Reconceptualising the Lessons from Martin Luther's Reformation for the Pentecostal Movements in Southwest, Nigeria

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Abstract
The Protestant Reformation was a religious reform movement that swept through Europe in the 1500s. It precipitated a chain of events that occasioned the missionary zeal of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The influence of the Reformation over every subsequent movement in Christendom is definitive, formative, and fundamental. As a result, scholarly volumes and research on the Reformation and its attending implications have never been in short supply from the fifteenth century till date. In the contemporary context, studies on Luther's Reformation are burgeoning. However, in the African Christian context studies examining the implications of Luther's Reformation on specific denominations with the thesis on the need for reforming the Christian faith are scant and hard to come by. This paper therefore attempts to reconceptualise the lessons of Martin Luther's Reformation in the context of Pentecostal movements in southwestern Nigeria. Using historical and analytical approaches, the paper gives a chronological analysis of Martin Luther's Reformation, its underpinning theologies and the implication for contemporary Pentecostal movement in southwestern Nigeria. The paper argues that reconceptualizing the lessons of reformation into the socio-religious terrain of Nigerian Pentecostal Movements entails refocusing the attention of the church to the core issues of reformation which essentially is the return to true Apostolic Christianity.

Key Words: *Martin Luther, Reformation, Protestant Churches, Pentecostal Movement, Southwest Nigeria***.**

Introduction

Protestant Reformation was a religious reform movement that swept through Europe in the 1500s which ensued in the creation of a branch of Christianity called Protestantism, a name used collectively to refer to the many religious groups that separated from the Roman Catholic Church due to differences in doctrine.[i] The Reformation was the basis for founding Protestantism.[ii] It led to the reformation of basic tenets of Christian beliefs and divided Western Christendom between the Roman Catholic and the new Protestant tradition.[iii] The reformation's impact swept through the world with far-reaching implications. Of all the factors, other than religious ones which prepared for the Reformation, the great movement called the Renaissance was the chief. It was not a religious movement, but it prepared the way for the Reformation by opening men's minds and breaking the shackles for centuries.

John Turner, in one of his teachings with his congregation at the Lutheran Church Missouri in the year 2017, during the celebration of the 500th anniversary of the beginning of the Reformation, said that in October 31st, 1517 in Wittenberg, Germany, Martin Luther, a Dominican Friar, posted his thoughts about some theological topics and the practices of the church, and said, that simple action began the reformation - that is, a movement that changed

the western society.[iv] The emergence of reformation, however, was about 500 years ago in the 16th century. It can also be called the Protestant Reformation.[v]

It is historically documented that in 2017, 500 years after the event, the anniversary of the event – Reformation was celebrated worldwide, of which Nigeria was inclusive. From every indication, the Protestant movements in Nigeria benefited immensely from Luther's reformation. Given this, however, the question one needs to ask now is – does the Martin Luther Reformation bring Christianity and development to Nigeria? On this, Emeka affirmed that 'there seems to be a huge gap between the Reformation which started in the late fourteen century and culminated in 1517 when Martin Luther nailed his 95 theses to the door of Wittenberg church and the 19th and 20th-century Christian missionary movement that led to the planting of Christianity in Nigeria.[vi] He asserts that as a result of the historical gap of 300 to 400 years, it could not have been the Reformation that stirred the missionary zeal of the eighteenth century, that the zeal came spontaneously.[vii]

However, the Reformation precipitated a chain of events that occasioned the missionary zeal of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. From the historical point of view, it may be adjudged that without the definitive change orchestrated by the Reformation in the fifteenth century, missionary endeavours might not occur. The influence of the Reformation over every subsequent movement in Christendom is definitive, formative, and fundamental. As a result, scholarly volumes and research on the Reformation and its attending implications have never been in short supply from the fifteenth century till date. In the contemporary context, studies on Luther's Reformation are burgeoning. However, in the African Christian context studies examining the implications of Luther's Reformation on specific denominations with the thesis on the need for reforming the Christian faith are scant and hard to come by.

