



The English Act of Supremacy

Turning Points in History
March 22, 2015



Different Phases of the Reformation

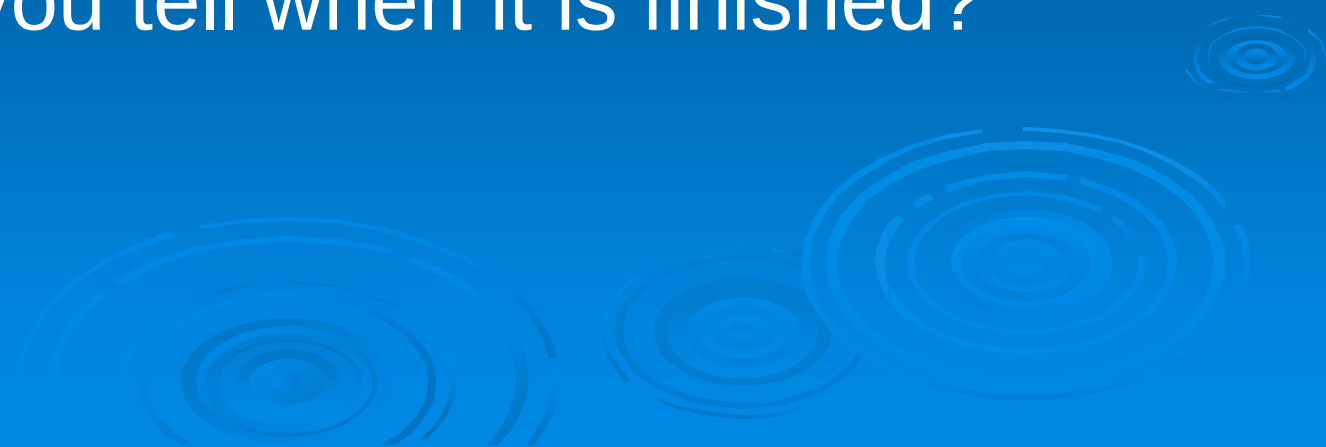
➤ The Magisterial Reformation

- Associated with Luther, Calvin, and the Church of England.
- Emphasized working with the political leadership to bring about reform within the church.

➤ The Radical Reformation

- Associated with the Anabaptists
- Emphasized working with individual believers and churches of the elect to recreate New Testament Christianity

