

Denominationalism, Religious Cults and World Religions

Lesson 4

The Rise of the Reformation Movement

Introduction:

The Reformation Movement officially began in 1517 when Martin Luther challenged the Roman Church on the matter of Indulgences. Although Luther had no idea of the impact this would make on the German society and the world, his actions changed the course of history.

"The Reformation of the sixteenth century is, next to the introduction of Christianity, the greatest event in history. It marks the end of the Middle Ages and the beginning of modern times. Starting from religion, it gave, directly or indirectly, a mighty impulse to every forward movement, and made Protestantism the chief propelling force in the history of modern civilization" (Philip Schaff, *History of the Christian Church*).

There had been many attempts to reform the Roman Church before the 16th century, but they were all squelched by the Inquisition. There were also groups outside the Roman Church, such as the Albigenses and Waldenses, who opposed the Roman Church and paid the price of martyrdom for their opposition. Men such as John Wycliffe (1320-1384), John Huss (1360-1415), and Savonarola (1452-1498) spoke out against the papacy, purgatory, worship of saints, relics, confessions to priests, etc. Huss and Savonarola were burned at the stake as heretics. Even Rome herself made some halfhearted attempts to reform at the Councils of Pisa (1409), Constance (1414-1418) and Basel (1431), but these were not successful. There was a group within the Roman Church called *The Brethren of the Common Life* that came into existence around 1350 for the specific purpose of bringing reform. Some famous men who belonged to this group were John of Wessel, Erasmus and Thomas à Kempis.

Religious, economic and political factors that had been brewing for centuries also set the stage for the Reformation. The papacy was corrupt; monasticism and scholastic theology had declined; while there was an upswing in a revival of the Greek and Roman classics; men with a spirit of inquiry and independence were discovering the new world; the printing press had been invented, and the Greek New Testament had been republished. The Renaissance was also a factor in that it challenged men to use their minds - but the Renaissance was purely secular, not religious. However, all these factors combined brought about the greatest religious revival since the first three centuries of the Church.

Some men have wrongly called the Protestant Reformation a Protestant revolution because much of the Reformation was political and economic. Men forget that because

the Roman Church controlled everything, it was necessary for the Reformation to include political and economic elements. If Protestants were to survive, they had to have political and economic power to hold off Rome.

"For the Reformation was neither a revolution nor a restoration, though including elements of both. It was negative and destructive towards error, positive and constructive towards truth; it was conservative as well as progressive; it built up new institutions in the place of those which it pulled down; and for this reason and to this extent it has succeeded" (Schaff).

"There are two leading aspects in which the Reformation, viewed as a whole, may be regarded; the one more external and negative, and the other more intrinsic and positive. In the first aspect it was a great revolt against the See of Rome, and against the authority of the church and of churchmen in religious matters, combined with an assertion of the exclusive authority of the Bible, and of the right of all men to examine and interpret it for themselves. In the second and more important and positive aspect, the Reformation was the proclamation and inculcation, upon the authority of Scripture, of certain views in regard to the substance of Christianity or the way of salvation, and in regard to the organization and ordinances of the Christian church" (William Cunningham, *The Reformers and the Theology of the Reformation*).

While the Reformation Movement began the first bold steps in opposing Roman Catholic doctrines and practices it stopped short of a full and complete return to New Testament Christianity and the church as found in the Scriptures. Many religious groups that were spawned during this movement retained some of the doctrines and practices of Catholicism – and still do so today. It will not be until the Restoration Movement that men will begin making complete departures from any religious doctrine or practice that cannot be supported by the authority of Scripture.

However, had it not been for the Reformation Movement, the Restoration Movement would have been nearly impossible. Therefore, it's important to consider the factors that led to the first radical steps in departing from Roman Catholicism.