Moreover, despite the historical gap between the Reformation, emergence and evolvement of Protestant movements, especially Pentecostalism, the lessons and implications of the Reformation and its ideas are germane and crucial for the continual sustainability and relevance of the Pentecostal movement, especially in Nigeria.[viii] This paper therefore attempts to reconceptualise the lessons of Martin Luther's Reformation in the context of Pentecostal movements in southwestern Nigeria.

Concept of Reformation

The etymological root of the word "reformation" can be traced to the Latin verb "*reformare*" from which the English word was derived. This Latin term occurred only twice in the Latin translation of the Bible.[ix] Untung and Khoirunisa define "the Reformation was a grand act of emancipation from spiritual tyranny and a vindication of the sacred rights of conscience in matters of religious belief."[x] Gonzalez defines it may be defined as the religious revolution that took place in the Western church in the 16th century.[xi] Faber maintains that the sixteenth-century reformation was an act of God to restore the honour of His name.[xii]

However, the term 'reformation' was commonly used in the sphere of law, society, and church during the Middle Ages. For instance, Faber asserts that amendments and applications of legal regulations were tagged "reformations." In social life, the term meant renewal or revival of lost values. In the Church, "reformation" meant institutional change; often such change occurred following a decision of a Council. The sixteenth-century reformation was therefore a historical event that is a result of long-aged agitation for renewals and reforms in the Christian Church. Faber termed this form of reformation as 'radical reformation.'[xiii] He also goes on to examine other levels of reformation such as 'counter-reformation' and 'second reformation.' These

other levels are beyond the scope of this paper. In this paper, reformation "may be defined as the religious revolution that took place in the Western church in the 16th century." It led to the creation of several radical and moderate folds within Christianity such as Lutherans, Calvinists, Puritans, Anabaptists, Anglicans, and others.[xiv]

Historical Background to Martin Luther's Reformation

In some quarters, the emergence of the sixteenth-century Reformation has been attributed to divine providence among the Protestants. Such a claim may be considered naive when one gives due consideration to the historical background of events that led to the watershed split of the Western Catholic Church.[xv] Wirring writes that the "world of the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries was one in which concepts, governments and societal changes occurred at a drastic pace with the new replacing the old"[xvi] and as such Luther, along with the rest of the society at the time, lived in an almost perpetual state of struggle, challenge and adaption. Such a world provided the appropriate context for the germination of the Reformation idea.

The preceding age before the Reformation age, the medieval era was a closed society dominated by feudalism and the Catholic Church and its priesthood in Western Europe. The Church was a focal point of life and touched every aspect of people's lives from birth to death. The late Middle Ages witnessed significant developments which prepared the ground for the reformers. According to Vargas, though reformation seemingly occurred at the right time with the appropriate context, several sociocultural changes and makeovers in Europe made it possible.[xvii] There was a radical reorganisation of the economic system following the devastating Black Death Plague that ravaged Europe between 1347 and 1351. This reorganisation put Europe on different social footing that seemed to engender the reformation of the sixteenth century. In that context, Vargas notes that four notable social changes sum up Martin Luther's World's social and cultural context.

The first notable change was the explosion in population which gave rise to several towns and cities. With the growth of towns and cities, Europe was on its way to rising from the ashes of the great population and economic losses caused by the Black Death, economic dislocation, social upheaval and increased crime and violence that characterized the late Medieval Age. These growing cities became centres for development, social change and innovative ideas providing a platform for the Protestant Reformation to spread its cause.

However, Vargas's claim of population explosion has been challenged elsewhere. Alister McGrath opines that the population decline, occasioned by the Black Death Plague, created a favourable sociocultural context for the Reformation. The population decline led to a decrease in agrarian products as well as manufacturing.[xviii] This hastened the transmutation of the feudal fabric society. Landowners too were seriously affected by the fall in their revenues owing to Reformation and the declining rentals. In Western Germany, especially economic factors made the nobles more dependent on the territorial princes of Germany, whose authority was steadily increasing. Artisans and peasants were particularly affected by the low wages and high prices. These acute economic distress, disorientation and resentment found expression in the rational appeals of Martin Luther and Calvin.

