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An analysis of some contributions of the Lutheran Reformation on South Asia

Abstract

Martin Luther lived in Germany in the first half of the sixteenth century. His travel was confined to a limited area around Wittenberg in what later became known as Germany. It is unlikely that he was aware of the religious concerns of the Indian subcontinent even though Portuguese had discovered it a few decades ago. However, his concern to convert Jews and Muslims to Christianity undoubtedly inspired his followers of the nations that created national Lutheran churches as well as other Protestants to take reformation ideals to South Asia.

Luther's historical context and the meaning of reformation were understood by different generations of different ages. However, the basic spirit of Lutheranism was introduced South Asia bringing many positive results associated with his teaching. Luther is a historical figure that transcended his life time in terms of meaning and inspiration which impacted many nations of several generations. The followers of Lutheranism contextualized it in the South Asian setting to grapple with socio-cultural issues vastly different from that of Luther's environment. Missionaries of several nations and Indians who accepted Lutheranism applied Lutheran principles to deal with issues of personal as well as national significance to bring about hope for many a South Asian.

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