Compass Life Adult Sunday School

Pastor Pete

May 31, 2020

**“The Men Behind Luther and the Reformation”**

**Frederick the Elector of Saxony (1463-1525)**

**I. Frederick III “The Early Years”**

Born January 17, 1463 in Torgau, Saxony; Frederick was the first son of the eldest Wettin, Elector Ernest of Saxony. Frederick’s line is paternally connected to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, current Queen of England. Ernst and his brother, Albert, had in 1485 divided Saxony into two territories, ducal Albertine Saxony and electoral Ernestine Saxony. This was called the Leipzig \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of Saxony. Remember it is important to note that Ernestine Saxony had the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ vote and Albertine Saxony did not. Receiving an education suitable to the son of a dynastic family, which meant rigorous lessons in the \_\_\_\_\_\_ language. Ernst had met with Pope Sixtus IV in Rome and was unable to converse with him because he did not understand Latin. In 1484 both Frederick’s mother and his brother Albert died from a second wave of the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. His father Ernst the Elector dies two years later in a hunting accident, where his horse crushes him to death. In a space of two years the 23 year old Frederick lost both of his parents and a brother, and according to the Leipzig Division of Saxony he would succeed his father in 1486 as the Elector. Though he had aims of increasing the political and geographical reach of his territory, he was not able to encroach upon either Albertine Saxony, ruled by his cousin George, or the Empire, governed by the Habsburg prince, Maximilian I. The Saxon lands were immensely wealthy due to the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of the Erzgebirge Mountains, but due to their status as a latecomer to the Empire and their location on the fringes of the imperial north, the significance of the territory was limited. However, Frederick was able to make a great deal of money charging rent to nobles, controlling the trade roads and charging tolls and tariffs for access and safe conduct through the land. A laborer in Saxony would receive 20 Guldens/year while the State of Saxony was taking in over \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ guldens/year for Frederick! Frederick loved German Proverbs and the one he cherished the most became a motto for his leadership: “One who has to watch over territory and people cannot sleep the entire night!

**II. Moving the Capital to Wittenberg**

Ernestine Saxony’s greatest flaw was it lacked a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ for its kingdom. There needed to be a city with a Grand Residence, a major University and a Religious center. Wittenberg is located in the heart of Saxony on the northern shore of the \_\_\_\_ River. By 1350 it was a walled in city with a castle, a castle church, a town church and a Franciscan monastery. When Frederick began his rule in 1486, the chapel still contained a collection of \_\_\_\_\_\_ amassed by the Ascanians. Frederick collected many relics in his castle church; his inventory of 1518 listed 17,443 items, including a thumb from St. Anne, a twig from Moses' \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, hay of the holy manger, and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ from the Virgin Mary. Money was paid in order to venerate these relics and thus escape years in purgatory. A diligent and pious person who rendered appropriate devotion to each of these relics could merit \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ years worth of penance (an earthly equivalent of time otherwise spent in Purgatory, removed by indulgences). From the moment he assumed power until his death, Frederick kept an army of master builders, painters (\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, Albrecht Durer), sculptors, carpenters, wood workers and stone masons busy throughout the Ernestine Wettin territories renovating or replacing old family residences, their adjoining chapels, and local churches and monasteries that had fallen into disrepair. Frederick believed the four ways to display reverence for God were “Church Buildings, adornments, relics and pilgrimages. In 1493 Frederick was ready to take a voyage to the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. He believed a trip offered immense spiritual rewards: hundreds of years of indulgences and forgiveness of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Each year the Holy Roman Empire held a meeting called the Reichstag to discuss the business of the empire. By 1495 Frederick became the most powerful of the seven elector princes (Imperial Governor) and he also had a close relationship with the Maximillian I the Holy Roman Emperor.

