

## The Reformation and Counter-Reformation

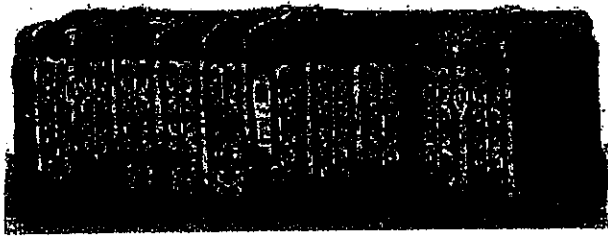
1. The Roman Catholic Church was the most powerful institution in Western Europe during the Middle Ages. People accepted the authority of the Church.

However some people such as kings and princes resented its power.

During the Renaissance this attitude changed. Europeans began to question long accepted religious beliefs and certain practices of the Roman Catholic Church. Those who challenged, or protested against, the ways of the Church were called **Protestants**. Their demand for reform and religious changes in the Church was called the **Protestant Reformation**. One of the reasons this great movement was considered a **turning point** in history was because it led to the creation of a new branch of Christianity: Protestantism. The Protestant Reformation also caused terrible wars and major political changes in Europe.

2. **The First Protestants.** In 1517, a German monk named Martin Luther posted a document on the door of the church in Wittenberg, a university town. This document was known as the "Ninety-five Theses." This was a list of 95 criticisms Luther had against the Roman Catholic Church. His biggest complaint was the sale of **indulgences**. An indulgence was the promise by the Church to cancel some or all of the punishment a forgiven sinner would suffer in purgatory after death as a penalty

for sin. In Luther's time, indulgences were issued in return for contributions for the building of St. Peter's Church in Rome. A famous saying of the time was, "As soon as a coin in the barrel rings, a soul from purgatory springs." Luther was strongly opposed to this practice. He



Indulgence Box

questioned whether the Pope had the power to release someone from purgatory after an indulgence was paid.

Another problem Luther saw was that some clergymen lived worldly lives. Some of them were corrupt, lived in luxury, kept mistresses and had children. Many Catholics had other complaints about the Church, such as the practice of nepotism. Nepotism was the appointment of relatives of high ranking clergymen to positions in the Church.

Church officials were enraged by three of Luther's ideas.

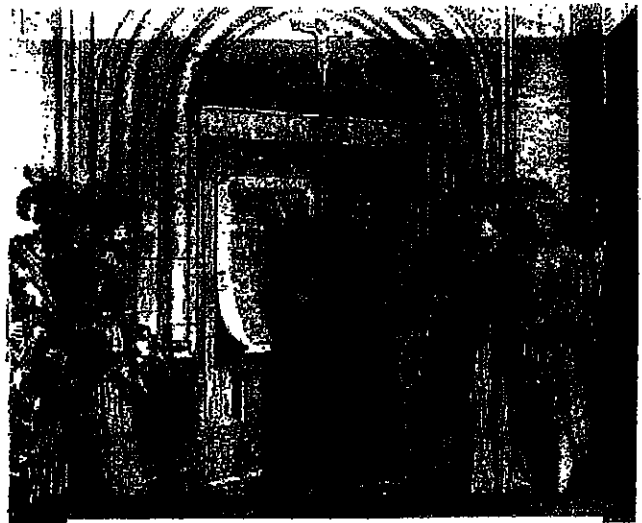
The first idea was that Luther preached a person could be saved and enter heaven through "faith alone." Performing good works or buying indulgences would not guarantee salvation. (The Roman Catholic Church believed that faith and good works were necessary to get to heaven.)

Second, Luther argued that the **Bible** was the only guide to salvation that Christians needed. Third, Luther claimed that the interpreting of the Bible by the Church was not necessary. Christians should be able to read and interpret the Bible for themselves. Luther believed that individuals, not the Pope should interpret God's Word.

In 1520, the pope **excommunicated** Luther. In the next year, Charles V, the Holy Roman Emperor and ruler of most of the states of Germany, declared Luther an outlaw.

Luther continued to speak out for reform. His ideas spread rapidly throughout Germany. Knowing the power of the printed word, Luther translated the Bible into German so it could be read more easily by more people. The common language of a people is called the vernacular.

All of these actions touched off a long struggle between Luther's supporters and his Catholic opponents. Many German princes sided with Luther against the pope. When Charles V tried to force these princes to remain loyal to the Church, they protested. These German princes were called Protestants. They supported the establishment of a new branch of Christianity based on Luther's teaching. Protestant princes welcomed the opportunity to be independent of the Pope.