I. Social and economic factors that led to the Reformation Movement:

- A. The Renaissance: (From the 14th through the 17th centuries – also called "The Age of Enlightenment" or "The Age of Humanism"):
 - 1. The word "Renaissance" simply means a rebirth or revival.
 - 2. The Renaissance began in Italy and rapidly spread throughout Europe.
 - a. It was a cultural movement that dramatically affected literature, philosophy, art, music, politics, science, and religion.
 - b. With the Fall of Constantinople (1453 AD) Greek scholars began immigrating to the West, bringing with them precious manuscripts in

ancient Greek, many of which had fallen into obscurity.

- c. Among these manuscripts were those of the Greek New Testament, which were brought from Byzantium to Western Europe and were read by Western scholars for the first time since late antiquity.
- d. The return to the original Greek of the New Testament helped pave the way for the Protestant Reformation.

B. The need for the Renaissance:

- 1. The power of the Pope and the state had both become weak.
- 2. People were ignorant of Bible teaching (the Bible was not available to the common people), and only knew well-established Catholic doctrines.
- 3. Punishment for openly opposing or criticizing Catholic doctrine was swift and severe (this is especially true of the period known as "The Inquisition").
- 4. Therefore, the people were unwilling and even fearful of seeking further truth.

C. Other factors that led to the rise of the Renaissance:

- 1. The crusades brought new ideas (philosophies) from the East and created a desire for cultural advancement.
- 2. The weakening of the Papacy through the rise of national states throughout Europe (initially one-third of the land in Europe was owned by the Catholic Church).
- 3. The breakdown of asceticism – which was the principle philosophy behind celibacy, monastic communities (monasteries), and self-imposed poverty of priests.
- 4. A growing interest in intellectual pursuits:
 - a. Renaissance Humanism (as opposed to Secular Humanism): This was a cultural and educational reform prompted by scholars, writers, and civic leaders. They sought to create a community (frequently including women) that would be able to speak and write with eloquence and clarity, and capable of encouraging others in

their communities to cultural and educational advances through the study of "the humanities": grammar, language, history, poetry and moral philosophy.

- b. The establishment of universities – most of the great reformers were the product of universities. The revival of learning produced a form of healthy skepticism which led many to question the authority and teachings of the Roman Catholic Church.
- 5. The rise and spread of capitalism – printing of money, minting coins, beginning of the banking system, and increase in exploration, trade and discovery for monetary purposes.
- 6. The invention of the printing press (about 1445)
- 7. The Bible became readily available to the common people.
 - a. John Wycliffe (1320-1384): translated the Bible from the Latin Vulgate into Middle English (standard language of the people).
 - b. William Tyndale (1492-1536): translated the New Testament and about half of the Old Testament into English from Hebrew and Greek manuscripts. It was more accurate than the Wycliffe Bible, and was the first to be issued in printed form. About 90 percent of the King James Version (1611) comes from the Tyndale translation.
 - c. Coverdale Bible: was the first complete printed Bible translation into English. Compiled by Myles Coverdale (1488-1569) and published in 1535, it was heavily influenced by Tyndale: Coverdale took Tyndale's New Testament and the published portions of his Old Testament, and translated the remainder of the Old Testament himself from Latin and German versions.
 - d. Matthew's Bible: was produced by John Rodgers (1500-1555), working under the pseudonym "Thomas Matthew" for safety. It was based on Tyndale's previously published editions with the addition of his unpublished Old Testament material. The remainder used Coverdale's translation. The Matthew's Bible received the approval of Henry VIII.

