

Footstep #4 The Discovery of Truth - 1512

“Night and day I pondered until I saw the connection between the justice of God and the statement that ‘the just shall live by his faith.’ Then I grasped that the justice of God is that righteousness by which through grace and sheer mercy God justifies us through faith. Thereupon I felt myself to be reborn and to have gone through open doors into paradise. The whole of Scripture took on a new meaning, and whereas before the ‘justice of God’ had filled me with hate, now it became to me inexpressibly sweet in greater love. This passage of Paul became to me a gate to heaven...” (Roland Bainton, *Here I Stand*, p. 49, 50)

The essence of Martin Luther’s theology and the catalyst for his criticisms of the three popes in the beginning of the 16th century is his understanding of the saving power of God through Jesus Christ. At this time, Luther did not disagree with Roman Catholic theology and was careful to avoid heresy by using the evidence of God’s Word in the *Holy Bible* to support his thesis. In this perspective, he is an enlightened reformer. It is his thirst for personal salvation that leads to his departure from traditional beliefs of the Church.



In 1513, Pope Julius II died at the age of 69. The College of Cardinals elected Giovanni de Medici as Pope Leo X. The de Medici family was one of the most powerful and influential in the Italian city-states.