

The Catholic Church

Was the dominant church in Western Europe

Church had wealth and political prestige

Even kings looked to the Pope for his approval

Religion was a major part of European life



Pope Leo X
Led Church 1513-21

At the end of the 1400s, Catholicism was the dominant religion in Western Europe and, as a result, the Catholic Church was the dominant church. The Catholic Church's power extended far beyond people's religious beliefs – the Church had immense wealth, property, and political prestige. Although the Pope was the head of the Church, kings often sought his permission and guidance, especially when it came to anything involving the Church. At that time, religion was a major part of European life. Since the Pope headed the Catholic Church, that made him the spiritual leader of most people living in Western Europe.



As a huge institution with great wealth and power, the Catholic Church had critics who felt that many church leaders and church practices were corrupt and unfair. Also, some monarchs and nobles wanted to limit the Church's political power and wealth since they saw it as a threat to their own power.

The following items were areas of conflict identified by critics of the Catholic Church:

- Greed: Many people felt that Popes were too interested in wealth and worldly pleasures, rather than in being spiritual leaders.
- Poor conduct: Many Catholic priests were illiterate and many did not observe their vows of celibacy. The Church also practiced simony, or the selling of church leadership positions.
- The banning of usury: The Church had banned usury, or the practice of lending money at a high rate of interest. Merchants often needed to borrow money to start business ventures and they were forced to borrow money from non-Christians. Christian bankers were affected by this ban. These merchants demanded changes.
- The Italian domination of the Church: Italians held most of the key positions in the Church. In addition, Catholics were required to give 10% of their income to the Church. Much of this money went to Church leaders or to the Vatican in Rome where the Pope lived. As a result, the nobility in Germany and England tried to limit Italy's domination of the Church so that their money would remain in their own countries.
- Political power: The Catholic Church owned a lot of land throughout Europe and paid no taxes on this land. In addition, the Pope was a powerful political leader who led the Papal States, which made up a large portion of central Italy.
- Indulgences: Perhaps the most striking example of Church corruption came from the selling of indulgences. Indulgences were sold throughout Europe as a way to pay away sins, so that a person would spend less time in purgatory before entering heaven. A prime example of the abuse of indulgences was by a German priest named Johan Tetzel. Tetzel took the indulgences that people paid to help rebuild St. Peter's Cathedral in Rome and diverted them to his archbishop to pay off the archbishop's debts. Tetzel's actions inspired Martin Luther to preach openly against him.

Martin Luther

German Monk (1483-1546)

