints, the Fathers, and the Popes!

LUTHER

Ha!

HENRY

How can you expect that anybody should believe that all nations, citadels, kings and provinces should be so ignorant of their rights and liberties as to acknowledge the superiority of a strange priest to whom they owe no allegiance.

LUTHER

Why have I succeeded so well! I already have millions of followers.

HENRY

The work of the devil. Alas, the most greedy wolf of hell has surpassed you, devoured and swallowed you down into the lowest part of his belly where he lies half alive and half dead.

LUTHER

Are you not being carried away?

HENRY

Oh, unhappy man! Do you not understand how far superior obedience is to sacrifice. You merit every imaginable punishment for having disobeyed Christ's vicar on earth.

LUTHER

You mean Leo the Pervert!

HENRY

You blaspheme!

LUTHER

Oh, Defender of the Faith! Have you not been excommunicated?

HENRY

In this dream we are all confused.

LUTHER

Leo compared you to King Solomon who had seven thousand wives and beheaded none of them You've had eight and beheaded half of them.

HENRY

Only two of them, Oh Peasant Luther! You are in the presence of a king.

LUTHER

Here we have no royalty. You look like a bear with a crown.

HENRY

Disrespectful.

LUTHER

You are loathsome! You are a secondary monarch with no power to threaten me. You have soiled a lot of clean paper.

HENRY

You skunk.

LUTHER

You have taught me to have even greater contempt for the high and the mighty, You Are the worst scoundrel on earth.

HENRY

Begone. Oh devil's advocate!

LUTHER

Who do I see in the background?

HENRY

I must go. (He exits)

Thomas More comes closer to
Luther.

LUTHER

Who are you?

THOMAS MORE

Thomas More.

LUTHER

Ha!

THOMAS MORE

You laugh!

LUTHER

The man who had you hanged was just here.

THOMAS MORE

I am here to see you.

LUTHER

I thank you!

THOMAS MORE

For what!

LUTHER

For elevating me as did your king.

THOMAS MORE

How?

LUTHER

Three hundred pages called Responsio ad Lutherum
written by Thomas More.

THOMAS MORE

Ah yes. I did not attack you sufficiently.

LUTHER

You called me a pig, a dolt a liar, an ape, a
drunkard a pestilential buffoon, and a lousy little
friar.

THOMAS MORE

And worse than that your writings come from snippets you have gleaned in brothels, barber shops, taverns , and priest.

LUTHER

I avoid brothels but I love taverns.

THOMAS MORE

As long as your reverend paternity is determined to tell these shameless lies, others should be permitted to throw back you into your paternity's shitty mouth, truly the shit-pool of all shit, All shit which your damnable rottenness has vomited up.

LUTHER

You miserable man. No wonder poor Henry had you beheaded. Now rot in hell.

THOMAS MORE

And you still believe in that nonsense about celibacy and marriage. And attacking the sacred sacrament of marriage.

LUTHER

I love marriage. There is no other route. That is why I am married. Celibacy for perverts only!

THOMAS MORE

You state that you do not believe in the sacrament of marriage.

LUTHER

That is right. I believe in marriage and but not a sacrament. Sex is the major reason for a marriage and sex should not be a sacrament.

THOMAS MORE

That is because you are a leech! And you destroyed the Church, the Body of Christ,

LUTHER

Celibacy is not commanded in the Bible nor is marriage forbidden. Indeed the contrary is true. Prohibition of priestly marriage was not proclaimed until 400 years after Christ died.

THOMAS MORE

What idiocy. The only reason your wanted a reformation is to fulfill your lusts.

LUTHER

That is right. I say kiss and rekiss your wife. That unhappy stage of a single person, male or female, reveals to me each hour of the day as so many horrors. And you tried to kill their sexual desires!

THOMAS MORE

You blaspheme the writings of Augustine, Clement and all the great theologians of the church.

LUTHER

I do not contradict Jesus of Nazareth. A married life is a gift from God. God permits us to marry and have fun with and embrace or wives, when they are naked. Just as Isaac fondled his wife in Genesis. Female companionship is an excellent antidote to a man's melancholy.

THOMAS MORE

And you don't consider marriage a sacrament.

LUTHER

A sacrament is a mystery, a secret rite and a visible sign of spiritual grace. Marriage is none of those.

