

C. F. W. Walther's Suggested Reading List for the Works of Martin Luther^[1]

“The best way to be spurred to the reading of Luther’s writings, and to achieve the correct valuation and insight into these incomparable writings, is for one to begin reading the polemical documents”:

- That These Words [of Christ, ‘This is my body’ etc., Still Stand Firm Against the Fanatics, 1527 (AE 37.3-150); (Martin Brecht^[2] II, 310-13).
- The Great Confession on Christ’s Supper, 1528 (AE 37.151-372); (Martin Brecht II, 314, 318, 336; III 46, 178).
- On the Papacy at Rome Against the Most Celebrated Romanist in Leipzig, 1520 (AE 39.49-104); (Martin Brecht I, 344-46).
- Against Hans Wurst, 1541 (AE 41.179-256); (Martin Brecht Volume III, 219-22).

“After the polemical writings, the so-called writings of the Reformation are to be read, as for instance”:

- The Babylonian Captivity of the Church (AE 36.11-126); (Martin Brecht I, 350, 380-85, 398, 406-7, 432, 436-37, 444, 452. II 9, 85, 91).
- The Freedom of a Christian (AE 31); (Martin Brecht I 385, 405-10).
- To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation (AE 44.123-217);^[3] (Martin Brecht I, 333, 369-79, 381, 385, 398, 401, 406, 414; III 360).

“Then follow the doctrinal writings in the narrower sense of the word, for instance”:

- On the Office of the Keys, 1530 (AE 40:325-377); (Martin Brecht II, 400; III, 74).
- That a Christian Assembly or Congregation Has the Right and Power to Judge All Teaching and to Call, Appoint, and Dismiss Teachers, Established and Proven by Scripture, 1523 (AE 39.305-314); (Martin Brecht II, 69-70).
- Concerning the Ministry, 1523 (AE 40.7-44); (Martin Brecht *De instituendis ministris*, II, 73-74).
- The Bondage of the Will, 1525 (AE 33.15-295); (Martin Brecht I, 413. II, 7, 224-38; III 82, 142).
- On Marriage Matters, 1530 (AE 46.265-320); (Martin Brecht II 280, 282-83).
- Temporal Authority: To What Extent It Should be Obeyed, 1523 (AE 45.81-129); (Martin Brecht II, 117-18, 342).
- Admonition Concerning the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Our Lord, 1530 (AE. 38.97-137); (Martin Brecht II, 382-83).
- On the Councils and the Church, 1539 (AE 41.9-178); (Martin Brecht III, 193-98, 327).

“Regarding the writings that deal with exegetical matters”:

- The Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 5, 6, 7 (AE 21.3-294)[4]
- Treatise on the Last Words of David (AE 15.267-352);[5] (Martin Brecht III 347-48).
- Commentary on Psalm 2 (AE 12.3-93).
- Commentary on Psalm 45 (AE 12.197-300).
- Commentary on Psalm 82 (AE 13.39-72).
- Commentary on Psalm 110 (AE 13.225-348).
- Commentary on Psalm 111 (AE 13.349-387).
- Commentary on Psalm 117 (AE 14.3-39).
- Commentary on Psalm 118 (AE 14.41-106).

“With respect to Luther’s homiletical writings, one should at least read the appropriate sermons on the pericopes in the Postilles before the preparation of each sermon.”

“As far as Luther’s letters go, one ought to read especially all those from the time of the preparation for the Diet of Augsburg [1530], those written during the Diet, and those which deal with Luther’s departure from the Diet. All letters that have to do with ecclesiastical matters in general should be read.”[6]

[1] As drawn from Walther’s Essay on “The Fruitful Reading of the Writings of Luther,” found in Matthew Harrison’s volume, *At Home in the House of My Fathers*, Lutheran Legacy. 2009. p. 333-343.

[2] Where it was provided, I also included the historical background provided in Martin Brecht’s three volume biography of Martin Luther, published by Fortress Press.

[3] “These [two] are of first importance for the beginner. He must read the writings where Luther lays the basis for the work of the Reformation.” p. 339.

[4] “In the explication of the Sermon on the Mount, everything is of interest for a reader who is interested in the divine truth.”

[5] “The explication of “The Last Words of David” is a valuable work.”

[6] Luther’s letters in part are translated in AE 48-50.