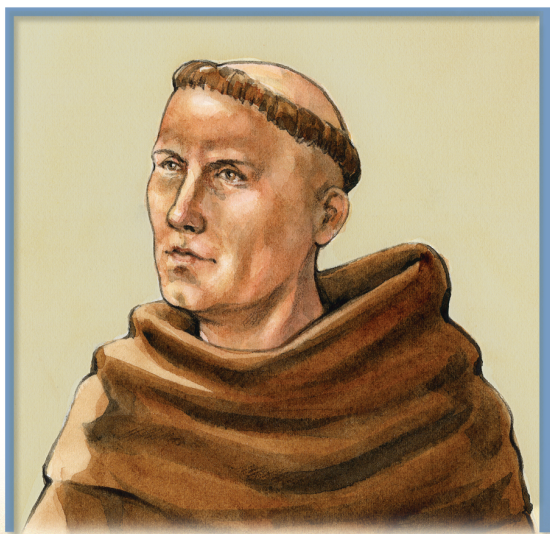


Martin Luther

Hero of Faith



By Edward C. Grube

Illustrated by Deborah J. White



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Martin Luther



◆ ◆ ◆ foreword

The life and work of Martin Luther is well documented and well speculated. Separation of fact from popular legend is the work of Luther scholars, and we gratefully acknowledge their efforts.

This biography borrows from the concept that created Table Talk, a collection of casual but significant conversations that occurred around Luther's dinner table. In creating *Lunch with Luther*, the author begs indulgence (forgive me!) as he places Dr. Luther as a guest at a Lutheran school lunch table. Fiction creeps into the scenarios, but only as a device to contextualize Luther's wisdom. These pages portray Luther as a person who would interact with people today, just as he did in his Table Talk experiences. The biography is not chronological, but instead reflects a random scattering of questions and conversation that might guide the conversation among Luther and several students.

You will read the words of a narrator—an imaginary student who guides the discourse—

along with questions and comments of other imaginary children. Special thanks go to Renee Grube and her students at Concord Lutheran School in Bensenville, Illinois, who helped me to think like a student in Luther's company.

A foreword for students appears in the opening paragraphs of the biography.

Edward C. Grube





95 THESES

THESE 1. L'homme est un être libre.
THESE 2. L'homme est un être responsable.
THESE 3. L'homme est un être social.
THESE 4. L'homme est un être rationnel.
THESE 5. L'homme est un être sensible.
THESE 6. L'homme est un être spirituel.
THESE 7. L'homme est un être créatif.
THESE 8. L'homme est un être durable.
THESE 9. L'homme est un être engagé.
THESE 10. L'homme est un être solidaire.



day one

The World of Martin Luther

Older students like you aren't often asked to use your imagination. But if you can dream a little, it may help you understand the world-class genius Martin Luther. Many books tell about Luther's work, and authors have written fine biographies of his life. You may even want to read one or more of them after you meet Dr. Luther.

Yes, imagine you are meeting Martin Luther in person. He decided to visit your school. Would you invite him to eat lunch with you? You might be relieved that he isn't visiting religion class or sitting next to you in chapel. You might expect him to want to hear you confess a flawless Apostles' Creed or to sing one of his famous hymns from memory! But, he just wants to talk. He wants you to ask questions. He wants to share his knowledge, his stories, his humor, and most of all, his faith. Some of his best teaching happened around a crowded dinner table.

By the way, sometimes you'll hear Luther mix in a German word or two as he speaks. Oh, and what should you call him? It is proper to address him as Dr. Luther, because his university studies earned him the right to be called *doctor*, as you might call a teacher at a college today. You can call him *reverend* or *pastor* too. Not only did he teach about the Bible, but he also was pastor of a church.

Well, let's get back to you and Luther and lunch. Imagine that Luther takes you aside and quietly asks about the lunch menu. "You don't suppose, *mein Freund*, that your cooks have prepared some sausages and crusty rye bread, do you?"

You might be happy that he called you his friend, and you certainly don't want to disappoint such an important and friendly guest. What can you offer that might even come close to his beloved sausages and rye bread? Maybe he could learn to like hot dogs on a bun.

As you lead Luther to your table, you ask, "What food did you enjoy when you were young?"

Maybe Luther could learn to like hot dogs on a bun.