Secondly, in contrast to the observation made above, Vargas notes that there was positive economic progress occasioned by the Renaissance.[xix] He points out that having initially emerged through the Renaissance and the Lombard cities in Italy, capitalism developed further during the Reformation, most particularly in its Calvinistic expression, inspired trade, and industry.[xx] David Calhoun notes, that no longer did prestige depend entirely upon one's name and ancestors. One's income now plays a role in status.[xxi] That change produced new centres

of influence, namely banks and bankers. They grew to play an important role in the history of Europe.

Third, the emergence of the Renaissance gave an intellectual and religious impetus to the propagation of the gospel of the Reformation. Vargas notes that the art of the Renaissance was highly instrumental in the propagation of the gospel of the Reformation.[xxii] Rather than depicting a spiritual ideal typical of medieval painting and sculpture, Renaissance portraits reflected reality while maintaining respect for their classical heritage. This served as an important vehicle to further inspire the desire for social change. This desire for change in every aspect of life was expressed aesthetically in artistic experimentation and innovation.

Fourth, one that has been given special attention by historians about the Protestant Reformation was the invention of the printing press. It was the culprit, so to speak, that was mainly responsible for the sudden spread of the cause of the Protestant faith at such an unprecedented speed. Had it not been due to Guttenberg's printing press, Luther's 95 Theses would not have been distributed to a great mass of people. Had it not been due to this very important invention, the Reformation would not have shaken the very foundation of the Church of Rome. Had it not been for this technology, the writings of Luther and the other reformers in the common language of the people would never have impacted the European nation-states that eventually broke with the Church of Rome to establish their national churches. Such a social setting mentioned above along with the political context of the day in such a divinely appointed moment in history gave the Protestant Reformation a friendly environment to accomplish its God-given mandate to recover the light of the old-time gospel of Christ to dispel the darkness caused by the Medieval Church's departure from the biblical faith.

The Reformation was seen as the logical and inevitable consequence of the rise of humanism. By accepting the Renaissance, the papacy brought about its end as it led to an increase in intellectual activity with severe criticism. The ideas of the Renaissance accelerated the Reformation. Italian Humanism implicitly rejected the monastic virtues of renunciation and fostered secular attitudes. Thus, the Reformation arose, as Alister McGrath points out, from a complex heterogeneous matrix of social and ideological factors. The rise of nationalism, the growing political power of the south German states and the Swiss cities, the emergence of individual personalities, intellectual movements, and theological awareness at the time of growing crises in the church gave way to the Reformation movement, though it varied from one region to another.[xxiii]

Doctrines and Theologies of the Reformation

The Reformation movement was meant to correct the false doctrine and practices of the Catholic Church and deal with the doctrine of Justification. The doctrine of justification according to Martin Luther was that Jesus Christ our Lord and God died for our sins and was raised against our justification (Romans 3:24-25). He alone is the Lamb who takes away the sins of the world (John 1:20) and God has laid on Him the iniquity of us all (Isaiah 56:3). All have sinned and are justified freely without their merit, by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, in His blood (Roman 3:23-25).[xxiv] In all of these, Luther ended up saying justification is by faith, which is the relationship that deals with the Law and Gospel that was one of the components of his reformed theology with other theological issues of the doctrine of salvation by grace alone, through faith alone in Christ alone in the material principle upon which other principles rest.[xxv]

