

Footstep #2 - Help Me! - 1512

“Is it not against all natural reason that God out of his mere whim deserts men, hardens them, dams them, as if he delighted in sins and in such torments of the wretched for eternity, he who is said to be of such mercy and goodness? This appears iniquitous, cruel, and intolerable in God, by which very many have been offended in all ages. And who would not be? I myself more than once driven to the very abyss of despair so that I wished I had never been created. Love God? I hated him!” (Roland Bainton, *Here I Stand*, p. 44)

Luther exclaimed in frustration to Rev. Johan von Staupitz, *“Ich verstehe es nicht!”* (I do not understand it!) Luther wrestled with the teachings of St. Augustine (the founder of his monastic order) that man’s fate had been predetermined by God and that man’s fate is unpredictable and God is capricious. Both views led Martin Luther to question and doubt his faith in God. Luther’s confusion is that he saw God as both the avenger and the redeemer. Luther was at the verge of a mental breakdown over religious problems in 1512.



Johann von Staupitz