

Focus On Good Qualities

Luther is a towering figure in the world of religious history. He confronted the Babylon of Rome by posting his *95 Theses*. As Apostolics we probably do not fully understand the historical impact of that singularly courageous act. But neither should we discount nor ignore it. Although we do not believe Luther was saved; and we are not Lutherans in any sense of the word, we must not altogether ignore history.

Luther is a complex individual; he became increasingly anti-semitic as he got older. This no doubt contributed to what happened much later in German history concerning the Jews in WWII. There are other very negative historical facts about Luther that are repugnant and distasteful.

But some qualities garnered him millions of followers. He had a passion that surpasses what is common. He was immensely courageous and mighty with the pen. He is not our hero, but let us not overlook the positive forces of how he and others have tremendously impacted history.

Is passivity a problem in our present hour? It wasn't a problem with the reformers. The following is about Luther:

Luther

“Of the character of the great leader of this revival little need be added. We see at once how he differs from those great leaders whose life and work we have already considered. Francis was a poet; Savonarola was a preacher; Luther was both; but in addition, there was his broad and massive personality. About him there was something elemental, something of that volcanic energy which we connect in our minds with the forces of nature. ‘I am rough, boisterous, stormy, and altogether warlike,’ he says of himself. ‘I am born to fight against innumerable monsters and devils. I must remove stumps and stones, cut away thistles and thorns, and clear

the forests.’ In the hour of battle Luther’s voice is like a hurricane; he gathers the fury of the tempest around him, and shakes the earth with the fury of his indignation. ‘Courage,’ he cries to his enemies, ‘swine that you are! Burn me then, if you can and dare. Here I am; do your worst upon me. Scatter my ashes to all the winds—spread them through all the seas. My spirit shall pursue you still. Living, I am the foe of the Papacy; and dead, I will be its foe twice over. Hogs of Thomists! Luther shall be the bear in your way—the lion in your path...’” (James Burns, *Revivals: Their Laws And Leaders*, Grand Rapids, Michigan: 1960, 201; Excerpt from Chapter IV, Luther and the Revival in Germany)

Does timidness stop the pen from writing, or stop us from teaching Bible studies, or from witnessing? Good qualities produce good results. Bad qualities produce disastrous results. Do not allow bad qualities to destroy, nullify, or hamper our efforts to fulfill our purpose and duty to God.

There is an aggressive, non-stop, no-time-wasting, non-negotiating, no-back-peddling, but constant assertive push and drive that each reformer possessed. We would do well to have the same qualities. As Apostolics we must reach our world with boldness and not let timidness nor other negative factors hamper our efforts.

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