Touched by Grace? A Look at Grace in Bergman's Winter Light and Martin Luther's Writings

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Abstract
Ingmar Bergman holds a prominent place in the lineup of directors who have used cinema to investigate the meaning of life in a godless world. The so-called “Trilogy of God’s Silence” is often identified as the place where Bergman struggled most profoundly with core themes from the Christian faith. In Winter Light, he explores the topic of doubt, devastatingly, through a minister's religious and existential crisis. This article, however, proposes that Martin Luther’s theology may provide resources for reappraising Bergman’s canonical film.

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Luther’s experience with the Jews was very disappointing. He spent many years trying to convert them. Like St. Paul, he gave the Jews the first chance at the gospel, but concluded in later years, as the reader will soon see, that his efforts in this direction were futile. This book is published only in the interest of accuracy. If it falls into the hands of a highly technical student of the 16th Century German, the Publishers will appreciate any correction which might improve the next edition of this work. The demand for this little book is so great that we expect it to go into numerous e Martin Luther was a composer, professor of theology, monk and a priest of German descent. He was a central figure in Protestant Reformation and perhaps the most well-known revolutionary of the 14th century. He severely criticized the Roman Catholic Church because he sincerely believed that it was the Bible and not the Church that should determine the legitimacy and interpretation of the Lord's word. To make holy teachings more accessible to the German public, he translated the book into German language. Luther’s writings and influence on the church are still important today and quoted quite extensively. We have scanned his work, speeches and writings to get some of his most popular quotes and sayings. Priest and scholar Martin Luther approaches the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg, Germany, and nails a piece of paper to it containing the 95 revolutionary opinions that would begin the Protestant Reformation. Luther’s frustration with this practice led him to write the 95 Theses, which were quickly snapped up, translated from Latin into German and distributed widely. A copy made its way to Rome, and efforts began to convince Luther to change his tune. That same year, Luther again refused to recant his writings before the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V of Germany, who issued the famous Edict of Worms declaring Luther an outlaw and a heretic and giving permission for anyone to kill him without consequence.