

The Protestant Reformation Revolutionized Art

Martin Luther's Reformation ended a period of dominance and unity in Europe under the Roman Catholic Church. This unity lasted for more than 1,000 years. The Protestant reformers influenced artists who became inspired by the new ideas of faith, forgiveness, a personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ, and the powerful stories in the *Holy Bible*.



Crowning with Thorns (Titian, 1542)

"They put a purple robe on him, then twisted together a crown of thorns and set it on him. And they began to call out to him, 'Hail, king of the Jews!' Again and again they struck him on the head with a staff and spit on him." (Mark 15:17-19)

This is a brutal and violent scene. Using sticks, men place the crown of thorns on Jesus' head. They then turn it till he bleeds. In a closer observation, we can see the blood flowing through the veins in the arms of Jesus.

The noticeable statue of Tiberius signifies that this is an action by the state, the government of Rome. We also see the brilliance of Titian as he leaves one of the sticks on the bottom step. Perhaps this is for me as my sins will also crucify my Lord!

As I look at this painting, I feel the pain of the cross. Clearly and cleverly, the message of Luther's theology of the cross is expressed in this painting. This painting is currently at the Louvre in Paris.

<http://www.artbible.info/art/large/278.html>