

Hist/HRS 127: Questions for Luther Essay

Spring 2014

Write about a 3-page essay on **one** of the following questions. Focus on answering the question. Do not tell a story.

Your essay should be based primarily on the Marty, 'Luther' book. You may use other sources; be sure to include them in your bibliography.

Use some sort of standard reference form, which must include a bibliography and a sensible reference system for quotations, paraphrases, or other cases of intimate reliance on the Marty book. Do not plagiarize material from any source. Include in your essay at least six (6) page references from the Marty book, to indicate to me that you have read the book.

The purpose of the essay is two-fold: write an interesting, well-grounded essay; and show me that you have read the book!

1. Describe the psychological and spiritual crisis that Martin Luther went through between about 1505 and 1517 and how he resolved it. What do works, faith, Luther's image of God, and his feelings about the Church have to do with it? What were his *Anfechtungen*? How did his reading of *Romans* show him the way out? Was Luther a neurotic man?
2. Using the Marty book as your source, summarize the differences and the similarities between Luther's doctrinal positions and those of the Catholic church around 1525. You might focus on: the superior role of the clergy and the papacy; justification through 'faith not without works'; *scriptura sola*; and the role and nature of the sacraments. Make reference also to some of the things he agreed on with the church.
3. In the beginning of his revolt Luther seemed still unsure how to organize his church of believers. Illustrate how Luther "caught in the middle" between the Catholic Church and the "radicals" (Karlstadt, Zwingli, the Swiss, the "Saints") by the mid 1520s. What was the consequence of this situation on his concept of the organization of the new Church? What was the "territorial church"? Show how he became reliant on the German princes.