

cathedral October 31, 1517 and consequently Luther wrote to the Pope an objection. He feeling that the pope really was responsible in being likely ill-informed. The papacy felt the challenge of a lack of funds and soon would move to silence Luther, not to correct the selling of indulgences.

Summary

The final break did not come immediately but this indulgence matter was a large straw on the camel's back. It was the practical moment for fracture. No matter what Luther may or may not have wanted or intended, his action challenged the doctrinal fathers of the day and went contrary to the bull of Sixtus IV. The challenge that would come to the papacy would grow from this. His rejection of the indulgence mechanism was really the focal point of the break with Rome and Luther would soon realize that the whole concept of justification and truth would go hand in hand with it.

Events in Luther's break from the posting of the 95 Theses (31 October 1517) to the Leipzig Debate, June, July 1519

Events from
the posting
of the
Theses to
the Leipzig
Debate

That no immediate repression came to Luther after the posting of the Theses is somewhat surprising. But there were in the background three items of international importance that took precedence over Luther's act. The first of these related to the election of the next emperor of the Holy Roman Empire. The present emperor, Maximilian of Austria, was dying and a replacement would be needed. The heir apparent was his grandson, Charles V, heir to the thrones of both Spain and Austria. But such a power figure seemed threatening to the papacy and it is safe to say that Leo did all he could to prevent Charles from becoming Emperor...all, that is, that could safely be done. Along with his (Leo's) failure to really understand the events in Germany, this political preoccupation was a major cause for his not taking a more immediate action towards the Wittenberg affair.

In the second place, the circumstances in Saxony were not favorable to repression. Saxony was divided and while ducal Saxony, ruled by George, was closely tied to the pope, electoral Saxony was under