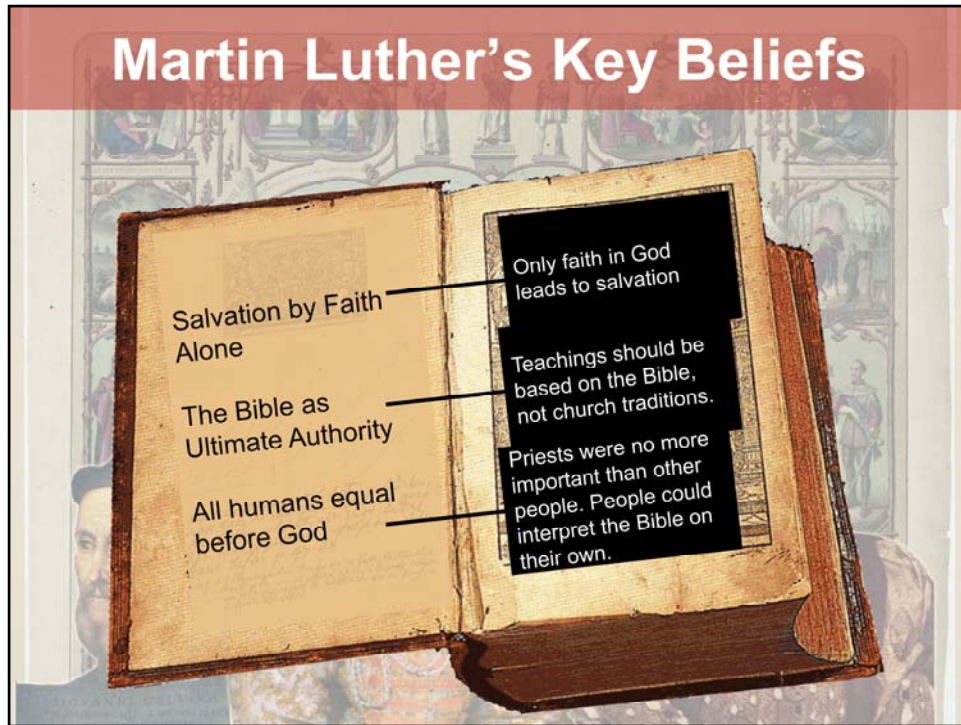
Disagreed with many Church practices

1517 – Wrote his 95 theses criticizing Church practices, specifically the sale of indulgences.

His 95 Theses marked the start of the Protestant Reformation

Martin Luther was a German monk who disagreed with many of the Catholic Church's practices. To Luther, Tetzel's selling of indulgences confirmed the Church's corruption and worldliness. In 1517, Luther wrote his 95 theses, in which he expressed his criticisms of the Catholic Church. Luther's students translated these from Latin into German. With the help of the printing press, Luther's ideas spread quickly across Germany, and then to much of Western Europe. Luther's 95 theses marked the beginning of the Protestant Reformation.

Martin Luther's Key Beliefs



Martin Luther believed that the only way to attain salvation was through faith. He felt that true believers did not need a priest or Pope to have faith. Also, Luther preached that the Bible was the ultimate authority in the Christian religion, and that church traditions and rituals should not get in the way of practicing the Christian faith. Finally, Martin Luther believed that all humans were equal in the eyes of God and that the church clergy were no more important than the common people. He felt that people could interpret the Bible in their own way, without a priest to guide them.

Result of Luther's 95 Theses



1520 Pope Leo X excommunicates Martin Luther.

Charles V, Holy Roman Emperor, issued the Edict of Worms declaring Luther a heretic and an outlaw.

Luther's ideas continued to spread throughout Germany.

Eventually his followers became a separate religious group known as the Lutherans.

Martin Luther's protests against the Catholic Church did not go unnoticed. In 1520, Pope Leo issued a notice excommunicating Luther from the Catholic Church. To make matters worse, Charles V, leader of the Holy Roman Empire, issued the Edict of Worms. This document declared Martin Luther a heretic and an outlaw, making it a crime for anyone in the empire to give him food or shelter.

Fearing for his life, Martin Luther went into hiding with the help of a prince in Northern Germany. Luther remained in hiding for over a year. Throughout Northern Germany, thousands hailed Luther as a hero, and began to follow his teachings. Luther's followers also renounced the authority of the Pope. These people formed a new religion called Lutheranism. Those who protested and left the Catholic Church were known as Protestants. Martin Luther's break with the Catholic Church was not an isolated event. Other Europeans started to challenge the Church's views and ended up joining the Reformation.