II. Religious factors that led to the Reformation Movement:

- A. Opposition grew against many doctrines and practices of Roman Catholicism, including:
 - 1. Veneration of saints:
 - a. Certain martyrs were elevated to a special category of "sainthood" by election and declaration of the Church. Relics connected with these persons were often collected and considered sacred, while images of these "saints" (in Roman Catholicism) and paintings (in Eastern Orthodox Catholicism) were used in worship.
 - b. Those who were recognized as worthy of "sainthood" were said to have performed exceptional acts of faith and service that were "beyond the call of duty" (known as "Supererogation"), making them worthy of this special honor.
 - 2. The worship of Mary:
 - a. This is alleged to have begun as early as 185 AD, and eventually evolved into the belief that Mary was free from sin, and remained a perpetual virgin following the birth of Jesus. Legends arose that claimed Mary had been carried into heaven by angels when she died, and became, in essence, a "heavenly queen." As a result, she became the one through whom prayers could be offered to Jesus Christ.
 - 3. Sacramental system:
 - a. The Eucharist: The sacrament that declares the unleavened bread and fruit of the vine become the body and blood of Jesus Christ during the partaking of the Lord's Supper (the doctrine of "Transubstantiation").
 - b. Penance: Catholics teach, "The Church has the power to forgive all sins" and that "sins are forgiven by absolution which can only be given by an authorized priest."
 - 4. Purgatory: From a word which means "cleansing" or "purifying" came the doctrine which claims there is a temporary place where those who

were not permitted into Heaven at death are sent to be purged (cleansed) of their sins. Once purged of sins, they are eventually able to enter heaven.

- 5 Simony (named after "Simon the Sorcerer" – Acts 8): It is the sin of purchasing spiritual advantages by money or other material possessions.
 - a. More specifically, it is the practice of buying offices in the Roman Catholic Church. In addition to buying their offices, they clergy were required to pay annual dues or fees – which the priests recouped by charging various fees for their services (usually high fees).
 - b. Pope Leo X (1513-1528) made \$1 million dollars per year on this system. Other offices in the Roman Catholic Church were purchased by noblemen for their sons as a form of honor.
6. Indulgences: In Catholic theology, an indulgence is the full or partial remission of temporal punishment due for sins which have already been forgiven. The indulgence is granted by the Catholic Church after the sinner has confessed and received absolution.
 - a. The theory behind the sale of Indulgences is simple. Although God forgave sins, the church (namely the Pope) retained the right to impose temporal punishment as a means of penance. Therefore, the purchase of an indulgence would shorten that punishment. In essence, the sale of indulgences encouraged sin (knowing one could purchase an indulgence in advance of any given sin to lessen the punishment for that sin).
 - b. Indulgences could be purchased by the sinner himself, or on behalf of someone in purgatory. If purchased on behalf of someone in purgatory, the indulgence would shorten the sinner's stay. The belief is that indulgences draw on the "Treasury of Merit" supposedly accumulated by Christ's superabundantly meritorious sacrifice on the cross and the virtues and penances of the saints.

- c. Indulgences were sold in a franchise manner by selling them to others who could then resell them. They became the principle source of money for the Roman Catholic Church. Indulgences were also offered as inducements to go to war during various crusades.
- d. Abuses in selling and granting indulgences were a major point of contention that prompted Martin Luther to be at the forefront of the Protestant Reformation (1517).

III. Early Reformers (Prior to Martin Luther):

A. William of Occam (1300-1349):

- 1. His teachings:
 - a. A general council has more authority than the Pope (a council has more authority than the authority of any one man).
 - b. The Bible should be the only authority in the church.
 - c. In secular matters the church and the Pope must be subordinate to the state.
 - d. The Pope is not infallible. In 1331 William of Occam challenged the Pope on the question of imposed poverty of priests. He was sentenced to expulsion from his order, imprisoned and eventually excommunicated.

B. John Wycliffe (1320-1384): (Also spelled Wyclif and Wycliff)

- 1. His teachings:
 - a. The Scripture alone should be authoritative in religious matters.
 - b. Christ is the only head of the church.
 - c. The Bible mentions only two church offices: Elders and Deacons.
 - d. He opposed:
 - The clergy interfering in secular rule, especially the Pope.
 - The use of images and relics, and the Latin language in worship.
 - Extreme Unction (Last Rites).
 - Monasticism - he said it opposed the spirit of Christianity.

