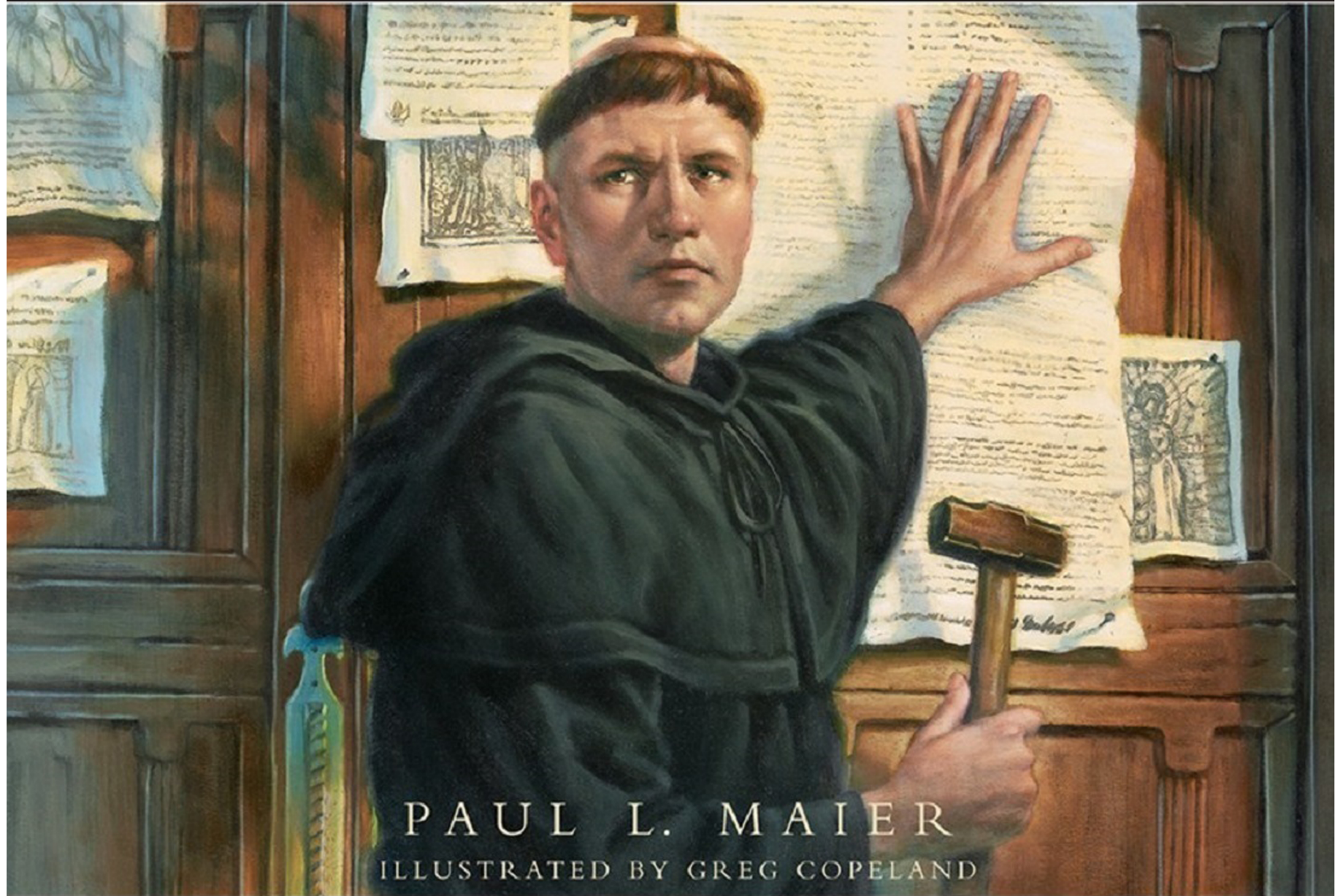


MARTIN LUTHER

A MAN WHO CHANGED THE WORLD



PAUL L. MAIER
ILLUSTRATED BY GREG COPELAND



MARTIN LUTHER

A Man Who Changed the World

WRITTEN BY

PAUL L. MAIER

ILLUSTRATED BY

GREG COPELAND

CONCORDIA PUBLISHING HOUSE • SAINT LOUIS




Our loving God helps His people turn from sin and error. In the Old Testament, He sent prophets to warn them. In the New Testament, He even sent His own Son, Jesus Christ, to reform and save the world. And in the centuries since then, God sent others to keep the church pure.