Luther emphasized clearly on the distinction between law and gospel that it was the starting point in the study of the scriptures, and that failing to distinguish properly between the law and gospel was at the root of man fundamental theological errors[xxvi] in which the catholic church did not understand. Luther's interpretation of justification therefore was entirely the work of God. He believed that believers are made righteous through the infusion of God's grace into the soul. Furthermore, he said, Christians received the righteousness did not only come from Christ and remain outside of us, but best is also merely imputed to us (rather than infused into us) through faith. He said that was why faith alone makes someone just and fulfils the law.[xxvii] He went further to say that faith is that which brings the Holy Spirit through the merit of Christ.[xxviii] Besides the above, there are five *Solas* of Luther's reformation which distinguished Martin Luther and his followers from the teachings of the Papacy are:

i. **Sola Scripture:** According to Luther, the Sola scriptura principle was the conciliation that all Church traditions, creeds, and teachings must be in unity with the divinely inspired word of God, and all believers are equal before it.[xxix] Apostle Paul said, all scripture is breathed out by God. Matthew Barrett in his essay wrote that scripture alone is our infallible inerrant authority.[xxx] He said, as the Holy Spirit carried along the biblical authors, he ensured that their human words reflected his body character; hence scripture is truth because God Himself is truth. It is after all God's word. However, this principle teaches that in the end, other authorities in the Christian life serve underneath scripture, while scripture alone rules over other authorities for it alone in God the inspired inerrant and sufficient word.[68]

ii. **Sola Gratia:** The Sola Gratia principles – meaning that – grace alone for salvation, not grace with merits, remind us of the depth of God's Love manifested in unmerited favour. He grants to those created in His image. Luther was saying here that the law is divine and holy. He said, Let the law have its glory, but yet no law, be it never so divine and holy, out to teach us that we are justified, and shall live through it. Luther followed the footsteps of Paul and preached grace convincingly like Paul did that his heavers asked. What shall we say to them? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? Sola Gratia, however, is not limited to our justification but spans all of Salvation from start to finish. The grace that saves us is according to John Newton amazing because it does not originate with us at all but stems from God's mercy in eternity.[xxxi] Paul said, God chose us in Him (Christ) before the foundation of the world (Eph.1: 4). The God who has chosen us by grace alone, is the one who alone can call us out of darkness into the light of His son (effectual calling; and raise us from spiritual death to spiritual life (regeneration). His grace is not synergistic as if it depends on our will for its success. No, it is modernistic for he alone works to bring us dead, lifeless sinners to new life in his son. Moreover, he alone can grant us the faith the believes and work such belief within us so that we embrace Christ as our savior and Lord. (Act 13:48-50).[xxxii]

iii. **Sola Fide:** Ellen White said that here, Luther was saying that justification by faith alone (not faith with works) was central to doctrine as it is to ours. She said that our only ground of hope is in the righteousness of Christ imputed to us and in that wrought by His Spirit working in and through us.[xxxiii]. She further states that, by His perfect obedience, He has made it possible for every human being to obey God's commandments when we submit ourselves to Christ, the heart is

united with His heart, the will is merged in His will, the mind becomes one with His mind, the thoughts are brought into captivity with Him; we live His life. This is what it means to be clothed with the garment of His righteousness, which is perfect obedience to the Law of Jehovah.[xxxiv] She maintained that according to Luther, the righteousness of Jesus Christ, the qualification to enter heaven in the model for the Pastor. Furthermore, the ministers must be converted before they can strengthen their congregation other than Christ and His righteousness. A reformation is needed among the people, but it should first begin its purifying work with the ministers. Luther emphasized that faith is the instrument through which we receive righteousness and close to God; He said through faith in Christ that blessed status in Christ, which God alone can give is reckoned to us· Luther ended this with the work of Paul who warned Christians that no one will be justified by works of the law; but through faith in Christ (Gal. 3:14).[xxxv]

iv. **Solus Christus:** Solus Christus asserts that a reformation Christian recognizes Christ as the only one who can offer eternal life and effect change. Paul in his days acknowledges that "for I know that in me – that is in my flesh, nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good, I do not find, for the good that I will do, I do not do; but the evil I will not do, that I practice. Ellen White, however, affirms that it is impossible for us, of ourselves, to escape from the pit of sin in which we are sunken …. education, culture, the exercise of the Will, and human effort, all have their proper sphere, but here they are powerless. They may produce an outward correctness of behaviour, but they cannot change from sin to holiness. That power in Christ. His grace alone·[xxxvi]

v. **Soli Deo Gloria:** The principle of Soli Deo Gloria states that (only God is worthy to be worshipped; and prayed to, not Spirit not angels, priests, or pastors) stands in opposition to the veneration of creatures instead of the creator. Since Salvation is solely the gift of God, Luther believed that no human being was worthy of such glory or praise. Instead of seeking popularity, power or prestige, pastors are called to validate their ministry by embracing the humility of Christ who, even though the only one entitled to be glorified, did not seek his glory.[xxxvii]