*Luther nailing the 95 Thesis on the door at Wittenberg.*

**3. The Spread of the Reformation.** The Reformation came to England in a rather roundabout way. The English king, **Henry VIII**, was a loyal Catholic. He wanted a son to insure the succession of the Tudor line of kings. His Spanish wife, had given him a daughter but no son. Henry wanted the pope to grant him a divorce so that he could marry someone else who might give birth to a son. When the pope refused,



Henry VIII

Henry became angry. He appointed an English archbishop who then granted Henry's divorce.

In 1534, Henry broke completely with the Roman Catholic Church. He had Parliament issue the **Act of Supremacy**. This new law made Henry the leader of a separate church called the **Anglican Church** also known as Church of England. Thus, Henry made himself more important than the pope in regulating church matters in England. Henry closed down the Catholic monasteries and seized much of the land in England that belonged to the Roman Catholic Church.

By his actions, King Henry VIII started the movement in England to make Protestantism the main faith authorized by the government.

Between 1536 and 1541, a French lawyer named **John Calvin** organized Protestant churches in Switzerland. Calvin's ideas were somewhat different from those of Luther. Calvin taught a very strict moral code and was against all but the simplest pleasures. He and his followers believed in a life of hard work and prayer. This appealed to the middle class, also known as the bourgeoisie. He believed in the idea of **predestination**. Predestination the belief that God had determined before the beginning of time who would obtain salvation. Calvin's ideas spread to Holland and Scotland. French Calvinists were known as Huguenots. The followers of Calvin in England were called **Puritans**. Both the Huguenots and the Puritans were persecuted. Their religious ideas and strict way of life were quite different from the practices of most English and French people. Many Huguenots and Puritans eventually brought their Protestant faith and their belief in hard work to America.



An early printing press

Luther's ideas as well as those of other reformers throughout Europe were spread more easily due to the printing press, which was invented in Germany in 1450.

4. **The Catholic Counter-Reformation.** The spread of Protestantism throughout Europe in the 16th century threatened the power and authority of the Roman Catholic Church. Catholic leaders took several important steps to maintain its power and to reform itself. This movement to reform the Catholic Church and to stop the spread of Protestantism was called the **Catholic Counter Reformation**. Pope Paul III called Church officials to the **Council of Trent**. During three sessions between 1545 and 1563, this council worked out ways to change and improve the practices of the Church. It ended the sale of indulgences and other practices that had been attacked by the Protestants. The training of priests was improved. The Council also clearly restated the basic beliefs of the Church, including the supremacy power of the Pope over the Church.



*A Roman  
Catholic  
Cathedral*

The Inquisition, or the Church courts established during the Middle Ages, took measures against **heretics**. Heretics are people who have beliefs different from the Church.

**The Inquisition** was very effective especially in Italy and Spain.

The success of the Counter Reformation was greatly aided by the society of Jesus, whose members were known as **Jesuits**. Ignatius Loyola founded the society in 1534 to promote Catholicism. Sometimes called "soldiers of Christ", Jesuits were trained as teachers and missionaries. They traveled to all parts of the world to win converts to the Catholic faith. Jesuits often accompanied Spanish and French explorers on voyages to the New World.

The Counter Reformation successfully strengthened the Roman Catholic Church. Protestantism became less popular in Poland, Hungary, and other East European nations. In Italy, France, Spain and Portugal, Catholicism continued to be the main faith. The Catholic Church went on to become a strong force in South and central America and parts of North America.

**5. The Results of the Reformation.** The Reformation shattered the religious unity of Western Europe and led to the development of Protestant religions. By 1600 almost all of Western Europe was divided into Protestants and Catholics, with each group hostile to each other. In the 1600's these feelings erupted into wars. Several religious wars were fought.

The monarchs of the European nations gained in power and wealth as the strength of the Catholic Church declined. They were able to take over Church lands and taxes.

Progress was made in education and literacy, especially because of the greater interest in reading the Bible.

At first, because of growing competition between Protestants and Catholics, religious intolerance grew.



NAME \_\_\_\_\_

Period \_\_\_\_\_

Using the reading, answer the following questions.

1. What was the Protestant Reformation? \_\_\_\_\_

2. Give one reason why the Protestant Reformation was considered a turning point. \_\_\_\_\_

3. What was the "Ninety-five Theses"? \_\_\_\_\_

3. Why did Luther oppose the sale of indulgences? \_\_\_\_\_

4. Luther believed some clergy lived lives that were too worldly. Explain what this means. \_\_\_\_\_

Use the reading to fill in the box below.

