



The Reformation

Part 2: What happened?

Reform and Reformers

Martin Luther (1483-1546)



- 95 Theses
 - Mostly about purgatory and indulgences
- Triggered a demand for reform, mainly in Germany
- *But he wasn't the only reformer...*

Huldrych Zwingli (1484-1531)



- ▶ Luther's contemporary
- ▶ Catholic priest, in charge of Zurich Cathedral
- ▶ Saw Christianity as largely a matter of morality
 - ▶ Rules found in the Sermon on the Mount
 - ▶ Not in the Church's laws about fasts, penances, etc.
 - ▶ Preached (from 1522) against corruption in the Church

Huldrych Zwingli



- Only accepted teachings found in the Bible
 - Rejected mediation by saints (including Mary)
 - Rejected idea of Christian priesthood
 - Rejected clerical celibacy (he married a young widow)
- Supported by Zurich city council and then the canton

Huldrych Zwingli



- Seems to have had a fear of beauty
 - Perhaps felt it was seductive, leading away from God
 - Worship was austere and spiritual – not sensory
 - Images, candles, altars, vestments and ornaments were removed
 - Music was abolished for worship
 - Most people couldn't understand it
 - Those who understood it could be distracted by it.
- Saw the 'Lord's Supper' as purely symbolic, observed as a memorial, not a re-enactment

Huldrych Zwingli



- Supported by Zurich and a few other cantons
- Opposed by the majority of Swiss cantons
- Zwingli prepared for war, which came in October 1531.
- There was only one battle, and Zwingli was killed during it
- Zurich remained a centre of Reform
 - More moderate
 - Less antagonistic towards other cantons

The Radical Reformers



- Luther said people should read the Bible and interpret it for themselves.
- The Radicals practised this approach very literally.
- Main family of radicals was the Anabaptists

Anabaptists



- Saw in Acts that conversion had a specific shape:
 - Preaching – Repentance – Faith – Baptism
- They said that the churches had this wrong
 - They baptised people (infants) who had not come to faith
 - Anabaptists baptised only believers

Anabaptist Characteristics



- Refusal to swear oaths
- Pacifism (for many)
- Some were socialists
- Unable to hold public office
- Very varied – a congregational, rather than hierarchical, structure

Anabaptists and other Reformers



- Anabaptists were opposed by Catholics, Lutherans, Zwinglians and others

Anabaptist dangers



- Some 'interpreted the Bible for themselves' to produce strange conclusions
 - One leader thought he was the prophet Enoch
 - Jan Bokelson took over Münster as the 'New Jerusalem'
 - Law in Münster became irrational and arbitrary
 - Münster retaken by Catholic forces and Anabaptists excluded

Anabaptist Legacy



- Reading the Bible for oneself
- Congregational Polity
- Direct ancestor of Moravian Brethren, Amish and others
- Indirect ancestor of modern Baptists
- Tendency to get interpretation wrong
 - e.g. rejection of Trinity
 - Unfulfilled prophecies
- Long-term distrust from other Christians

John Calvin (Jean Cauvin) (1509-1564)



- French Lawyer
- Influenced by Luther's writings
- Fled France (1534) to escape threat
- Strasbourg – then Basel
- Began writing *Institutes of the Christian Religion* in 1536
 - Completed around 1555

Calvin and Luther



Luther wanted to

- *Reform* the Catholic Church
 - Abolish teachings and practices contradictory to Scripture

Calvin wanted to

- *Re-form* the Church from first principles
 - Only permitting teachings and practices *explicitly* found in Scripture

Calvin and Luther



Luther

- Deliberately ambivalent about images
 - Did no harm
 - Might help some people

Calvin

- Strongly opposed to images
 - Distractions from God
 - Too much like idols

Calvin and Luther



Luther saw

- Mass as re-enactment of the sacrifice of Jesus
 - Body and blood of Jesus actually present
 - Bread and wine remain physically present

Calvin saw

- *Lord's Supper* as a memorial
 - Bread and wine are purely symbolic

Calvin and Geneva



- William Farel promoting reform in Geneva, 1536
- Invited Calvin to help
- Provoked riots (1538) over supervision of people's behaviour
- Evicted in 1538

Calvin and Geneva



- Calvin (without Farel) invited back, 1541
- Took control of reform in churches and city

Calvin and Geneva's Churches 1541



- Buildings stripped of all decoration
- People could sing psalms, but not hymns
- Children could be given only Biblical names

Calvin and the City of Geneva



- All taverns were closed
- Dancing, theatre and *fashionable trousers* (!) were abolished
- Gluttony was a crime, punishable by imprisonment

Calvin and Predestination



- Not a new doctrine – Augustine and Luther had accepted it
- Given new emphasis by Calvin
 - Exaggerated by later followers
- Asserts God's sovereign choice of 'the elect'
- Implies that others are chosen (or rejected) for a different destiny

Calvin's Legacy



- Influence over non-Catholic Christianity in France, the Netherlands, Great Britain and Ireland
- Influence through migrants on new communities
- Influence through missionaries on newly Christian communities

