



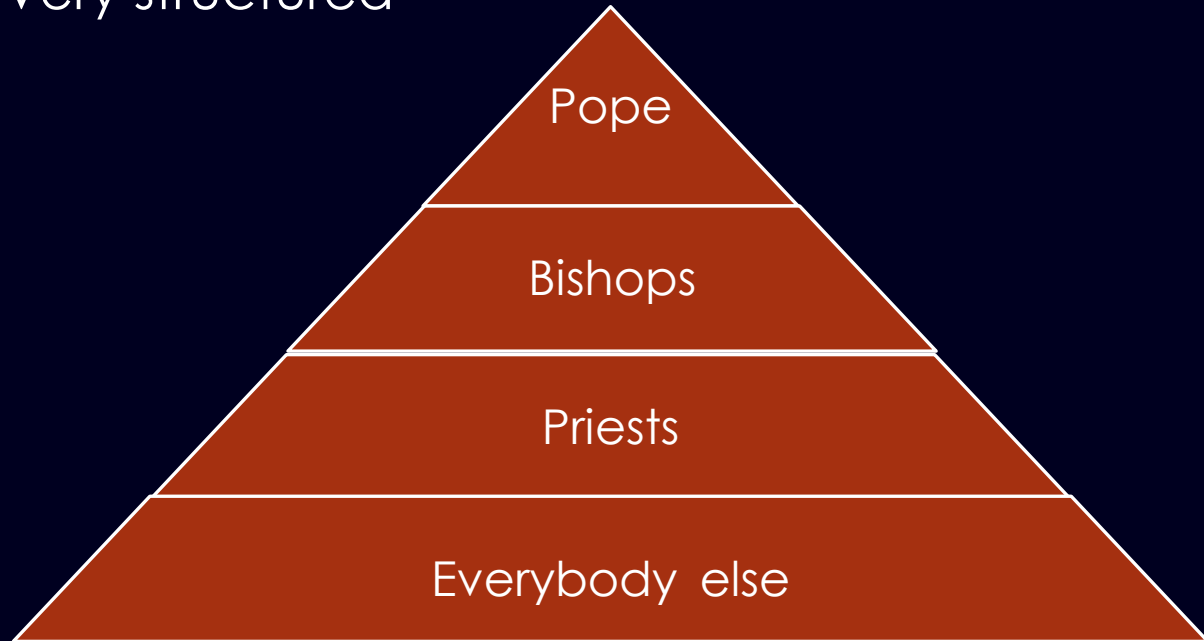
The Reformation

Part 1: What was the problem?

The Mediaeval Church



- ▶ Western Church – mainly centred in Rome
- ▶ Very structured



Mediaeval Church



- The Big Point

It survived!

- Parish priests were very important in communities
 - They were often the only literate people for miles
 - They passed on the story of Jesus

The Problems



- Corruption
 - Mainly in high places
 - Money
 - Sexual morality
- Incompetence
 - Limited literacy
 - Poor information
- Confused teaching
 - What happens after death?

Medieval View – the Afterlife



- Fast track to heaven
 - Martyrs
 - Saints
- Condemned to hell
 - Unrepentant sinners
- ‘Friends at court’
 - Christians in heaven could intercede for others
- Everybody else
 - Repentant sinners go to heaven – eventually
 - Need to be cleansed – *purged* – of remaining sin

Purgatory



- ▶ A place – or condition – of purification
 - ▶ Made sinners ready for heaven
 - ▶ Likely to be painful
 - ▶ Could be lengthy

The Church – in three states



- Church Militant
 - Those currently on earth, trying to serve God
- Church Penitent
 - Those currently in purgatory, before reaching heaven
- Church Triumphant
 - The growing number of Christians in heaven

- *Each can influence the others – there is no big divide*

The treasury of merit



- The merit of Jesus is all-sufficient for salvation
- Martyrs and saints can earn 'surplus' merit
- Ordinary Christians can earn some merit, by good deeds
- Merit of this kind can be used, or transferred to others, to reduce the 'time' in purgatory
- *The pope is authorised to use this treasury of grace to reduce purgatory - indulgences*

Political background: 1500



- Much of Europe was within the Holy Roman Empire
 - Mainly the German states (including Austria)
 - France, Spain and Italy were also involved,
 - The heir apparent to Spain was also heir to the empire
 - France was worried about the accumulation of power
 - Government was loose and largely devolved to local rulers
- Main exceptions were Scandinavia, France, Great Britain and Ireland
- The 'New World' had just been discovered (1492)



Signs of Change



- ▶ William Wycliffe (England) in 1380s
 - ▶ The 'morning star of the Reformation'
 - ▶ Followers translated Bible (illegally) into English
- ▶ Jan Hus (Bohemia) early 15th Century
 - ▶ Made Bohemia fertile ground for later Reform
- ▶ Giralomo Savonarola (Florence) in 1480s
 - ▶ Objected to immorality of both church and society
 - ▶ Led reform movement, but was executed in 1498

Change Factors



➤ Humanism

- Intellectual movement behind Renaissance
- Revered old masters
 - Art
 - Literature
 - Philosophy
- *Ad fontes*
- Applied approach to scripture and faith

➤ The Printing Press

- Invented by Gutenberg, around 1454
- Enabled rapid reproduction of texts and ideas
- Evaded censorship
- Made books affordable
- Encouraged literacy

Martin Luther

1483-1546

Augustinian friar

University theologian

Asserted that salvation is
by grace – not works



Leo X

Elected pope in 1513

Planned to rebuild St Peter's Basilica

Needed funds

Authorised sale of indulgences



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University theologian

Asserted that
salvation is by grace –
not works

Wrote 95 theses
against indulgences



Objections to Indulgences



- Only God can remove guilt
- Only God can absolve from punishment
- Therefore an indulgence can have no effect
- Since Christians are already pardoned and go to heaven, indulgences are unnecessary

- However, if the pope had any power to release anyone from purgatory, he should release *everyone*, without payment.

Logical conclusions



- The Bible has authority over the church
- Purgatory is not mentioned in scripture, so it is a fiction
- God enters into relationship with individuals, so intermediaries are unnecessary for salvation
 - Church leaders
 - Saints
 - Mary, the mother of Jesus

Luther's retentions



- The word 'mass'
 - (Bach was a Lutheran composer of masses)
- The idea of the 'real presence' in bread and wine
- Vestments, images (to some extent) and church décor
- Two sacraments
 - Baptism
 - Communion
 - *and Confession/Absolution (sometimes)*

Luther's rejections



- A separate priestly 'caste'
- Celibacy for clergy
- Church leaders as interpreters of scripture
- Five 'sacraments'
 - Confirmation
 - Confession/Penance (*perhaps*)
 - Anointing of the sick
 - Holy Orders (ordination)
 - Marriage

Who were the Protestants?



- ▶ Civic leaders and nobles who lodged a 'protest' at the decision at the 2nd Diet of Speier (1529):
 - ▶ All states *already Lutheran* could remain so;
 - ▶ All other states must remain Catholic
- ▶ The Protestants said the Diet should have no power over men's (!) consciences – in other words, change should be allowed to continue.

Luther's legacy – the *Solae*



- Only scripture – as the source of authority
- Only grace – as the mechanism of salvation
- Only faith – as the means of attaining salvation (excluding salvation by works)