John Calvin

French theologian

1530 left Catholic Church

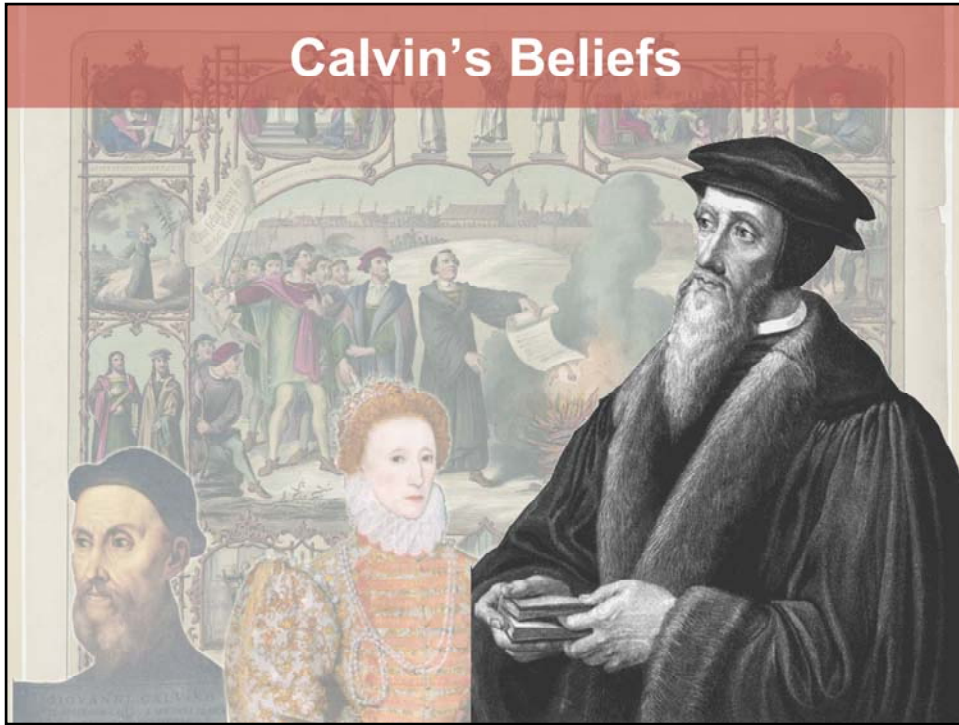
Fled to Switzerland as France
began persecuting Protestants

1536 - published *The
Institutes of the Christian
Religion*



John Calvin was born in France and lived around the same time as Martin Luther. He left the Catholic Church in 1530 and joined the Protestants. After the French government started persecuting Protestants, Calvin fled to Switzerland where he published his best-known work, *The Institutes of the Christian Religion*. This book was Calvin's attempt to bring order to the Christian faith.

Calvin's Beliefs



Calvin preached the idea of predestination, which means that God determines who receives salvation at birth. To Calvinists, or believers in Calvin's teachings, the world was divided into those who would be saved, and those who would not. Calvinists try to live their lives as though they will be saved, since only those who are saved are capable of living a Christian life. Calvinists believe that faith is revealed through a strong work ethic and living a righteous life.



Calvin believed that the best government was a theocracy, where church leaders ran the government. He also believed people should resist “ungodly” rulers. Eventually, he set up his own theocracy in Geneva, Switzerland. There, Calvin began to regulate the lives of his followers and banned what he considered sinful activities such as cursing, drinking alcohol, and gambling. Calvinist's were not tolerant towards other religions of the time.

The Spread of Calvin's Ideas




Eventually, Calvin's Protestant ideas spread outside of Switzerland with the help of the printing press. In France, Calvinist Protestants called Huguenots formed a large community, although they were constantly persecuted. Calvin's ideas also spread to Scotland, The Netherlands, Germany, Poland, and eventually North America through the Reformed and Presbyterian churches, which follow his teachings.

Luther and Calvin

Question 1 of 3 Point Value: 10

Which of the following did some critics want to change about the Catholic Church?

- Less centralized power in Rome
- Reduce political power of Church
- Church owning land throughout Europe
- Power of pope
- Remove Italian as official language of Church
- Selling indulgences



PROPERTIES
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On failing, 'Finish' button:
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User may view slides after quiz:
User may attempt quiz:

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Read each question carefully. Then, select the item or items that best answer the question.

Henry VIII

Became king at age 17 and ruled from 1509 to 1547.

Originally a strong supporter of the Catholic Church.



Not everyone who opposed the Catholic Church did so for entirely religious reasons. One such person was Henry VIII, who ruled England from 1509 to 1547. When Henry became king, he was a strong supporter of the Catholic Church and opposed the teachings of Martin Luther, including Luther's 95 Theses. However, Henry VIII had a marital problem that would cause him to split from the Catholic Church.

