

Fellow Reformers

Martin Luther and Philip Melanchthon

Oil on wood portrait

by close friend Lucas Cranach the Elder in 1543

Original hangs in the Uffizi Gallery in Florence, Italy

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Partners In The Reformation:

A Closer Look at the Friendship Between Martin Luther and Philip Melanchthon



- Met at the **University of Wittenberg** where they immediately formed a strong bond.
- While Luther's **fiery pronouncements** ignited the Reformation, Melanchthon's **scholarly mind** provided crucial theological structure.
- Of the seven documents contained in the Lutheran ***Book of Concord***, three were written by Melanchthon and three by Luther.
- Luther and Melanchthon had **contrasting personalities** but complemented each other. Luther was bold, outspoken and sociable. Melanchthon was careful, reserved and introverted.
- Melanchthon proofread Luther's translation of the **New Testament** from Greek to German and wrote several commentaries.
- Luther persuaded Melanchthon to marry **Katharina Krapp**, the daughter of Wittenberg's mayor, believing that Melanchthon could benefit from a wife's support.
- **The Augsburg Confession** was the greatest triumph of their friendship, as Melanchthon took Luther's theology and defended it in front of the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V, presenting a format that remains the main confessional standard of Lutheranism.

Melanchthon on Luther



"God has always preserved a proportion of His servants upon the earth, and now, through Martin Luther, a more splendid period of light and truth has appeared." *(On the death of Luther, 1)*



Luther on Melanchthon

"If it please Christ, Melanchthon will make many Martins and a most powerful enemy of scholastic theology; for he knows their folly and the Rock of Christ as well. As a man of might, he will prove his ability." *(What Luther Says, 919)*

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