- The Doctrine of Transubstantiation.
 - Indulgences.
 - Purgatory.
2. While in Rome in 1374 Wycliffe saw the corruption of the priesthood and began to speak and write against the Pope, calling him the "Anti-Christ."
 3. Pope Gregory XI (1377) issued a proclamation for the arrest and "examination" of Wycliffe, but John of Gaunt, 1st Duke of Lancaster, offered Wycliffe protection from the Pope.
 - a. Nevertheless, Pope Gregory XI condemned 19 points in Wycliffe's writings. Later, the Archbishop of Canterbury (1392) condemned 24 points in Wycliffe's writings.
 - b. In 1410 anyone having copies of Wycliffe's writings was subject to death. Finally, in 1415 the Council of Constance condemned 267 of Wycliffe's writings and condemned him as a heretic.
- C. John Huss (1369-1415): (Also spelled Hus)
1. Huss is often called the "John the Baptist" of the Reformation. He was appointed head of the University of Prague (1409), and became a professor there as well as a preacher.
 2. His teachings:
 - a. Opposed indulgences and the corruption of the Roman Catholic priesthood.
 - b. Everyone must study the Scriptures.
 - c. Endorsed many of the teachings of Wycliffe.
 3. Huss was excommunicated by the archbishop of Prague (1411) and later by the Pope of Rome. He was arrested and burned at the stake on July 6, 1415.
 4. Following his death his followers split into two groups:
 - a. Taborites - militant.
 - b. Utraquists - believed every Christian should partake of both elements of the Lord's Supper, not just the bread.

D. Jerome Savonarola (1452-1498):

1. Savonarola entered a monastery at the age of 20, was educated as a priest, and began to preach directly from the Bible – this led to his immense popularity among the laity who had never heard the Bible taught.
2. He became bold in attacking the wickedness he witnessed among priests, and was known for two "visions": he claimed to have had:
 - a. A vision of Rome with a cloud over it raining swords (1492).
 - b. A black cross over Rome and a beautiful cross over Jerusalem.
4. When Charles VIII of France led his army into Italy in 1494, he welcomed Savonarola to the city of Florence, placing him in charge of all governmental affairs of the city. This gave Savonarola power to reform the church within Florence.
 - a. The Pope offered Savonarola the position of Cardinal if he would stop his reforms, but Savonarola is said to have told the Pope he would prefer a cap of blood to the cap of a Cardinal. The Pope then demanded that he stop preaching but he refused.
 - b. Savonarola had no desire to leave the Catholic Church – he just wanted to reorganize the Church on a Scriptural basis.
5. Pope Alexander VI threatened him with an interdict and was condemned as a heretic. Savonarola was later arrested, tortured, and confessed under torture, but when he was released he retracted his confession. He was then arrested and hanged and his body burned (1488).

E. Erasmus (1466-1536):

1. He was a leader in breaking away from the ecclesiastical system of the Dark Ages in four ways:
 - a. He condemned the monks for their ignorance of the Scriptures, their pride in believing they should be honored by the laity, their immoral and unchaste behavior, and their promotion of worship filled with ceremonialism and yet without the heart.
 - b. He used a critical (analytical) method of interpreting the Scriptures.

- c. He issued the first Greek New Testament.
 - d. He advocated that the Bible should be translated into the language of the common people.
2. Erasmus never intended to separate from Rome. However they Church condemned his writings, especially his history of the early church fathers. That history caused great unrest since Erasmus claimed the early church fathers did not teach what the Church was teaching.
 3. It has been said Erasmus "laid the egg which Luther hatched."

IV. Reformers (Beginning with Martin Luther):

- A. Martin Luther (1483-1546):
 1. Luther entered the University of Erfurt at the age of 18 and studied classic philosophy. He earned a BA and an MA and became interested in the study of salvation. Entering the priesthood in 1507, Luther devoted himself to a study of the Scriptures, concluding that the sinner is justified by faith alone – without works (without meritorious works of salvation taught in Catholicism).
 2. In 1506 the building of St. Peter's Cathedral in Rome had begun by Pope Leo X, and when funds the Pope encouraged the sale of indulgences to fund his building programs.
 - a. When John Tetzel came through Germany selling indulgences (as a franchise), Luther violently opposed this practice.
 - b. When Luther managed to influence many of the people in his parish from allowing the sale of indulgences in Wittenberg, Tetzel set up a booth outside of the town and continued selling them.
 3. On October 31, 1517 Luther nailed his "Ninety-Five Theses on the Power and Efficacy of Indulgences" to the door of Castle Church in Wittenberg.
 - a. News of Luther's actions quickly spread to Rome where the Pope demanded Luther to recant his heresy or face excommunication.
 - b. However, Luther denied the Papal infallibility and claimed the Scriptures were sufficient in matters of religious faith and practice.