	According to Luther	According to Catholic Church
How a person could be saved and enter heaven	5.	6.
Who should interpret the Bible	7.	8.
What language should the Bible be written in?	9.	LATIN

10. What did the Pope do to Luther as a result of his ideas? \_\_\_\_\_

11. What was Luther's original goal in 1517? \_\_\_\_\_

12. What was the name of the new Church in England? \_\_\_\_\_

13. What was the main belief of John Calvin? \_\_\_\_\_

14. What does this belief mean? \_\_\_\_\_

15. What was the response of the Catholic Church to the Reformation? \_\_\_\_\_

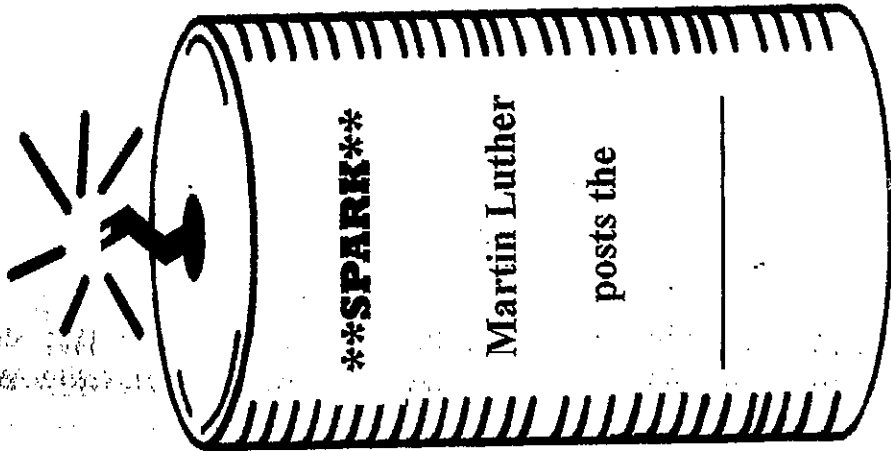
16. Who do you think had the best reasons for splitting with the Catholic Church—Luther or Henry VIII? Explain your answer. (2)

# The Protestant Reformation


**CAUSE**

**CAUSE:**  
SALE OF INDULGENCES

**CAUSE**



Role of the printing press-

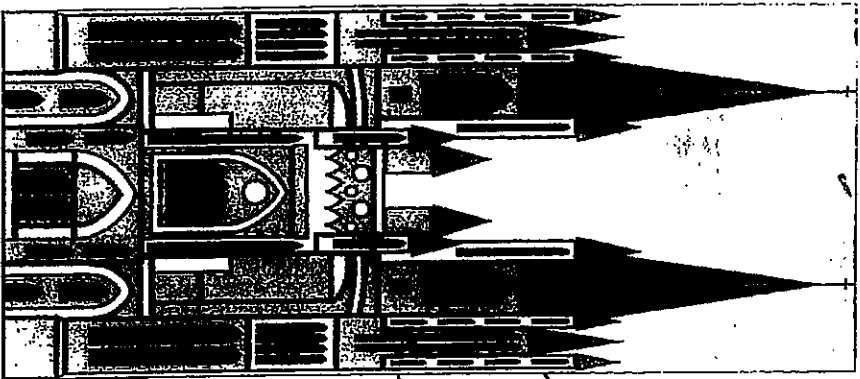


<b>RESULT:</b> Counter Reformation	
Goal-	
Steps taken (2)	
<b>RESULT</b>	
<b>RESULT</b>	
<b>RESULT</b>	

# Religion in Europe

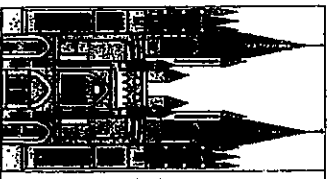
.....  
 : Before the Reformation :  
 .....

.....  
 : After the Reformation :  
 .....

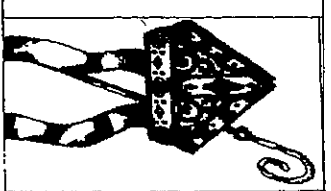


New Denominations Formed

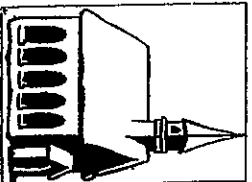
<u>The Roman Catholic Church</u>	
Unified people:	Yes No
Allowed questioning:	Yes No
Provided stability:	Yes No



<u>Roman Catholic Church</u> (Circle One)	
Power of the Church:	Increased Decreased
Power of the Pope:	Increased Decreased



<u>Lutheran Church</u>	
Accepted the Pope:	Yes No
Bible interpreted by:	People Pope



<u>Calvin / Presbyterian Church</u>	
Accepted Predestination:	Yes No
Appealed to:	Lower Class Middle Class



<u>Anglican / Church of England</u>	
Head of Church:	POPE KING