THOMAS MORE

Be damned Martin Luther. You depraved and oversexed ass.

More exits. Then we hear a mass
and Leo the Tenth enters.

LUTHER

Who is playing that diabolic music.

LEO
Diabolic?

LUTHER
Who are you?

LEO
Surely, you recognize me!

LUTHER
Ah come closer.

LEO
Here I am.

LUTHER
The devil himself. LEO! THE ANTI-CHRIST

LEO
No. Christ's representative on earth. The Vicar of Christ. In the footsteps of Peter.

LUTHER
Ha!

LEO
You will burn in hell.

LUTHER
You are the Anti-Christ. How dare you. You are the extravagant son of a notorious Renaissance family, You were made a cardinal at the age of 13 and became Pope Leo X at 38. Did you ever become a priest? Money talks,

LEO
I became pope by God's choosing!
You are an effete Renaissance prince and a devious and double-tongued politician.

LEO

I have always been attacked by the enemies of the church.

LUTHER

Pleasure-loving and easy-going, you went on a wild spending spree as soon as you ascended the papal throne.

LEO

Done for the people..

LUTHER

Expenses for your coronation festivities alone cost 100,000 ducats-one seventh of the reserve Pope Julius had left in the papal treasury. Your plans for rebuilding St. Peter's Basilica were estimated to cost over a million ducats. Within two years as pope, you squandered the fortune left by your equally corrupt predecessor.

LEO

Untrue!

LUTHER

To keep up with your expenditures, your officials created more than two thousand saleable church offices during his reign.

LEO

You are the wild boar who has invaded the Lord's vineyard!

LUTHER

The sale of indulgences provided you with yet another source of income. To pay for St. Peter's, offset the costs of a war, and enable a young noble to pay for three offices to which you appointed him, you issued an indulgence for special sale in Germany.

LEO

I did what was right

LUTHER

May God have pity on your wretched soul.

LEO

I leave the devil.

He exits. Peter, a tall young
man faces Luther.

PETER

Reverend Luther.

LUTHER

Yes?

PETER

I pay my respects to you.

LUTHER

Do I know who you are?

PETER

No reason why you should. But you presided over my
death on the eve of my marriage.

LUTHER

I presided over no one's death!

PETER

You killed many of us peasants who fought for our
human rights! Not with your sword but with your pen.

LUTHER

You rebelled against the civil authority. You have
tried to break down God's order.

PETER

I only wanted to hunt and fish

LUTHER

You deserved to be punished, You have broken the
law!

PETER

How?

LUTHER

You violated your oaths of loyalty to your rulers and were therefore subject to temporal punishment.

PETER

That is untrue.

LUTHER

You had robbed, plundered, and murdered, and were subject to death in body and soul.

PETER

We wanted our rights.

LUTHER

You had committed crimes under the cover of Christ's name, thereby shamefully blaspheming God.

PETER

You will burn in hell.

LUTHER

You were like a mad dog which had to be destroyed.

PETER

You had no pity!

LUTHER

The government is the God-given office to subdue the rebels with force, the only language they understood.

PETER

Please Sir

LUTHER

Whoever loses his life in suppressing this rebellion, is a a martyr to the gospel.

PETER

One parting thought.

LUTHER

Yes?

PETER

Too much theology separates us from the love of God.

LUTHER

Makes no sense.

PETER

Look deep and hard.

Peter exits. Thomas Munscher
enters

THOMAS MUNSCHER

Martin Luther!

LUTHER

Thomas Munscher!

THOMAS MUNSCHER

Martin Luther! You killed me.

LUTHER

Not directly. But I supported the leaders you tried
to overthrow.

THOMAS MUNSCHER

And you have the blood of two hundred thousand of
God's peasants on your hands.

SCENE 7 LUTHER'S BEDROOM

Luther is in bed. Katherina,
Phillip Melanchton are beside
him is beside him.

LUTHER

My dear Katherine. I am going to die.

