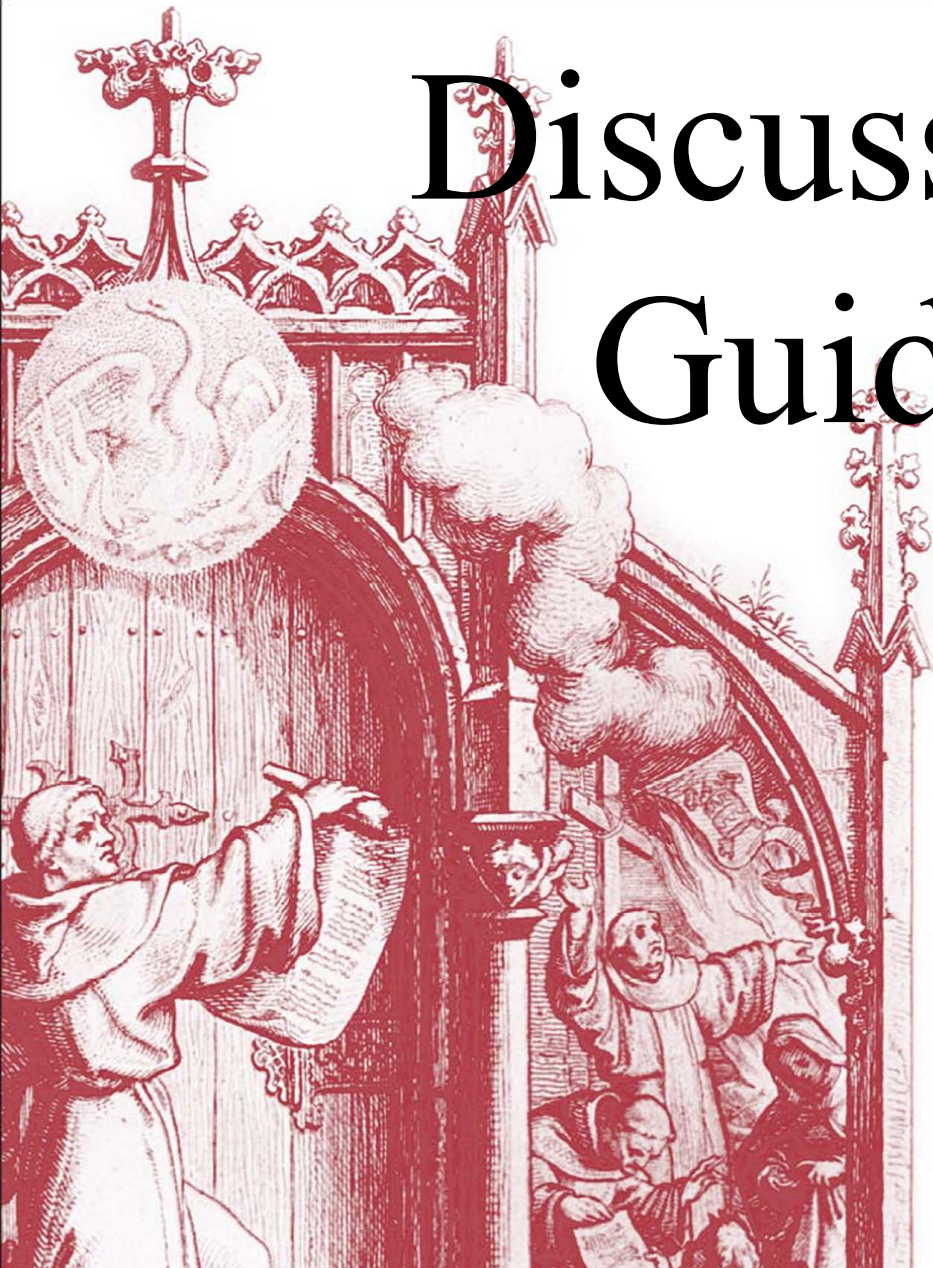


THE FREEDOM OF A CHRISTIAN
1520

THE ANNOTATED LUTHER STUDY EDITION

Discussion Guide



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THE FREEDOM OF A CHRISTIAN, 1520

Overview

Written as the papal bull of excommunication was on its way to Wittenberg from Rome, Luther expressed the deep freedom he experienced through faith in Christ. At the same time, this freedom was not an individualistic or isolated freedom but one that—as the second half of the tract makes plain—expresses itself most completely through unconditional service to our neighbors and to this world that Christ died to save.

Discussion Questions

1. How might the dedicatory letter to Pope Leo X serve as a “case study” in how to practice Christian freedom? (p. 468).
2. Luther started his tract by saying, “Many people view Christian faith as something easy.” In *The Freedom of a Christian*, what does it mean to have faith?
3. What did Luther mean by separating the inner person from the outer person?
4. What happens in the union of the bridegroom, Christ, and the soul through faith?
5. In what sense is Christ’s free justification of sinners both subjective (personal) and objective (not about us)?
6. What are your thoughts on Luther’s assertion that good works don’t make a person good but that a good person goes good works? What Bible verses or illustrations from daily life did Luther use to help make this point?
7. As the tract moves into its second half, why did Luther insist that discipline was still necessary for Christians?
8. Based on the second half of this text, how might you describe Lutheran views of good works?
9. What does it mean to be free to serve?
10. After reading the entire tract, how would you explain Luther’s conviction that Christians are both free lords of all and dutiful servants of all?