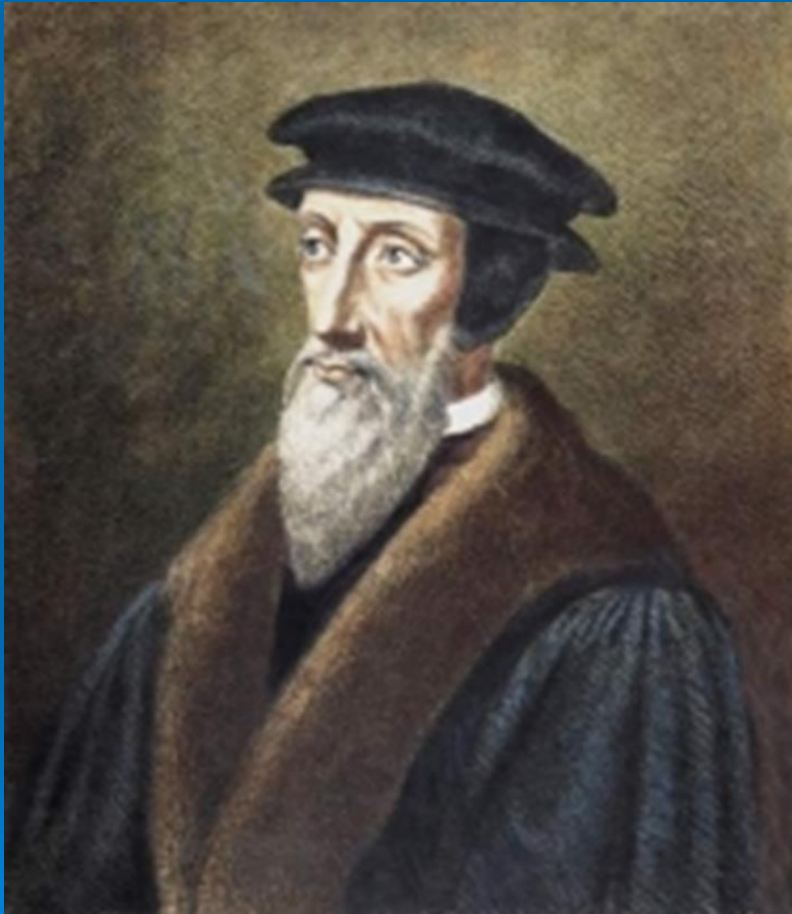
Opening Questions for Table Discussion

- What is the purpose or goal of a Reformation?
 - Who controls the pace of change?
 - How can you tell when it is finished?
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The Contagion of Reformation

- Once the break with Rome has begun, how far will it proceed?
- Can the original reformers maintain control over their reforms?
- Who defines/defends doctrine within the Protestant Churches.
- Can/should state authority be used to maintain doctrine/discipline within the church?
- How much will ideas about authority, deference, and obedience be altered?
- Should the church be completely separated from the state?

Jean Calvin (1509-1564)



- Born in France
- Studied law and influenced by Humanist thought.
- 1533 converted to belief that salvation is by faith in Christ and not by works.

John Calvin Continued

- 1536 Calvin was invited to serve as a pastor in Geneva, Switzerland after Catholic clergy were expelled.
- Exiled in 1538 when he refused to follow the “Council’s” direction in serving Communion.
- Invited back in 1541 to be chief pastor of Genevan Church.
- Goal was to make Geneva a holy and just commonwealth based on the Bible.
- Practiced social control AND social help.

Calvin's Beliefs

➤ Synod of Dort

- Total Depravity (full original sin)
- Unconditional Election (God chooses who is saved)
- Limited Atonement (Christ died only for the elect)
- Irresistible Grace (If elected you can't refuse)
- Perseverance of the Saints (Once saved, always saved)

➤ Calvin's views would heavily influence Presbyterianism, Puritanism, and Congregationalism.

The Anabaptists and the Radical Reformation

- Radical Reformers sought to restore “primitive Christianity” which threatened the existing political, economic, and social order.
- Founded by Thomas Müntzer near Zurich during the peasants war.
- The term “Anabaptist” referred to re-baptizers but was also applied to all who separated from the state churches.
- Diet of Speyer ruled that Anabaptists were guilty of sedition, schism and heresy and proclaimed the death penalty.
- Catholics, Lutherans, and Calvinists all agreed that Anabaptists needed to be exterminated.

Thomas Müntzer

- Müntzer began to viciously criticize Luther
- He formed a paramilitary group called “The League of the Elect”
- Eventually captured and killed in the Peasant’s Revolt



The Münster Rebellion

- In 1533 Melchior Hofmann began teaching that the Second Coming was near and Christ would come to Strasbourg to establish the Millennial Kingdom.
- Jan Matthys and Jan van Leyden then preached Jesus would return to Münster.
- By 1534 they took control of the city council – expelled non-Anabaptists and established communal property ownership then, when under siege, compulsory polygamy.
- The city fell in 1535 and all survivors were massacred.
- Led to increased persecution of Anabaptists



Anabaptists beliefs

- Most Anabaptists avoided the extremes of Müntzer and Münster yet still faced arrest, torture, burning at the stake and drowning.
- Key emphases:
 - Believers baptism
 - Gathered church of the regenerate
 - Religious liberty (no governmental interference or use of sword to promote religion)
 - Lord's Supper as remembrance (does not convey God's grace)
 - Separation from the world
 - Prohibition from oaths in civil law

Anabaptists legacies

- Hutterites practiced a vibrant communal faith but were frequently persecuted for their beliefs and refusing to serve in the military – were chased around Europe and eventual to the US
- Menno Simons (Mennonites) was the most important Anabaptist preacher and theologian who placed great emphasis on full religious liberty.
- Denominational groupings
 - Baptists
 - Amish
 - Brethren
 - Mennonites
 - Quakers
 - Disciples of Christ

Considering a Source

- What do you notice about Elizabeth's Act of Uniformity?
- Who has ordered it?
- What is it reversing?
- What exactly trying to do?
- Would we benefit from something like that today?



