

# Martin Luther's 95 Theses

Although he was a Catholic monk and then a priest, Martin Luther soon realized that he had many issues with the leadership and traditions of the Catholic Church. At the age of 39, Martin Luther developed an enormous list of things he found wrong with Catholicism. This list was nailed to the door of a local Catholic Church building. The 95 Theses, as the list came to be called, were spread all over Germany with the help of the printing press, a recent German invention. Catholic leaders back in Rome were furious.

## (Some of) Luther's 95 Theses (paraphrased):

*21 Preachers who say indulgences save you are dead wrong*

*28 The phrase: "When the coin in the coffer rings, the soul from purgatory springs" is false*

*37 You can have Christ's blessing without a pope or his blessing*

*46 Giving money to the poor is better than buying an indulgence*

*48 Pray for the rich pope instead of giving him your money!*

*50 Investing in people is better than investing in buildings*

*53 You're God's enemy if you preach indulgences instead of the Bible*

*68 Indulgences & pardons is nothing compared to Jesus' work on the cross*

*75 You're crazy if you think popes forgive things like 'violating Virgin Mary'*

*86 The pope is Europe's richest man, why use money from poor Christians to build St. Peter's church. He should use his own money!*

*94 Christians should follow Jesus, first & foremost [not popes]*

*95 Christians, rest assured that you will be at peace in heaven after you die, don't worry about trials or purgatory*

1) Which points from the 95 Theses address the topic of money?  
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2) How does Luther criticize the way the Pope and the Catholic Church handle money?  
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3) According to Luther, how does Jesus compare to the Pope?  
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4) How does he critique the use of indulgences?  
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5) What can be gathered regarding Luther's ideas about heaven or the afterlife (cite the numbers)?  
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