“My family began with very little. My parents were careful and tried to save. We moved when I was about one year old so my father could buy a copper mine and earn a better living. It’s hard to remember way back then, but families like ours often ate cheap pork along with dark bread and turnips.



Sometimes we ate porridge, a thick soup made of oats boiled in water. Not exactly hot dogs on a bun, *ja*? But you know what I really remember about our family meals? I remember my brother Jacob sitting next to me. Ah, dear Jacob loved me, and I loved him. Don’t you think that meals with people you love are always good meals?

“Oh, but you asked about food. As my father began to make more money, our food improved. Germany had fine fields for growing grains to make bread, and there were pastures for raising cattle. Only the nobles in their castles had what

you would call fine dining. Yet, God provided the food we needed. I didn't really enjoy food until Katie and I were married.

“We did not have refrigerators, so much of what we ate was smoked, pickled, or salted. *Ach du lieber!* I mean, oh, my dear! Salted herring! I fondly remember the first time I met Katie. You know, she had quite an adventure with fish barrels. *Jawohl!* She and some other nuns escaped from a convent. They hid in a wagon transporting fish barrels, from which salted herring was sold! Can you imagine that?”



“The meals I remember best were during the days that Katie, our children, many guests, and I lived in a building called the Black Cloister, in Wittenberg, Germany, a small town on the Elbe River. The cloister



My visit with you reminds me of those days.

was a wedding gift to us. We partied! Katie always made enough to eat, even though we never knew how many students from my university would show up. Some even lived with us. Besides the students,



our Black Cloister was like a hotel, where visitors stopped to hear my stories and my teachings. We enjoyed laughter and learning and God's grace, along with meat and potatoes, cider and beer. My

visit with you reminds me of those days."

Many fascinating facts—and a few legends too—surround Luther's life. His greatest discovery was how we are saved. After you spend some time with Dr. Luther on these

pages, you might want to read *Luther: Biography of a Reformer* by Frederick Nohl—but not during lunch!

We will do lunch again tomorrow. Luther will be pleased to answer your questions. Invite your friends!

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Rosa Young



Rosa stopped and looked out at the sea of white.



chapter one

Into the Cotton Fields

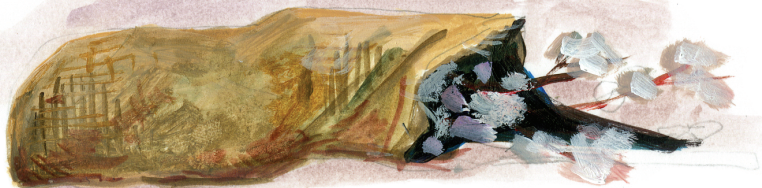
Rosa ran out to her family's cotton fields, just past their home deep in the woods of rural Alabama. It was 1897, and everyone she knew grew cotton. On this warm November day, she was proud to help with her first cotton harvest. She hurried because she didn't want her older brothers to get too far ahead.

At the edge of the field, the seven-year-old stopped and looked out at the sea of white. Just days ago, it had been an ordinary field of knee-high green plants. Suddenly, with enough sun and dry weather, the cotton bolls had popped open, turning it into a field of white. It reminded her of that verse her Daddy liked to preach: "Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest" (John 4:35b KJV).

A mighty will made up for Rosa's small size. When her father tried to give her a child-size sack to fill, she said quietly but firmly: "I'm no baby, Daddy."

"All right, Rosa Jinsey Young, here's your Big Girl bag," he said, smiling.

Rosa crisscrossed the big burlap bag over her tiny shoulders. She wondered how she would ever fill it. But she had begged her father to let her come—he had wanted her to wait a year before working in the fields—so she wasn't about to complain.



She had watched her brothers pick cotton whenever she had brought them water. She was sure she knew what to do: you pull the white fluffy cotton boll out of the pod. Here, her small size was an advantage: she didn't have to bend over the plants like her father and brothers.

But she also didn't have their rock-hard calloused fingers. Whenever she reached into the rough brown shell to pull out the cotton boll, one of the ragged edges scratched her finger. She bit her lip to keep from crying out, but no matter how carefully she picked, she couldn't keep the pods from slicing her fingertips.

As the autumn sun rose higher, the bag got heavier and heavier. Her fingers were throbbing with dozens of tiny cuts. Pushing back the tears, she kept picking, even though her brothers were so far ahead she couldn't see them. Her breath grew short as she tugged the heavy bag and wiped the sweat from her face, smearing the black dirt from the fields across her forehead. She was tired, but she would not give up.