The greatest of these was Martin Luther, an extraordinary man who started the Reformation just when the church needed it most.

Martin was born at Eisleben in Germany in 1483—nine years before Columbus sailed to America! In those days, the Christian church no longer based its beliefs on the Bible alone. It had actually invented new doctrines and practices that Jesus and His apostles had never taught. Sadly, too, the church leaders of that time, far from setting a good example for their people, sinned worse than the people did!

Martin Luther would change all that.





Hans Luther, Martin's father, was a rather prosperous miner, and his mother, Margareta, was strict when it came to discipline. The family soon moved to Mansfeld, where Martin went to school and learned his lessons in Latin.

When he was 14, Martin was sent to school in Magdeburg. There, students who did poorly in their studies were made to wear a donkey mask! After only a year, Hans sent Martin to school in Eisenach. Martin and other students there would go door to door and sing for their food, a custom of young scholars at the time that did not mean they were poor as beggars.

Because his son was so brilliant, Hans enrolled Martin at the University of Erfurt to study law. Martin might have become an important lawyer, but a sudden thunderstorm came along and changed his plans—and church history too! He was returning to the university after visiting his parents when a lightning bolt knocked him to the ground. “Save me, St. Anne!” he cried out. “I will become a monk!”

And he did. Thinking this was a sign from God, Luther sold his law books and entered the Augustinian monastery at Erfurt. Papa Luther was furious: he had hoped his son would be a wealthy lawyer and support him in his old age. Now what would he do?







Martin did not wish to displease his father. He only wanted to lead a holy life and know that his sins were forgiven so he would go to heaven. Brother Martin tried to be a good monk: he prayed long hours, ate little, worked hard, studied constantly, and endured great hardships.

Did all that help? It did not. Luther was surprised and saddened that the harder he tried to keep God's commandments perfectly, the more he felt like a failure.

Perhaps a visit to Rome, the headquarters of the Roman Catholic Church, would help. The monastery sent Brother Luther over the Alps to Italy. But when he saw how worldly and sinfully the pope and the cardinals behaved, his despair only deepened.

Then, once again, Luther's life changed. The ruler of Saxony, Frederick the Wise, had established a new university in Wittenberg, a hundred miles away from Erfurt. Luther was sent there to be a professor.



PAUL L. MAIER

Dr. Paul L. Maier is a professor of history at Western Michigan University and is a much-published author of both scholarly and popular works. His books *The Very First Christmas*, *The Very First Easter*, and *The Very First Christians* received the Evangelical Christian Publishers Association Gold Medallion Award. His novel *A Skeleton in God's Closet* was the #1 national best seller. A sequel, *More Than a Skeleton*, was released in 2003. Several million Maier books are in print in a dozen languages, as well as more than 200 scholarly articles in professional journals.

GREG COPELAND

Greg Copeland is a freelance illustrator who works primarily on book covers and children's books. His clients include Scholastic Inc., Simon and Schuster, Penguin Group, and Leisure Books. He has won recognition from the Society of Illustrators, Communication Arts, and Spectrum illustration annuals. Classical portraiture and painting methods, 1950–60s American illustration, and such contemporaries as Bernie Fuchs and Gregory Manchess influence Greg's oil paintings.

More than anything, Martin Luther wanted peace with God. His search led him to the Bible, where he learned about salvation through faith. This discovery caused Luther to challenge the church to return to the roots of the Christian faith.

The church leaders liked things the way they were, however, and tried to stop Martin Luther. But he stood his ground, and his tireless work led to the Reformation of the church and to far-reaching changes in society.

Here is a story of adventure, courage, and—most of all—faith. Here is the story of a man who changed the world.



ISBN 0-7586-0626-5



9 780758 606266

Children's / Children's Picture
56-2274

