

The Protestant Reformation: Martin Luther, 1517-1529

- I. Reformers before the Reformation
 - a. Critics of the church concentrated on three disorders:
 - i. Clerical moral laxity
 - ii. Clerical lack of education
 - iii. Clerical pluralism and absenteeism
 - b. John Wycliffe (1320-1384)
 - c. Jan Hus (1369-1415)
- II. The Lutheran Upheaval
 - a. Martin Luther's Early Life
 - i. Sent to the University of Erfurt to study law
 - ii. Brushes with death
 - iii. 1505: Luther enters an Augustinian monastery
 - iv. 1513: Conversion experience—the quest for spiritual peace
 - b. Salvation and the Church
 - i. The Church (sacraments) and the believer (piety and charity) could affect salvation
 - ii. The Church “quantified” the process of salvation
 - iii. The “Treasury of Merits”
 - iv. The indulgence
 - 1. Remission of the penitential obligations imposed by priests
 - 2. Indulgences earned by demanding spiritual exercises (eleventh and twelfth centuries)
 - 3. Indulgences granted with a monetary payment
 - 4. Indulgences seen by many as just another form of simony (selling grace in return for cash)
 - 5. “Here I stand; God help me, I can do no other.”
 - c. The Reformation begins
 - i. Albert of Hohenzolern
 - 1. Debt and simony
 - 2. The bargain with Pope Leo X
 - 3. Granted Albert an indulgence
 - 4. Half the money went to build Saint Peter's Basilica at Rome
 - 5. Half the money went to Albert
 - d. Johann Tetzel
 - i. Hawked indulgences in northern Germany with Fugger support
 - ii. Sold indulgences as “tickets to heaven”
 - e. October 31, 1517: Luther's Ninety-Five Theses
 - i. Written in Latin, intended for academic dispute
 - ii. Translated and published in German
 - iii. 1519: public disputation in Leipzig
 - iv. Luther maintained that the pope and all clerics were merely fallible men
 - v. The highest authority for an individual's conscience was the truth of Scripture
 - f. Pope Leo charged Luther with heresy
 - g. Luther's pamphlets of 1520—general ideas
 - i. Justification by faith alone
 - ii. The primacy of Scripture
 - 1. The literal meaning of Scripture takes precedence over Church traditions
 - iii. The “priesthood of all believers”
 - 1. All Christian believers are spiritually equal before God
 - iv. General consequences
 - 1. Good works do not lead to salvation

- a. Fasts, pilgrimages, and the veneration of relics were valueless
 - 2. The dissolution of all monasteries and convents
 - 3. Proposed substituting German for Latin in church services
 - 4. Reduced the number of sacraments from seven to two (baptism and the Eucharist)
 - 5. Denied that the Mass was a repetition of Christ's sacrifice on the cross
 - 6. Proposed the abolition of the entire ecclesiastical hierarchy of popes and bishops
 - 7.
 - v. The break with Rome
 - 1. The role of the printing press in spreading Luther's message
 - 2. Luther's defiance touched off a national religious revolt against the papacy
 - a. Popes bribed the cardinals to gain papal power
 - b. Moral corruption
 - c. Popes waged war to gain territory
 - 3. There were no agreements (concordats) between pope and German emperor
 - 4. Princes complained that taxes were too high
 - 5. Many German princes sided with Luther as a way to attack Roman influence and corruption
 - vi. The Diet of Worms (1521)
 - 1. Luther handed over to Elector Frederick the Wise for punishment as a heretic
 - 2. Frederick convened a Diet (formal assembly) to give Luther a fair hearing
 - 3. Initiative lay with presiding officer, Charles V (Holy Roman emperor)
 - a. Would not tolerate attacks on the Church or the emperor
 - vii. Luther kidnapped by Frederick and brought to the castle of the Wartburg
 - viii. Edict of Worms declared Luther an outlaw (never enforced)
 - ix.
- III. The German princes and the Lutheran Reformation
 - a. The new religion prevailed in areas where princes formally established Lutheranism
 - b. Rulers sought to control appointments to Church offices and restrict flow of money to Rome
 - i. 1487: Innocent VIII consented to the establishment of the Spanish Inquisition
 - ii. 1516: Concordat of Bologna—French king to choose bishops and abbots
 - c. The consolidation of the authority of the German princes
 - d. Free cities adopted Lutheranism in order to establish supreme governing authority
 - e. Luther and temporal authority
 - i. 1523: *On Temporal Authority*—God must be obeyed in all things
 - ii. 1525: *Against the Thievish, Murderous Hordes of Peasants*