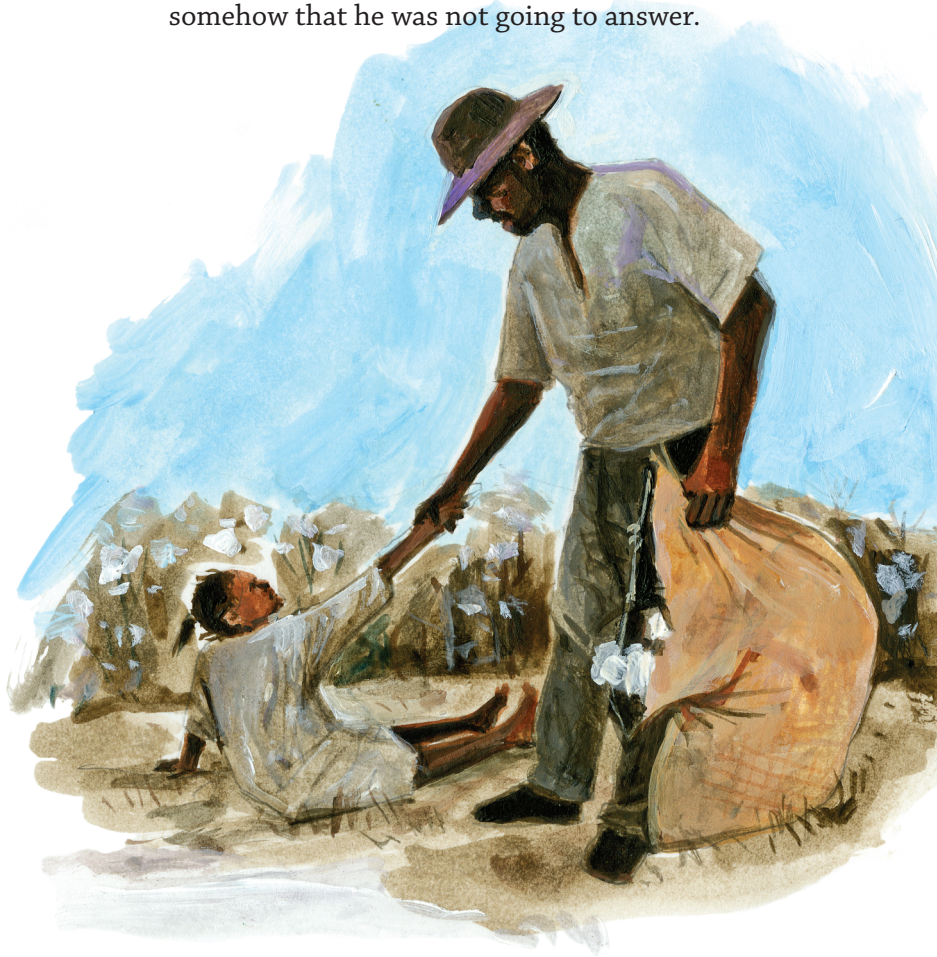
She decided to distract herself with her favorite daydream: she's standing in front of a group of little children and teaching them to read. Rosa had never been to school, but she had the dream that someday she could teach her people to read, like her daddy was teaching her.

"Rosa, Rosa," her father called to her. Rosa had passed out in the field. She came to as her father picked her up, along with her half-filled bag of cotton. To her it had seemed so heavy, but he lifted it like it was filled with feathers.

Before she could protest, her father hushed her. "You did fine for a first try. Let's go get you some water and some rest."

On the way back to the house, Rosa reached across her father's back to give him a hug. She

felt a strange bump. It was long, snaking all the way across his back. She reached down farther, there was another one. “Daddy?” she said, knowing somehow that he was not going to answer.



“You did fine for a first try. Let’s go get you some water and rest.”

Johann Sebastian Bach





hero of
Faith

*Sebastian's father, Ambrosius,
taught him to play the violin.*

◆ ◆ ◆
chapter two

Sebastian's Childhood

When he turned eight years old, Sebastian's parents sent him to the same grade school in Eisenach that Martin Luther had attended. Those early days in school were happy ones! Young Sebastian started to read. He learned arithmetic, studied the Bible and the catechism, and played during recess. And he loved to make music with his classmates. At home, his father, Ambrosius, taught him how to play the violin.

