

## LutherFacts #38 – Last Words

Just before his death, Martin Luther wrote down his final words that are both humbling yet powerful in their meaning. Knowing he was failing, he wrote his last will and testament. It began with the words, "I am well known in heaven, on earth, and in hell," a statement consistent with the many bold stands he had taken in his life. As Luther worked to complete his last thoughts, his close friend and fellow reformer Justus Jonas (1493-1555) asked Luther, "Do you want to die standing firm on Christ and the doctrine you have taught?" "Yes," he replied. In response to the question, then he wrote down, "We are beggars. This is true." He chose not to focus on his years of activism but instead to stress his own need for salvation. These were surely words that had their roots in his years as an Augustinian monk seeking redemption. For Martin Luther, the reform of Christianity was more than institutional change but also the seeking of spiritual truths that could sustain life. Once again, even in death, he sought to show the way for others to follow.