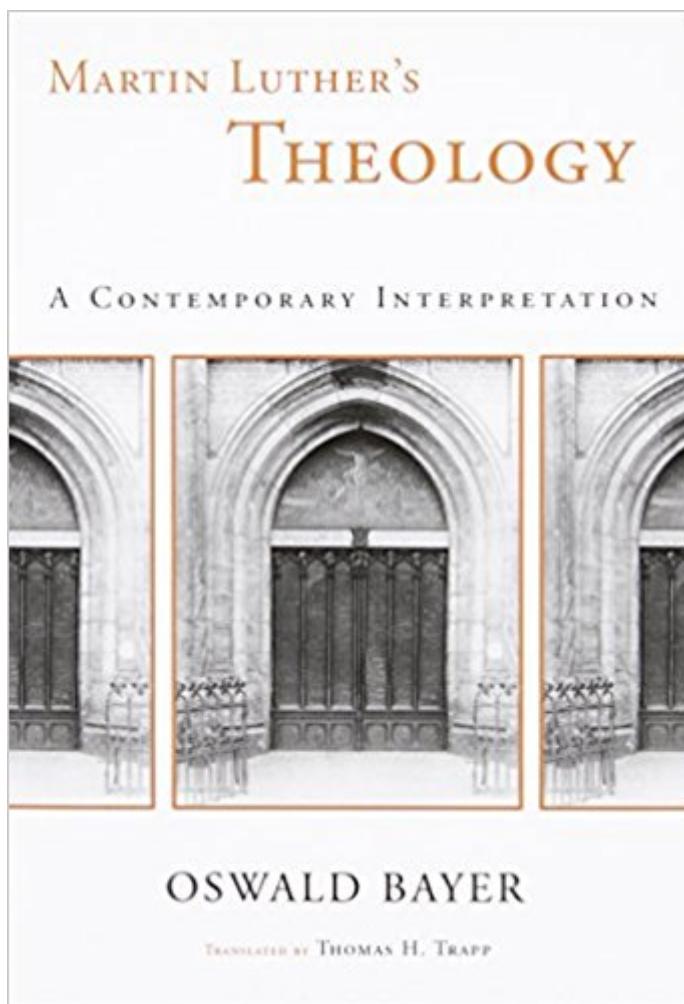


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# Martin Luther's Theology: A Contemporary Interpretation



## **Synopsis**

Forty years of in-depth research on Martin Luther's theology has left Oswald Bayer uniquely qualified to present this comprehensive study. He does so with clarity and care, simply enough for nontheologians to access. This remarkable book offers the basics of Luther's understanding of theology, discussing his response to the philosophy of science tradition, the formula by which he studied theology, and the basic philosophy that informed him. Bayer then takes Luther's stance on Christian dogmatics and ethics and applies it to our own theological understanding in the modern age. With such a complete Lutheran dogmatic concept -- the first of its kind offered -- the stunning inner consistency of Luther's theology and its ease of application to contemporary studies become unmistakably clear. Martin Luther's Theology is a valuable tool for students and teachers of theology and for those looking for a guide into the mind and heart of Luther -- a theologian for today.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

Oswald Bayer is professor emeritus of systematic theology at the University of T?bingen, Germany, and director of the Luther Academy Sondershausen-Ratzeburg. He is also an ordained pastor of the Lutheran Church of W?rttemberg and was the editor of *Neue Zeitschrift f?r Systematische Theologie und Religionsphilosophie* from 1986 to 2006. His research focuses especially on Luther and Hamann.

The great T?bingen Luther-scholar, Dr. Oswald Bayer, published a book in 2003 (in German,

published by Mohr/Siebeck) giving a contemporary interpretation of Luther's sixteenth century theology. I had been using the German edition extensively in my dissertation when I recently came across the 2008 English version. This book is a must read for all Lutheran ministers and theologians. Dr. Thomas H. Trapp (Professor of Theology at Concordia University, St. Paul) did an excellent job translating the book into quite readable English. Bayer presents Luther's systematic theology in a classical sense while accounting for the unique situation of the twenty-first century church. One scholar summarized the work as a "conversation with Luther" whereby we read his theology on matters we share in common in the contemporary church with the church of the Reformation. I highly recommend this book to you; it will enhance your ministry and understanding of the Wittenberg reformer's teachings.

The book got to me clean and in good shape within the specified time-frame. The book is most relevant in understanding the contemporary interpretation of Martin Luther's theology. I have recommended it to many of my colleagues. I pretty sure that very soon will receive orders from some of them. I am impressed with the delivery of this book.

I realise this is a highly respected work from a renowned theologian, but it is an incredibly difficult book to read.

You don't get the fun of reading this until you've read it.

Great Book for my systematics Class. Fast shipping and easy to work with.

Bayer's work is insightful and helpful to all pastors and theologians. Written almost as an annotated catechism Bayer touches on most of the major topics in Luther's theology. All the regular subjects are there but are arranged creatively and are laden with unique insights that keep with Bayer's stated goal of putting Luther's in a "contemporary interpretation" conversant with modern thought. Bayer makes many unique claims based on his deep knowledge of Luther's writings. Among those that are clearest in my memory are 1.) Luther's holding the teaching of the "three estates" as more important than the teaching on the "two kingdoms" in his understanding of creation and the political use of the law, 2.)the doctrine of the trinity as a unique event that happens not in some speculative limbo but as a real unfolding of God in time which is revealed to us by faith. Luther roots his entire teaching in the promise which comes from God and serves as the liferoot of our faith. Bayer makes

this central insight the light that illuminates Luther's entire work. This book had to be digested very slowly and thought about deeply but it was incredibly rewarding. This book should be used by those who have a working knowledge of the basic tenets of Luther's thinking who have read at least the Small and Large Catechisms, the Augsburg Confession, "On the Freedom of a Christian", and highlights from "Bondage of the Will." Originally written in German this work benefits from a translator who worked hard to make prose readable, and makes mention of many works by Luther which have not been translated into English yet. The only difficulties with the book came in the way that Bayer often repeats what he considers to be the central ideas and the lack of any kind of cohesive conclusion (which may have been a design on the author's part).

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