4. Finally, on January 3, 1521 Luther was formally excommunicated from the Roman Catholic Church. This freed Luther from all restraints to boldly proclaim his views.
 - a. Luther openly opposed monasticism, resulting in several nuns and priests leaving monasteries to follow Luther, and many married.
 - b. Although many left the Catholic Church they did not leave all of their long-held Catholic beliefs and practices.
 5. In 1530 many of Luther's followers met in Augsburg, Germany to draw up what has become known as "The Augsburg Confession." It is made up of 28 articles of faith that lay out basic Lutheran doctrine. The "Confession" also lists 7 major abuses Luther saw in the Roman Catholic Church. Unfortunately, this creed became a major obstacle for Luther because it forced him to spend much of his time defending his creed.
 6. Unfortunately, Luther's concept of Biblical authority was to condemn only those things the Scriptures specifically condemn – meaning, if the Scriptures did not specifically condemn a practice, then it is Scriptural.
 7. Following Luther's death in 1546, modifications were made to The Augsburg Confession, and it was officially adopted as the standard belief among Luther's followers. Unfortunately, his followers put their faith in this confession rather than in the Bible.
 8. The Lutheran Church became the official "State Church" through most of Europe: Sweden 1526; Finland 1528; Norway 1536; Denmark 1539.
 9. Ironically, it had not been the intention of Luther to start a new church.
- B. Ulrich Zwingli (1484-1531) and the Swiss Reformation Movement.
1. Switzerland was ready for the Reformation Movement. The institution of local self-government freed the Swiss from the rule of the "Holy Roman Empire." Hatred against the Roman Catholic Church was strong among the Swiss since it owned or controlled much of the land.
 2. Zwingli was born into a wealthy family, was educated at the Universities of Basel, Bern and Vienna, and earned both BA and MA degrees.

- a. While at Basel University, Zwingli had become convinced that:
 - The Scriptures should be the sole source of authority in all matters of religious faith and practice.
 - The death of Christ is the only basis for forgiveness of sins, as opposed to the Catholic doctrine of meritorious works.
 - Indulgences were worthless.
3. When Zwingli graduated in 1506 he became a parish priest, and began studying Greek and corresponding with Erasmus. By simply reading the New Testament in the original language he saw a need for total reform in the Catholic Church.
4. When he was appointed as a priest in Zurich in 1519, Zwingli began to preach sermons on the books of the Bible, drawing large crowds of those hungry to hear the Word. However, in his sermons he condemned practices of the Catholic Church which were not found in the Bible. Upon hearing of Luther's works, Zwingli began reading all of Luther's writings. Two things happened:
 - a. He read too much to remain a good Catholic so he rejected the financial support he received as a priest.
 - b. Following the death of his mother (the sister of a priest), he began to openly criticize the Roman Catholic Church.
5. Among his beliefs were:
 - a. The church must get its authority from the Scriptures.
 - b. Salvation is by faith alone.
 - c. Works of merit (meritorious works) do not save.
 - d. Saints are not intercessors – Jesus Christ is the only intercessor between man and God.
 - e. Monastic vows are not binding.
 - f. There is no purgatory.
 - g. Christ is the only head of the church.
 - h. The clergy should marry so as to not sin.
 - i. It is not necessary to observe Lent.