The Reformation in Britain

Background



- Around 1500 Britain was very Catholic
 - England known as 'Mary's dowry'
- Henry VIII (1509) married Catherine almost immediately on accession – an alliance with Spain
- Catherine had previously been married to Henry's older brother, Arthur
 - Arthur died six months after the wedding (aged 15)
 - Pope provided annulment, allowing Henry and Catherine to marry

Henry's Problem



- Henry and Catherine married 1509
- Issue: one daughter (Mary)
- Henry needed a son as successor
- He came to believe he was being punished for marrying his brother's widow
- He also had his eye on pretty Anne Boleyn

Henry's solution



- An Annulment – marriage to Catherine had never really existed
 - Needed confirmation by the pope
 - The pope was the prisoner of the King of Spain – Catherine's nephew, so no help
 - Pope's authority had to be ended in England

Henry's Church of England



- ▶ Anne's influence – Lutheran
- ▶ Cranmer – increasingly Calvinist
- ▶ Henry – Catholic (but without the pope)
- ▶ Catholic style
 - ▶ Bishops, cathedrals, vestments, incense, images, etc.
- ▶ Reformed teaching
 - ▶ Bible in English made available, clergy permitted to marry

Henry's problem continued



- Marriage to Anne produced only a daughter (Elizabeth)
- Henry became desperate
 - Anne had to go – executed for treason
 - Married Jane Seymour
 - Produced a son (Edward)
 - Jane died days later

Edward VI and the Church



- Edward became king (1547) aged 9
 - Raised by Reformers
 - Some acted as regents in his early years
 - Reform progressed
 - Mass for souls in purgatory prohibited
 - Cranmer's book of Common Prayer issued (1547)
- Died (1553) aged 15

Mary



- Daughter of Catherine
 - Very Catholic
 - Had a grudge against the Reformers
- Became queen (1553)
 - Attempted to return England to Catholicism
 - Removed married clergy and reformers from their positions
 - Created punitive regime for Reformist leaders
 - Many Reformers fled to Europe

Elizabeth



- Became queen in 1558
- Looked – and acted – like Henry
 - Could not become Catholic and remain queen
 - Subject to Catholic plots
- Returned Church of England to Henry's style, but with slightly more Reformed doctrines

The Elizabethan Compromise



- Catholic style
 - Bishops, vestments, choirs, etc.
- Reformed teaching
 - Forbidden to mention purgatory
 - Prayers to saints abolished
 - Pope described as 'foreign prince'

Elizabethan Puritans



- Rejected the compromise
- Wanted a 'pure church' made up only of believers
- Tended to expect belief to match behaviour, so morality was important
- Not really welcomed by the state, because of the difficult 'balancing act'

Scotland



- Strongly Catholic – Monarchy in disarray
 - James IV died (1513) leaving 17 month old successor (James V), with Margaret (Henry's sister) as regent
 - James V died (1542) leaving 6 day old successor (Mary)
 - Mary forced to abdicate (1567) in favour of her son (James VI) – a one-year-old

John Knox (1505-1572)



- Catholic priest (1540)
- Reformist activist from 1545
- Supported English reforms under Edward
- Fled Mary's regime to Calvin's Geneva
 - 'the most perfect school of Christ'
- Returned to Scotland (1559) as campaigner

Scotland's Reformation



- Multi-track approach
 - Crown and court favoured Catholicism
 - Government adopted Reformed Christianity (Geneva-style) in 1561, influenced by Knox and others
 - Anglican style reform also attempted

James VI and I



- James VI of Scotland succeeded Elizabeth in 1603
- Reformers hoped his Scottish experience would lead to further English reforms
- Instead, he rejected the Calvinism of his youth and strengthened Elizabeth's Church of England

The Catholic Response

1. Council of Trent (1545-63)



- ▶ Highlighted differences with Protestants
 - ▶ Latin *Vulgate* the only authorised version
 - ▶ Latin mass (only) to be used
 - ▶ Bible and Tradition equally authoritative
 - ▶ Affirmation of traditional practices – indulgences, pilgrimage, veneration of saints. etc.
- ▶ Applied internal reforms
 - ▶ Absentee bishops penalised
 - ▶ Lax morality corrected
 - ▶ Administrative corruption corrected

The Catholic Response

2. Baroque style



- Architecture, art and music
- Highly decorated
- Intended to overwhelm the senses
 - Generate awe, inspire worship
- Response to unemotional Reformed worship

The Catholic Response

3. The Order of Jesus (Jesuits)



- Founded in Spain (1534)
- Call to evangelisation, education and works of charity
- Missionary order, (e.g.) pioneering in China and India
- Often associated with baroque church buildings

The Catholic Response

4. Continuing



- Council of Trent remained binding until 1960s
- Vatican I (1869-70) declared 'papal infallibility' but changed little else
- Vatican II (1962-65)
 - Permitted vernacular Bible and mass
 - Recognised non-Catholics as 'separated brethren' (not heretics)
 - Declared the whole church (not just the clergy) to be the 'people of God'
 - Remains disputed, and is a 'work in progress'