But the good times did not last long. Two tragedies struck while Sebastian was still quite young. When he was nine years old, his mother died. Then the next year, while he was still feeling sad and missing his mother, his father passed away too. Losing his mother and father while so young affected Sebastian throughout his life. He would make sure his own family felt loved and cared for.

After his parents died, Sebastian went to live with his older brother, 24-year-old Johann Christoph, who already cared for a young family of his own. They lived in the city of Ohrdruf, not far from Eisenach.

Johann Christoph Bach was also a musician (no surprise there!). He taught school and served as organist at St. Michael's Lutheran Church in Ohrdruf. To help provide for his family, Christoph also tuned and repaired organs. Sebastian's older brother treated Sebastian like a son. Christoph even continued the music education Sebastian had begun with their father. He taught Sebastian to play the organ, the **clavichord**, and the **harp-sichord**. Sebastian showed intense interest in music and discovered early that he had a special talent.

Christoph once described some music as too difficult for young Sebastian, and he would not allow his younger brother to practice it. So, for almost six months, Sebastian would get out of bed late at night and sneak into the room where the music was hidden. By moonlight, he slowly made his own copy. Sebastian could not resist the opportunity to learn new music!

His brother had Sebastian help him fix and tune organs. Sebastian continued to use this skill throughout his life, not only to make extra money, but also to help design new organs for churches.

Although Sebastian greatly missed his mom and dad, he enjoyed life in his brother's home. But as time went by, Christoph's family got larger, and soon there was no room for Sebastian. Only five years after his parents' deaths, Sebastian's life was about to change again.

*By moonlight, Sebastian slowly
made his own copies.*



Katharina von Bora

Hero of Faith



By Jane L. Fryar

Illustrated by Deborah J. White



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Katharina von Bora



Katie said good-bye and they were off.



chapter one

Changed forever

Katie felt hot tears well up in her eyes as her father's horses trotted down the bumpy dirt road, taking her farther from home than she had ever been before. Sitting in the wagon next to Papa, she had always felt safe. Leaving the von Bora family estate near Hirschfeld had always been an adventure. Not today.

Today, Katie had said good-bye to her brothers, her stepmother, and her stepbrothers. Today, Katie had heard her family's big wooden front door close tight behind her for the last time. The wagon creaked as Papa hoisted six-year-old Katharina von Bora up into her seat. It creaked again as he had come around to the other side of the wagon and clambered up to sit beside her. He flicked the reins, and they were off.

It was late summer. The wagon lumbered past the garden where Katie had helped to plant cabbages and pull weeds. It took Katie past the village church where she had been baptized, its whitewashed walls gleaming in the morning sun.

Later in her life, people would call Katie tough and persistent. She had to be. Her mother, Anna von Haugwitz, died when Katie was five. Her papa, Hans von Bora, struggled to keep his little family going. But before long, he knew he must marry again—both for the sake of his children and because he needed help farming the family estate.

That's why, only a few months after her mother's death, Katie found herself welcoming her stepmother, Margarete von Seidewitz, into the von Bora home. And it's why six-year-old Katie sat in Papa's wagon that day in 1505, headed for the convent school that would be her new home.


The once-proud von Bora family had fallen on hard times. They weren't the only ones. The late 1400s and early 1500s brought many tumultuous changes all over Europe. The feudal system with its knights and lords, its manor houses and nobility, was ending. A merchant class, funded by bankers and spurred on by explorers, was rising in its place.





*Her mother, Anna von Haugwitz,
died when Katie was five.*





Christopher Columbus had “sailed the ocean blue” for the first time in 1492—seven years before Katie’s birth on January 29, 1499. His voyages had encouraged others to set off in search of fame and fortune. Before this time, people bartered for what they needed. Now, more and more, they were using money instead of trading goods and services.

Katie’s ancestors would not have recognized this new world. Gone were the serfs—the bond servants who once helped farm the von Bora property. Gone was the glory of that estate. Once upon a time, the “von” in Hans von Bora’s name had reminded the world of the family’s noble, knightly bloodline. Now, it reminded Katie’s papa of how far the family’s fortunes had fallen.

Still, they had their land. It was one of the few things people could count on. If you had land, you could grow food. Land and the buildings on it provided shelter. And owning land meant social status.