My Love. KATHERINA
 Twenty beautiful years together. LUTHER
 We are blessed. KATHERINA
 Yes my love. LUTHER
 Please live. KATHERINA
 I go to my God. LUTHER
 My love KATHERINA
 And you will join me there someday. LUTHER
 Yes my love KATHERINA
 I see a light. LUTHER
 Suddenly we see a light coming
 through the window. Then we
 hear shouts from the outside.
 Long live Martin Luther. PRO LUTHER ENSEMBLE
 May he rot in hell ANTI LUTHER ENSEMBLE
 He is with God now. PRO LUTHER ENSEMBLE
 He is the devil. ANTI LUTHER ENSEMBLE

PRO LUTHER ENSEMBLE
He saved Mankind.

ANTI LUTHER ENSEMBLE
He destroyed the Church.

PRO LUTHER ENSEMBLE
He gave us a Bible to read.

ANTI LUTHER ENSEMBLE
He destroyed Cardinality!

PRO LUTHER ENSEMBLE
He ended corruption.

ANTI LUTHER ENSEMBLE
He murdered the peasants!

PRO LUTHER ENSEMBLE
He saved our nation!

ANTI LUTHER ENSEMBLE
He gave indulgences to man killers

PRO LUTHER ENSEMBLE
Sixty beautiful hymns

ANTI LUTHER ENSEMBLE
In league with the devil

PRO LUTHER ENSEMBLE
Now with God and the Angels

ANTI LUTHER ENSEMBLE
Now in hell.

SCENE 8 ETERNITY

Luther stands surrounded by
light. We hear a choir in the
background singing. And we see
a sign that says: Revelations.

Here I stand. LUTHER

Here I stand. VOICE

I come to you LUTHER

Yes. VOICE

And for the Grace of God. LUTHER

Right! VOICE

Where am I. LUTHER

In the land of Revelations. VOICE

Why? LUTHER

Because you are. Look in the foreground. VOICE

Why? LUTHER

You will want to see what is there. Take a look. VOICE

I see thousands of humans, no millions, God!. I LUTHER

Impressive. VOICE

LUTHER

Who are they?

VOICE

They are the souls of many nations and groups, They are your followers. Now past and future.

LUTHER

I am overwhelmed.

VOICE

Do not be. Nothing is impressive here.

LUTHER

Who are you?

VOICE

Why do you ask?

LUTHER

I want to see my Creator.

VOICE

Now look to the left corner of eternity.

LUTHER

I see trodden plants

VOICE

Yes you do.

LUTHER

There are millions of them.

VOICE

Yes there are.

LUTHER

What are they about?

VOICE
There are six million of them.

LUTHER
Why six million?

VOICE
There are certain mysteries.

LUTHER
You are being vague.

VOICE
Yes I am.

LUTHER
Let me know.

VOICE
We will find out.

LUTHER
Save me God.

VOICE
And yes there is beer here.

LUTHER
Amen.

VOICE
Amen.

ENSEMBLE
Amen.

VOICE
We will always remember the greatest of
commandments.

ENSEMBLE
Yes.

VOICE
Repeat!.

ENSEMBLE

You must love the Lord your God with your heart, your soul, and your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. A second is equally important: Love your neighbor as yourself. The entire law and the demands of the prophets are based on these two commandments.

VOICE

Amen.

LUTHER

Amen.

EPILOGUE LUTHERAN SUNDAY SCHOOL SEPTEMBER 2001

Adult students are seated in a classroom. Pastor Elizabeth is standing.

PASTOR ELIZABETH

And so we complete our catechism course. We welcome you converts to our church.

ENSEMBLE

Yes, Pastor Elizabeth.

PASTOR ELIZABETH

So now we have completed Catechism Two. We have a very adult class here. You are now Lutherans. . Let's think about it. How would you define your type of Lutheranism? You are forcing me to call on someone. Ursula you are seated closest to me..

URSULA

Oh I don't know, Pastor.. Let me think about it,.. Wait. I think I have it....

PASTOR ELIZABETH

Yes Ursula.

URSULA

You must love the Lord your God with your heart, your soul, and your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. A second is equally important: Love your neighbor as yourself. The entire law and the demands of the prophets are based on these two commandments.

PASTOR ELIZABETH

Very Good. Do you agree?

ENSEMBLE

Yes.

PASTOR ELIZABETH

Let us repeat.

STUDENTS

You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. A second is equally important: Love your neighbor as yourself. The entire law and ALL the demands of the prophets are based on these two commandments.

PASTOR ELIZABETH

Now, past, and future

ENSEMBLE

Now, past, and future.

End of Play.