

ality, a strong singing voice, was a vigorous person and in many ways the embodiment of the social virtues of the Teutonic peoples.

Education

His educational career began in the public school (as we would call it) in Mansfield, continued in Magdeburg and led him to Eisenach. In Magdeburg he saw the influence and ideas of the Brethren of the Common Life. While his parents had been religious, it is doubtful that they "worked at it" in such a way as to bring him to an ecclesiastical posture. But questions of eternal disposition often haunted him and the calm enjoyment of God shown by this group was a challenge. Beyond Eisenach he attended Leipzig (the university, obviously) where he earned a BA in 1502 and a master's in 1505. His movement to a monastery briefly interrupted the educational progress but in 1509 he obtained a ThB and in 1512 a doctorate from the rather new university in Wittenberg--the academic pride and joy of the Elector of Saxony: Frederick. Having already lectured at the university, prior to receiving the doctorate, it came as no surprise that he was given the post of lecturer in theology after receiving the degree. He was the master of philosophy and classicism and moved easily into the Bible lectureship where he excelled as a preacher. Luther is not thought of as being one of the innovative, intellectual genius types, but he is thought of as being bright, enormously industrious, courageous and opportunistic. It is hard to beat a combination like that.

The Monastic Life

To the disappointment of parents and friends, Luther abandoned the legal/civil course and jumped to the church when he entered the Augustinian monastery in Erfurt in 1505...shortly after receiving his MA. The cause was traceable to strong inner conflicts about eternal values, the sudden death of a friend, and a "moment of terror" that left him in a state of emotional and spiritual disarray. Under the Augustinian order he found the guidance of Staupitz, a man advanced in spiritual understanding but seemingly not competent to give Luther the final measure of what he needed. Staupitz advised him to refrain from excessive flagellation, etc., and return to the Scripture