

Skit #2: Luther & the Reformation

Dramatis Personae:

Martin Luther

John Tetzel

(Enter Tetzel with papers in his hand. Luther is sitting in the audience.)

TETZEL: (To audience) Hello, everyone, my name is Tetzel, John Tetzel. I just got back from the Vatican—You know, the pope’s house in Rome—and have I got a deal for you! Now, we all know that God hates sin, right? Well, I have a way right here to get rid of those sins. You see, the pope is building this fancy new church called the Sistine Chapel, and he hired a guy named Michelangelo to paint the ceiling! Well, for some reason, it’s taking a whole lot of man hours to paint this ceiling, so he needs more money. That’s where you come in! As we all know, when you die, you don’t go directly to heaven!

LUTHER: (Calling out) Mr. Pretzel! Since when?

TETZEL: That’s Tetzel. Hey, kid, this isn’t Monopoly™ here! No “Go directly to heaven; do not pass ‘go’” and all that! To get to heaven, you need to stop at purgatory first.

LUTHER: Mr. Spittle, you need to stop at college campus housing?

TETZEL: That’s Tetzel, and no, not a dormitory—purgatory! Purgatory is a place where you go to get your sins burned out of you!

LUTHER: Mr. Seltzer, that sounds a lot like hell! Say, is that the new world that was discovered by that Italian guy, Christopher Columbus, when I was 9? I thought they were going to call that “America”!

TETZEL: That’s Tetzel! And no, it’s not hell or America. People in America will spend lots of money to come back to Europe on vacation. People in hell stay there. People in purgatory get to go to heaven, but to work off all those sins, they’ll have to be there for thousands of years! But don’t worry about that! For a limited time, you can buy an indulgence, which will take ten thousand years out of your purgatory stay for a measly \$99.99!

LUTHER: For a hundred bucks, I’d rather buy your pretzels!

TETZEL: That’s Tetzel! Son, get outta here! You bother me!

LUTHER: Well, if you could indulge me for a moment, you see, I’m Martin Luther, a monk, so I know how to read Latin, unlike most of these people, and I can read the Bible, and I don’t remember anything about parsley stories or flatulences, or Schnitzel for that matter!

TETZEL: That’s Tetzel! And this is not from the Bible. It’s from the pope! And if you argue with him, he’ll send you out of his church, and then you *will* go to hell, and *no* amount of indulgences will help you!

LUTHER: Well, I’m not part of the pope’s church; I’m part of Christ’s church, and if the pope could free people from hell or personality or whatever, why doesn’t he just let everyone go for free? You have an answer for that, Mr. Tetzel?

TETZEL: That's schnitzel! I mean.... Never mind. Look, you either shut your mouth, or I'll take you to a Diet at Worms.

LUTHER: No thanks. I prefer brats and sauerkraut and beer! And pretzels, if you still have any!

TETZEL: No, a Diet is a meeting before the king, and Worms is the name of the city where it'll be held.

LUTHER: Well, I'll see your king, since I already have a full house, but I'm going to give all this papal bull a royal flush, because that's exactly where it belongs. Unless you can show me from Scripture that I'm wrong, I won't take back a single thing, except that I'm going to take back the Word of God to His people...in spades!

TETZEL: Brother Martin, I suggest you go to your priest right now and confess your sins.

LUTHER: Oh, you'll get a confession all right, Mr. Freckle! You'll get it at Augsburg before Emperor Charles V in 1530. By then, you'll have your fill of me and my friend Phil! [Exit]

TETZEL: [Yelling offstage] That's Tetzal!

[Exeunt]