

Reformation and Counter Reformation



The Reformation was a time of great discovery and learning that affected the way individuals viewed themselves and the world.

The Beginning of the Reformation

The Catholic Church was pushing the limits of its power. They were selling **indulgences** (forgiving sins for money) to people who could afford it. The common man could not afford to buy indulgences and they were upset with the church for doing this. A monk of the Catholic Church was bold enough to confront the church about its **corruption**. His name was **Martin Luther**. He challenged the **doctrine** (beliefs) of the church by writing his complaints and nailing them to the door of a church in Wittenberg, Germany on October 31, 1517. This set of complaints is known as **The 95 Theses**. Martin also protested against excommunication (cut off from the church) and the corruption of the church hierarchy. The invention of the printing press allowed information and books to reach the common man. The ability to read the **Bible** by the common man for himself, and hear it in his native language helped to bring about this Reformation. Luther did not intend to **abolish** (break) the Catholic Church but just change its corruption. Martin Luther believed that **salvation** could not be earned by persons' good deeds, but instead was given by God, introducing **the concept of grace**. Luther also believed that believers could **communicate directly with God through prayer and reading of the Bible** which could be printed for the masses (all the people) instead of going through a Catholic priest to ask for sins to be forgiven.



"Martin Luther Nailing the 95 Theses - Google Search." *Martin Luther Nailing the 95 Theses - Google Search.*
N.p., n.d. Web. 19 June 2014.

Question: Why do you think the common man got mad at the selling of indulgences?

Question: Do you think Martin Luther did the right thing speaking against the church? Explain your answer.

Once Martin Luther begins the Reformation others begin to speak up about their beliefs. **John Calvin** also joined the fight for **reform or protest** against the church. He wanted Catholics to reject the church itself and favor a new and even different branch called **Protestantism**. A Protestant is a person who is a member or follower of any of the Western Christian churches that are separate from the Roman Catholic Church and follow the principles of the Reformation, including the Baptist, Presbyterian, and Lutheran churches. Those that followed **John Calvin** are called **Calvinist**.



"John Calvin - Google Search." *John Calvin - Google Search*. N.p., n.d. Web. 19 June 2014.

Early American Protestants, such as **Puritans, Huguenots, and Presbyterians** rejected the Catholic Church and followed Calvin. Another person who came into the fight was **John Knox**. John Knox saw how important it was for the church to do what the Bible said, and not just what they thought was right. He wasn't afraid to stand up to anyone, even kings and queens for what they knew were right. In England, **King Henry VIII** breaks from the church to form the Church of England. He is an example of a monarch's power to break from the church for personal reasons.



"Knox." *Knox*. N.p., n.d. Web. 19 June 2014.



"King Henry VIII (1491-1547)." *King Henry VIII (1491-1547)*. N.p., n.d. Web. 19 June 2014.

Question: The Reformation brought about what change in society and religion?

Question: Give an example of how a monarch could overpower the pope and church?

The Growing of the Protestant Faith

The **northern half of Europe**, including England, Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden, and Norway **followed the Protestant beliefs** while the **southern half of Europe** including France, Spain, Italy, Austria, and Poland **followed the Catholic Church**. The monarchies (rulers) beliefs of each country set the beliefs for the common man in these countries.



"Map of Reformation Europe - Google Search." *Map of Reformation Europe - Google Search*. N.p., n.d. Web. 19 June 2014

Question: Looking at the map above name the three important religions in the 1600's affected by the Reformation.

Reaction of the Catholic Church or Counter Reformation

The Catholic Church tried to end the Reformation through pressure from the Roman Emperor Charles V. He declared war on the kingdoms of Germany to convert them to Catholicism (Catholic beliefs). The **Peace of Augsburg**, 1555, bought a temporary settlement within the Holy Roman Empire of the religious conflict arising from the Reformation. The Catholic Church decided to try to change itself (reform). This period is known as the **Counter Reformation**. Pope

Paul III called a group together that met to discuss change. This group is known as the **Council of Trent**. One of the most important decisions made was to establish the Jesuits. A **Jesuit** was a person who defended the Catholic Church and also converts those who did not believe in the faith (missionary). Often nations went to war for their faith for example the **Thirty Year's War** or persecuted (harassed) its people to believe in the Catholic ideas, example **Spanish Inquisition**.



"The History Channel's Spanish Inquisition." *Alegra The Joy of Spanish Living*.
N.p., n.d. Web. 19 June 2014.

Question: Why did the Catholic Church try to reform itself?

Question: What was a major decision of the Council of Trent?

Question: Why would a country go to war over religious beliefs?