Contemporary State and Challenges of Pentecostalism in Southwest Nigeria

The current state of Pentecostalism in Nigeria, especially in southwestern Nigeria portends serious challenges to the purity of faith that early Pentecostals held. According to Ukpong, there are negative and dangerous impacts of Pentecostalism that show that the church needs reformation.

Clerical Flamboyancy

It seems that whenever and wherever there is a spiritual re-awakening, the clergy will take advantage economically. The material success of some Pentecostal ministers has created a kind of "ministerial jealousy" in Nigeria. The success and validity of ministers of God seem to be measured by their material flamboyancy. This cancer is eating deep into the fabric of Nigerian Christendom. The clergy are living far above many members of their congregations materially.

Achunike correctly observes: "Pentecostal flamboyant lifestyle affects priests and seminarians. This precisely because we belong to a flamboyant society, a society that worships wealth or money or possession."[xxxviii] The challenge of "living good and giving the best to God" encourages Pentecostalism, is having negative effects on the churches' policies concerning clerical remuneration, and thereby calls for a re-evaluation of the acceptable and dignified style of life by the clergies, in their witness to and identification with the Son of Man who had no place to lay his head (cfr. Luke 9,58).

Financial and material prosperity

The flamboyant lifestyle is not affecting the clergy only but is becoming a terrible virus among the laity too. Pentecostalism with the message of abundant life and blessing, is making material prosperity a yardstick of the divine favour. It is affirmed that whoever is poor, is a sinner and not born-again. It is the prosperity of members of a church that shows which church is worshipping God rightly. Therefore, it becomes pertinent for members to be prosperous and to abound in wealth as a testimony of divine encounter in the Church. Many Christians now consider their financial status seriously, and there is a terrible stigma about bankruptcy or financial brokenness. Nowadays, the popular slogans among Christians include: I can never be poor in Jesus' name;[xxxix] the God that lifted me will not let me down! To this end, people may likely go into all sorts of corrupt practices, devoid of Christian justice and integrity in as much as they maintain or improve upon their financial position.

Obsession with Monetary Solicitation

There is an obvious obsession with monetary solicitation within the Pentecostal churches. As a result of the continued socio-economic and contextual challenges in Nigeria, all sorts of offerings are now solicited in contemporary church spaces in Nigeria such as *Breakthrough offerings, Open Heaven offerings, Healing offerings, Deliverance offerings, My Tomorrow Shall be alright offerings, Let my People go offering, prophets offering* and so on. The obsession with pecuniary matters led to the negation of sound exegetical praxis by some Nigeria Pentecostal church leaders and the failure to learn from church history during the Dark Ages is an indication that there is the need for another reformation of the contemporary Nigeria Church scene.

Reconceptualising the Lessons of Reformation for Nigerian Pentecostal Movements

Reconceptualizing the lessons of reformation into the socio-religious terrain of Nigerian Pentecostal Movements entails refocusing the attention of the church to the core issues of reformation which essentially is the return to true Apostolic Christianity. True Apostolic Christianity emphasized the authority of the scripture, the necessity of personal salvation, and effective training for the works of ministry among other things**.** Essentially, one of the fundamental lessons of reformation is that it teaches a lesson in transformative grace. Martin Luther offers insight into the wonder of the transforming realities of the gospel when the claims of Christ are understood and embraced. It would seem that human nature has not been altered through what historians frequently have called centuries of progress. (In fact, advances in technology seem only to have brought into vivid relief the barbarous potential of human ingenuity.) The recognition of human blight is revealed frequently in the endless quest to dull tarnished dreams and painful memories.