Centrifugal Forces

- Nationalism (Concentrating power around monarchical houses)
- Rise of trade leads to new centers of financial power
- Social changes led to a decline of serfdom and rise of merchants, bankers, and lawyers
- Renaissance thought- combined with printing press turned from Medieval to Classical tradition
- How do these changes influence religious life in Europe?

Henry's Dilemma

- The search for an heir?
- The search for the true faith?



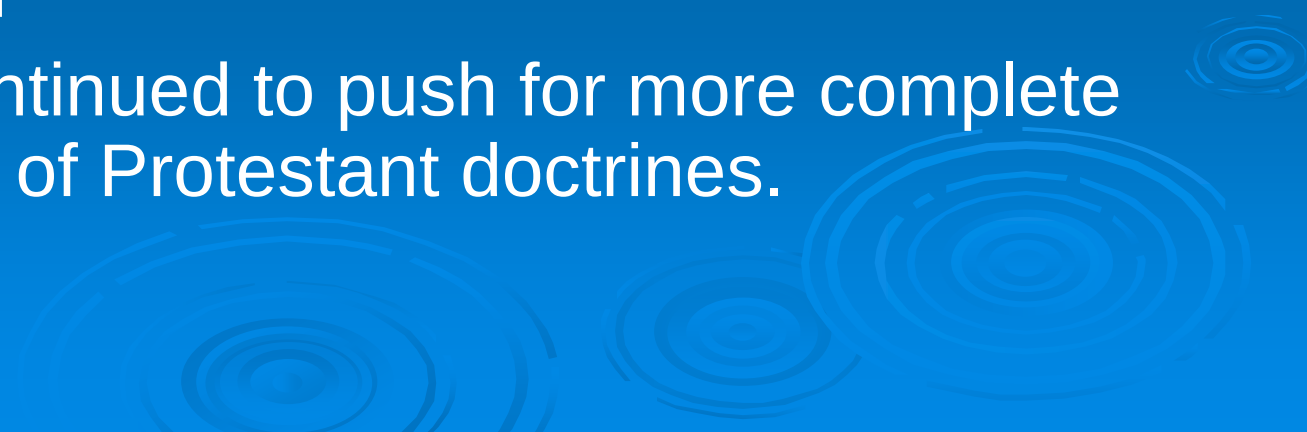
Henry VIII

- Henry marries Catherine of Aragon, with a special papal dispensation allowing him to marry his brother's widow.
- He requests an annulment so he can marry Anne Boleyn.
- Pope Clement VII who's a prisoner to Catherine's nephew, Emperor Charles V who recently sacked Rome, does not grant the annulment.
- Thomas Cranmer supports Henry and uses a series of parliamentary acts to lead to the Act of Supremacy in 1534
 - Officially breaks from Rome and establishes Henry VIII as the Supreme Head of the Church of England
 - Essentially an English Catholic Church with no pope
 - Closed monasteries, giving lands to laymen and universities

Why Learn about the Act?

- It symbolized the collapse of the idea of a universal church in Europe
 - Before local varieties of Catholic faith
 - 1st Protestants encouraged change within existing Catholic Church
- Established an alternative to Catholicism, leading to the beginning of other national “Christianities”
- It illustrates the challenges of attempting to subordinate the church to political or national aspirations.

Ripples from the Act

- Edward VI tried to expand Protestantism in England
 - “Bloody” Mary reversed course attempted to restore Catholicism and relentlessly persecuted Protestants
 - The Elizabethan Settlement preserved a broad and tolerant Protestantism to preserve the unity of the realm
 - Puritans continued to push for more complete acceptance of Protestant doctrines.
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Ripples Continued

- Tensions between Charles I and Puritan ministers leads to the Great Migration to New England and Civil War
- 1649 Parliament executes Charles I and created the Puritan Commonwealth under Oliver Cromwell
- 1660 Charles II restored to the throne
- 1688 – Glorious Revolution deposes James II for marrying a Catholic and having a Catholic heir
- 1829 – Catholic Emancipation Act restores civil equality to Catholics in Great Britain.

Table Discussion Application Questions

- What important lessons can we take away from these Reformation Movements?
- What important legacies do we need to maintain and preserve from the Reformation?