**III. Supporting an Augustine Friar**

It is important to note that Frederick never officially \_\_\_\_\_\_\_. He had a consort and her name was
Anna. Anna was absent from court but their 3 children were not! The Pope had very interesting rules regarding concubines and consorts \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. On October 18, 1502 the University of Wittenberg was formally opened (in the first year 416 students matriculated). In 1508 a new face came to court and his name was George Burkhardt, a 24-year-old priest from Nuremberg (he went by the name of George Spalatin. Spalatin will be the main \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ between Martin Luther and Frederick. It will be important for Frederick to keep his distance from the Luther (in order to protect him). Spalatin was awed by Luther’s knowledge of the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and just about every other religious aspect. Luther realized Frederick knew who he was in a letter he wrote (1516) to Spalatin, “You write about the most illustrious prince speaking of me frequently and praising me”. In a real sense, Spalatin was becoming Frederick’s \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. By 1516, Luther was answering Frederick’s questions indirectly through Spalatin about Erasmus, Reuchlin and a gamut of religious issues. That same year Luther \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Frederick in a sermon for his love of relics. “Frederick may have been a man extra-ordinarily intelligent in secular matters, but in the things concerning God and the welfare of his soul, Frederick was seven-fold blind.” Indulgences were an \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ issue, the pope depended on indulgences to finance St. Peter’s in Rome, but also the institution of the Vatican and Roman church. Indulgences pervaded the life of Europe, Luther’s own sovereign, Frederick, was deep into the indulgences business, each viewer of relics would receive \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of relief from purgatory. “As soon as the coin in the coffer rings, the soul from purgatory springs”. The people of Wittenberg went to other cities to buy indulgences and Luther was forced to respond! During the same time period Maximillian dies and the empire needs a new emperor. After Frederick rejects the crown the electors chose Charles V to be the next ruler, a Hapsburg family member stays on the throne. Luther attacks the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of the Catholic Church. He rejects Confirmation, Unction, Marriage and Ordination as unbiblical. He allows the Lord’s Supper, Baptism and grudgingly Penance as the only biblical and legitimate sacraments. Luther is given a Papal Bull and is excommunicated; he takes the Bull and the Papal books and burns them in a \_\_\_\_\_\_. The only way to satisfy all parties is with an Imperial Diet, and that happens in the town of Worms. Luther testifies that he has indeed written the books in question and furthermore refuses to recant. He is made an outlaw of the empire and Frederick takes it upon himself to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Luther and stash him in Wartburg Castle outside of Eisenach. It is here at the castle that Frederick commissions Luther to translate the Bible from Greek into \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Luther with editing help from Melanchthon translate the New Testament in less than \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. For the first time the German people will have the ability to read and study the Word of God in their own language! Luther was protected from the empire during this entire time by Frederick III.

**IV. Legacy**

Luther called Frederick the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of Saxony. A big question rages to this day: Was Frederick a Christian? Frederick died in 1525 and was buried in the Castle Church. A couple reasons to argue that he was a Christian are found in this letter he wrote. “We have gone too fast. The common man has been incited to frivolity and no one has been edified. We should have consideration for the weak. Images should be left until further notice…No essential portion of the mass should be omitted. Moot points should be discussed….Carlstadt should preach no more”. Frederick is identifying with the Protestant movement when he says \_\_\_\_\_. Another reason is that Frederick took Lord’s supper in both kinds. His epitaph reads: Wanderer, you who look at this grave only with a fleeting eye; delay your journey for a little while. Frederick was a territorial prince, an imperial prince and a Christian prince. He was not into aggressive territorial expansion and he did not like to use military force. From day one he spent all of his money and energy trying to make a respectable electorate out the shambles he inherited from Leipzig Division, he was a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. But it is as a Christian Prince that Frederick stands above all the others. From a sense of justice and Christian duty, he risked everything to protect the truth he thought Martin Luther revealed in the Holy Scriptures. When we search the meaning of the name Frederick we find that it comes from two names Fried (peace) ric (ruler/reich), Frederick III (the Wise) the Elector of Saxony was truly a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_!

**5/31 “The Men Behind Luther and the Reformation (Lucas Cranach)”**