

[Click here for 'Libel Against Luther'](#)

How Luther Reformed Marriage and the Family

Martin Luther, the German Reformer, is generally remembered as the theological professor, the Bible translator,

While still a celibate priest, Luther wrote extensively on marriage. He saw marriage as an institution in as

Martin Luther was a leading defender of the dignity of teaching and the foundation of the family (and his persia



On 13 June 1525 Martin Luther and Katherine von Bora were married. They provided the first Protestant example of a pastoral family.

For a thousand years, the single, celibate life had been upheld as the Christian ideal. Sex, though grudgingly permitted inside marriage, was not to be enjoyed. As the Church father, Jerome, declared in the 4th century: *"Anyone who is too passionate a lover with his own wife is himself an adulterer."* Augustine advocated sexual relations within marriage to be without emotion and primarily for procreation. A catechism of the Catholic Church written in 1494, applies the third deadly sin (impurity) to married people enjoying sex within marriage.

Martin Luther, however, declared war on Greek philosopher Aristotle's depiction on women as "*botched males*"

. Luther also criticised Jerome, Cyprian, Augustine, Gregory and other Church fathers for "*never having written anything good about marriage.*"

Luther and the first generation of Protestant Reformers rejected this tradition of over a thousand years, of ascetic sexuality - in both their theology and their lives. The Reformers rejection of the celibate ideal of the Middle Ages was as great a revolution in the home as their teachings were in the Church. Luther literally transferred the praises and esteem that Christians had traditionally heaped upon the celibate monks and nuns, to marriage and the home.

Luther described marriage as the only institution where a chaste life could be maintained. He insisted

"Marriage pervades the whole of nature that nothing is so good as marriage and it is everywhere, and it is the best of all measures and it is the best of all things."

Luther actively encouraged fathers to remove their daughters from convents. Protestant towns and territories

Luther had a high regard for the ability of women to shape society by moulding its youth and civilising its



After supper the Luther family sang hymns together as part of their family devotions.



Luther gave high priority to Scripture memorisation and learning the Catechism by children.



On one occasion, desperate for some peaceful study, Luther locked himself in his study for three days, until Katie forced the door off its hinges!



Luther wrote that you can learn more from one prayer than from much reading and speculation.



Luther and fellow translators working on the German translation of the Bible.

Ullrich, R. (2015). The Reformation: How the Protestant Revolution Shaped the World. New York: HarperCollins.



A draft of "A Mighty Fortress is Our God" in Luther's handwriting



Johan Kepler was the founder of physical astronomy



John Calvin



John Bunyan — author of *Pilgrim's Progress in the Bedford Jail*.



William Farel preaching in a marketplace in Switzerland.



Oil painting in the Lusanne Palace of Justice - Lady Justice holding the scales of evidence points to an open Bible as containing the principles for all law.

~~the Bible as containing the principles for all law.~~