



5 Facts You Need to Know About: Lutheranism

1. Lutheranism is the oldest and third largest Protestant denomination with approximately 80 million adherents worldwide, 8.3 million in the United States and consists of a number of different denominations. Denominations include: The ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) and the LCMS (Lutheran Church Missouri Synod) comprise 94% of Lutherans in the United States, the WELS (Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod) and ELS (Evangelical Lutheran Synod) comprise 5%, and the rest comprise of smaller synodical conferences
2. It was established on the reforms of Martin Luther and officially split from the Catholic Church in 1521. Luther was a friar in the Holy Roman Empire who condemned the sale of indulgences in his parish. This anger drove him to write his 95 Theses, a collection of problems he saw in the Church. His defense of these and their spread sparked the Protestant Reformation.
3. Lutheranism advocates for faith based on scripture found in the Christian Bible alone. Lutherans believe salvation is found through repentance and the acceptance of Jesus Christ as savior.
4. Lutherans believe acceptance of Jesus Christ as the savior of mankind by dying for the world's sins and repentance will lead to salvation while unbelief and sin leads to eternal damnation.
5. The Lutheran Church teaches that God created everything free of sin but Adam and Eve corrupted humanity through hubris and not resisting the devil's temptation. According to Lutheran teaching, all humans are born with the burden of original sin, a consequence of Adam and Eve's inability to resist temptation and eating of the apple from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil.

(over)

Learn more at:

<http://www.patheos.com/library/lutheran>

<https://www.elca.org/>

<http://www.pewforum.org/files/2011/12/Christianity-fullreport-web.pdf>

These five points are not meant to be comprehensive or authoritative. We hope they will encourage you to explore this tradition more deeply and seek out members of this community to learn about their beliefs in action. It is our firm belief that in understanding our differences we will better understand our common humanity.

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