

Luther Posts His Ninety-Five Theses

In 1517, the Augustinian monk, Martin Luther, nailed ninety-five *Theses* arguing for reformation of the Catholic religion to the door of Wittenberg cathedral. He called for a return to the sources of the Holy Scriptures, seeing the Catholic tradition as an arbitrary distortion of the Gospel message. He declared his lack of faith in the devotional practices of Catholicism, such as indulgences, and bitterly condemned the customs of nepotism and simony. The Roman church, after trying in vain to command Luther to retract, pronounced a papal ban on him. However his *Theses* spread like wildfire in the German nation and among the German princes.