Henry's Problem

18 years of marriage to Catherine of Aragon had produced only a daughter.

Henry wanted an annulment so he could marry Anne Boleyn and try to have a son to consolidate the Tudor dynasty.



After eighteen years of marriage, Henry and his Spanish wife, Catherine of Aragon, had only one child that had survived past infancy – a girl named Mary Tudor. Henry wanted a son to ensure that the Tudor Dynasty would continue. He feared that Catherine would not be able to have any more children because she was much older than he was. Henry's plan was to convince the Pope to grant him an annulment so that he could marry a younger woman named Anne Boleyn for the purpose of having a son.

Act of Supremacy



Pope Clement would not annul Henry's marriage to Catherine.

Parliament passed the Act of Supremacy, which declared the king was the head of England's church, not the Pope.

Marked beginning of Anglican Church.

Because Catholic law does not permit divorce, Henry asked the Pope to annul the marriage. The Pope had annulled royal marriages before, but did not do so this time. Henry was furious and asked the English Parliament to strip the Pope of his power in England and legalize divorce. Parliament agreed, and passed the Act of Supremacy, which declared the king, and not the pope, to be the head of England's church. The Act of Supremacy marked the beginning of the Protestant Church of England, also known as the Anglican Church.

Henry Limits the Church's Power

Henry married Anne Boleyn

As head of Anglican Church, Henry confiscated Catholic Church lands and wealth reducing its power



Westminster Abby - London Church where many royal events take place

As head of the Church of England, Henry annulled his marriage to Catherine and married Anne Boleyn. This marriage didn't result in any sons either, and ultimately, Anne was executed for high treason, despite little evidence. Henry continued to marry and annul marriages throughout the rest of his life. Finally, one of these marriages resulted in a son, Edward VI.

As head of the church, Henry was able to do more than alter his marital status. In addition to legalizing divorce and stripping the Catholic Church of any power in England, he confiscated English land and wealth from the Catholic Church and gave it to his supporters. This further reduced the Church's power and increased Henry's own power as head of the Anglican Church.

Building Loyalty

Henry used the property that he confiscated from the Catholic Church to win the loyalty of the nobility.

Henry VIII with Jane Seymour and the young Prince Edward

After confiscating the vast property and wealth held by the Catholic Church in England, Henry acquired these resources and decided to utilize them to his advantage. In order to build support for the Anglican Church among the nobility, Henry sold them much of the land that he took from the Catholic Church. This action motivated the nobles to support Henry's actions for fear that, if the Catholic Church was re-established, they would lose the property that had been provided to them.

Return to Catholicism



1547 – Edward VI becomes king

1553 – Mary I becomes queen

Mary brings back Catholicism

“Bloody Mary” burns hundreds of Protestants at the stake



After Henry's death in 1547, his 10-year-old son Edward VI became king, but Edward passed away five years later. His half sister, Queen Mary Tudor, took the throne and reverted England back to Catholicism. During her five-year reign, Mary condemned hundreds of Protestants to death and had them burned at the stake. Her opponents called her “Bloody Mary.”



After Mary died, her sister, Elizabeth, became queen. Unlike her sister, Elizabeth was a Protestant, but was tolerant of those who wanted to remain Catholic. She made the Anglican Church the official church of England, ending religious disputes in the country. The Anglican Church remains the official church of England to this day.


After resolving these religious issues, Elizabeth turned her attention to expanding the empire through colonialism in the New World and elsewhere. During her reign, England defeated the Spanish Armada in 1588. The Spanish fleet sailed against England to overthrow Elizabeth. Spain's defeat showed that Britain was the supreme naval power of the time.

Henry VIII and His Heirs

Question 1 of 3 Point Value: 10

Why did Henry VIII challenge the authority of the Pope?

- He believed in Martin Luther's teachings.
- He wanted to control the Catholic Church's lands.
- He wanted an annulment to try and have a son.
- He wanted to redistribute the Church's wealth.



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