- j. Worship services should be conducted in the language of the people.
 - k. Pictures or idols were to be removed from church buildings.
 - l. Organs (and all instruments of music) were to be removed from churches.
 - m. The doctrine of Transubstantiation was to be repudiated.
 - n. The Lord's Supper is a memorial.
6. The results of Zwingli's preaching in Zurich was profound:
- a. Priests and nuns began to marry.
 - b. Fees for baptism and funerals were no longer allowed.
 - c. Services were held in the German language.
 - d. Monasteries were confiscated in 1524 and turned into schools.
 - e. The inside walls of church buildings were whitewashed and all images were removed.
 - f. Organs (and any other instruments of music) were removed in July 1524.
 - g. In 1525 the Lord's Supper became a memorial instead of a sacrament.
7. Zwingli wrote a commentary on true and false religions in which he essentially contended for the practice that we must be silent where the Bible is silent.
- a. While Luther condemned only those things which the Scriptures condemned, Zwingli argued that only those things for which we can find Biblical authority should be accepted as religious faith and practice.
8. When the Roman Catholic Church attempted to put down Luther and Zwingli's influence by the use of military power, Luther and Zwingli attempted to join forces out of necessity.
- a. Unfortunately Luther and Zwingli could not agree over the doctrine of "consubstantiation" and the union of forces never occurred.
 - (1). Consubstantiation is a theological doctrine (like

Transubstantiation) which claims that during the Lord's Supper, the fundamental "substance" of the body and blood of Christ are present "alongside" the substance of the bread and fruit of the vine, which remain present. While the doctrine of consubstantiation claims to be in contrast to the doctrine of transubstantiation, it is merely a compromise.

- (2). While some Lutherans believe in consubstantiation, others do not.

9. Zwingli was killed in battle against Catholics in 1531.

C. John Calvin (1509-1564):

1. Calvin was born in 1509 into an upper-middle class family in Noyon, France.
 - a. He was sent to live with nobles when his mother died. He entered the University of Paris at the age of 14, and received an education in humanities, law, theology, and philosophy. He was also educated in Greek and Hebrew.
 - b. He eventually turned his interests to religion.
2. In 1532, at the age of 33, Calvin was converted to Zwingli's teachings and immediately began to preach Protestant theology.
3. In 1536 he published his first edition of "The Institutes of the Christian Religion."
 - a. Originally this was a treatise written to King Francis 1, defending French Protestantism. This was a bold step since France was heavily influenced by Catholicism.
 - b. Over the next few years Calvin enlarged this treatise until it was published in 1559. The document detailed Calvin's beliefs, and laid the foundation for the doctrine of "Calvinism."
4. After leaving Paris, Calvin spent a brief time in Geneva, but was too radical for reformers there. He moved to Strausberg, Germany and continued developing his theological ideology.
5. When Calvin returned to Geneva years later, he was, for all practical

purposes, given free hand to enforce religious reform in the city, and began what many call "Calvin's Inquisition" (1542-1546).

- a. One of Calvin's opponents was Servetus who taught much error about the trinity. Servetus was captured, charged with heresy and burned at the stake.
- b. Calvin also developed a system of spies who would be sent into drinking establishments to report on those using inappropriate language, to ensure these establishments closed each evening at the lawful time, and then to roam the streets ensuring everyone kept the city's curfew.
- c. As a result of these extreme measures, 76 persons were banished from the city, and 57 others were executed.

6. His beliefs:

- a. The Bible is the infallible guide in all matters of religious faith and practice.
- b. The "Ten Commandments" are still binding and must be followed.
- c. The purpose of every Christian in life is to glorify God.
- d. God has predestined (chosen before) those who will be saved as well as those who will be lost. Only the "elect" (those chosen by God) will be saved by grace through faith alone. God decreed an individual's eternal condemnation before his birth.
- e. The Holy Spirit creates faith and repentance in the "elect" only through His irresistible powers.
- f. The Bible can only be understood and interpreted properly by the "elect."
- f. The sacraments (especially of baptism and the Lord's Supper) are for the "elect" only. The Lord's Supper is a "closed communion" for believers only, who are required to partake four times a year.
- g. God's sovereignty is "absolute," as is God's will – meaning everything that happens in the world (good or bad) is the will of God. Calvin denied that God's will is also "permissive" - meaning