Though Luther's struggles had more to do with a troubled conscience preventing acceptance by a holy and just God, he, like many today, found that the advice and instruction of his teachers did little to assuage the emptiness felt in the depths of his soul. When Luther prepared lectures at the University of Wittenberg, the light of the gospel gradually flooded his heart and mind.

An accomplished monk, and a devoted follower of the Christian disciplines, he discovered that God through Christ was not a wrathful judge, but a compassionate redeemer. Freedom from a guilty conscience was a gift purchased by Christ and granted as a gratuitous gift. And that forgiveness could not be earned or merited but was granted because Christ stood alone as the sinner's substitute and advocate. This is the old, old truth that is forever new to those who experience it for the first time (and return to it many times).

It is a result that personal salvation must be emphasised as sine qua non in the Church context. Salvation is different, and, in fact, unrelated to psychological conversion that is based on a peripheral response to an altar call, to receive a blessing from God. Learning from the Reformation of Luther, preachers should know and also teach that though salvation is by grace through faith in Jesus Christ, those whom they are preaching to must be made to understand that they must do away with their confessed and repented of sin.

Secondly, it can be seen from the Reformation that the depth of Luther's commitment to the life-changing gospel of redemption offers a model of discipleship that is timeless. The courage to present an unbending, unwavering witness to the absolute sufficiency of a Christ-wrought redemption, without the mudding mixture of complementary or any supplementary endeavours, stands as a sentinel for us to resist compromise so characteristic of the "Age of Tolerance" (perhaps more accurately, "the Age of Concession") promising the removal of the blight of obscurantism but threatening the diluting of the gospel of Jesus, the only and final redeemer.

He was a man of conviction who thought lightly of the opposition of his church or the power of the state to silence him. Standing before Charles V, the imperial emperor, he became an unflinching witness to the narrowness of truth. His words ring out in contrast to this century's morality of the impropriety of conviction, sadly propagated in our citadels of supposed academic freedom and commitment, as well as our religious schools that purpose to train leaders for tomorrow. "Unless I am convicted by Scriptures . . . I will not recant anything, for to go against conscience is neither right nor safe. Here I stand."

Subsequently at the Wartburg Castle where Luther was sequestered by Frederick the Wise for his protection, and where he translated the Greek New Testament into German, any lingering doubts fled when he observed smoke rising over the Thüringen Mountains from the burning of charcoal, only to be blown away by the wind. "So it is," he said, "the Lord removed my doubts." Oh! That our pulpits would be filled with those who would faithfully explain the claims and commands of Jesus. The conviction that Luther had stemmed from the word of God, and it is a veritable lesson that the contemporary Church should concentrate more on sound teaching of the word of God than the gyrations and worldliness that have characterized many Pentecostal and Charismatic churches, which the mainline churches are now adopting to keep their congregation.

Thirdly, Luther's Reformation should serve as a witness to us of the power of technology in setting forth the message of Christ. In that day, the cutting-edge tool was the printing press, the invention of typesetting and its development by John of Gutenberg in Mainz, Germany; in our day, we would likely call it the computer, the tablet, the smart phone. The possibility of access to information multiplied exponentially; actually, it exploded. His literary productivity was simply stupendous. In addition to the celebrated *Ninety-Five Theses*, Luther wrote a number of small pamphlets (his little work on prayer is a wonderful how-to guide); numerous book-length treatises, including the masterpiece, *The Bondage of the Will*; the translation of the Hebrew and

Greek Scriptures into German, merging the various regional dialects through careful word selection that created a unified national language; and a variety of catechisms (perhaps among the most treasured is the *Small Catechism* of 1527 for children). The collection of sermonic material is a treasure trove as well as his numerous commentaries. Most particularly the work on the Epistle to the Romans remains a classic. Though the medium for the dissemination of ideas has proliferated beyond the printed page, Luther remains a testimony to the power and importance found through the diffusion of ideas in the nurturing of the church.

Fourthly, we can also conceptualise the lesson of discipleship. When Luther came to the fledgling University of Wittenberg (established 1501) to take the position of lecturer on the Bible, initially preparing instruction on the Psalms, Galatians, and Romans, he entered the world of training the next generation of students, inspiring them to become leaders. He was a master-teacher. His instruction was not only his own path to a deepening understanding of truth, but it also aroused and guided many to emulate his passion for Christ and a free salvation through his atoning sacrifice.

Such inspiring insight caused some to pay the ultimate cost in martyrdom and many to be tireless advocates. In this regard, *Table Talks* provides indispensable insight into this competent, impassioned teacher. Luther brought light to the classroom and the classroom to life. Luther has left us both a legacy and a challenge in this regard, certainly for those who seek to teach in whatever capacity. Would that the spirit of Luther's giftedness in the classroom be emulated in among Pentecostal circles of today, crafting many zealous Jesus-followers.

Fifthly, there is the lesson of family life. While Luther hoped to secure a former nun, Katharina von Bora, as a wife for a colleague and former priest, eventually she married Luther himself. Luther commented that he married for reasons other than love, but he later confessed that he found it. He became a caring father. His home was not only blessed with children, but it was always filled with eager students at his table. Together they filled the Black Cloister, where they lived, with music and singing. Luther composed many songs to enhance private and public worship, including "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God." Katie became the industrious housewife as well as a constant comfort to her busy, often perplexed, Luther. Not all was bliss, however. Luther experienced great pain when he held his twelve-year-old daughter, Magdelena, in his arms as she died. Luther asked her if she was ready to meet her heavenly Father and she answered affirmatively. Luther later said, "Why am I so sad when she now shines as the stars of heaven?" He was a man of remarkable compassion, and his home became a model of the grace of God as well as the blessings and sanctity of marriage and children.

Finally, Pentecostal Pastors can learn from Luther the lesson through imperfection. While Luther is an imposing colossus who singularly shaped the Protestant tradition in many commendable ways, he is also a witness that strengths come with weaknesses. Assuredly, he was a man of courage and conviction, willing to endanger life and health to bring about a revitalization of both church and society. However, his weaknesses became far too evident when Martin Bucer of Strasbourg sought to bring unity to the Protestant movement in 1529 by merging the reform movement in northern Germany with the German-speaking Swiss of Zurich. Though national animosities did exist, they became evident in a clash over theology, specifically the last controverted point that, had they agreed, would have brought unity instead of fracturing to the nascent movement. Sadly, the issue was the Lord's Table, but the deeper issue was a clash of perspectives between Luther and Zwingli. Luther showed himself to be obstinate, provincial, calloused, and blind to the enormous implications of the moment.

Therefore, Pentecostal ministers should watch out for spiritual pride that could leave them exposed and vulnerable.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Through the long centuries of Christian witness, there have been a few that not only impacted their world throughout their lives (the choices they made, the words they wrote and spoke, the immediate influence they exerted), but have continued to do so, shaping our understanding of the faith, promoting the Christian virtues, and inspiring self-sacrifice. Certainly, this veritable "Hall of Fame" contains Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, John Calvin, John Wesley, William Carey, Hudson Taylor, and Karl Barth. The influence of these men, and many more, continues to shape and encourage us. Among these many, Martin Luther is a luminary.

In view of what has been discussed so far, it is recommended that the church should train her minister for effective ministerial work. The era of 'God called me and quickly resorting to building a tent for meeting is over if spiritual and ethical growth of the church must be sustained. Secondly, the church must pay attention to her public image. As it stands currently, the image of the church in terms of morality is disheartening. If the church cannot deal with the rot within, there is serious doubt that it can influence the society for the better. Morality is the perfect picture of the church within and without. Lastly, the bible must be returned to the centre of the church's activities. While other method can assist, they are precisely for a shallow purpose. A long-lasting revival in history has been based on the Bible.

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