- God allows evil to take place in the world even though He is not the author of it, nor is it in keeping with His will. (This is why people will say of some tragedy, "It's God's will.")
- h. Civil government has the divinely appointed task of fostering and protecting churches, and punishing church offenders.
 - i. Christians cannot partake in "Popish" holidays (such as Christmas or Easter, etc.).
7. The Five Points of Calvinism (TULIP).
- a. This theology is based on God's "foreknowledge" and "predestination" – meaning God not only knows what will happen in the future, but has predestined (by use of His divine power) for it to happen (especially as it concerns knowing who will be saved, and predetermining that they will be saved).
 - T = Total hereditary depravity (born in sin).
 - U = Unconditional election (predestined to be saved).
 - L = Limited atonement (the blood of Christ saves only those whom God has predestined to be saved).
 - I = Irresistible grace (the Holy Spirit's power of saving grace is irresistible – which explains why the "elect" will be saved).
 - P = Perseverance of the saints (essentially "once saved, always saved" – or the impossibility of apostasy).
8. Calvin's biggest opponent was Jacob Arminius, a professor at the University of Leiden (the Netherlands).
- a. He claimed Calvin's theology was unscriptural.
 - b. Arminius said God would be unjust if He condemned to eternal torment those who were created without the freedom of choice (free will) – meaning their future had been determined before they were even born, and they could do nothing to change their future.
 - c. Arminius further denied the "absolute" will of God, arguing instead that God's will is restricted only by His divine nature and justice – meaning God will not do anything contrary to His divine nature.

Therefore, sin and evil is not the will of God, but rather what God permits since He made man with the freedom to choose obedience or disobedience.

- d. Arminius also claimed that those who are "in Christ" by choice of their own faith and obedience are the "elect."
- e. Finally, Arminius claimed that God's predestination and election is based on His foreknowledge of those who would by their own free will believe, obey and persevere.
- 9. Following his death, Arminius' views were soundly rejected in 1619 by the Synod of Dordrecht (Dordt or Dort) in favor of Calvin's doctrines. Calvin's teachings continued to influence much of the theology of that day, including the beliefs of John Wesley (founder of Methodism).

V. Reformation groups that laid the foundation for the Reformation Movement:

A. Anabaptists:

- 1. Started by B. Hubmaier (1480-1528), the term "anabaptist" literally means "one baptism on top of another" or "baptism upon baptism."
- 2. Hubmaier studied under John Eck, and came to the conclusions that the reform movement was still not close enough to Biblical teaching.
- 3. As a result, Hubmaier and his followers (some 300) were openly persecuted by Catholics, Lutherans and the followers of Zwingli and Calvin. Due to this persecution, the groups were nearly extinguished
- 4. Anabaptist teaching (later known simply as "Baptists"):
 - a. They rejected original sin and infant baptism (but differed on the proper "mode" or "method" of baptism – sprinkling vs. immersion).
 - b. Church members must subject themselves to a rigid form of discipline.
 - c. There must be a total separation of church and state.
 - d. The Calvinistic concept of foreordination and predestination and election is unscriptural.
 - e. The Holy Spirit works in man separate and apart from the Bible in leading men to an understanding of the truth.

- f. Churches must practice local autonomy (independent, self-governing), and that each local congregation should have its own leaders.
 - 5. Groups that can trace their heritage to the Anabaptists are:
 - a. Quakers.
 - b. Mennonites.
 - c. Dunkards (those who "dunked" or immersed for baptism).
 - d. Baptists.
- B. Church of Christ:
- 1. Eight congregations calling themselves the "Church of Christ" were formed in 1669 in the Furness District of Lancashire, England.
 - 2. From a book of "minutes" that was later discovered, it was learned that this group of churches believed the following:
 - a. Baptism was by immersion only.
 - b. The Lord's Supper is to be observed every first day of the week (every Sunday).
 - c. Each congregation is totally autonomous with its own elders and deacons.
 - d. The Bible is the only source of authority in matters pertaining to religious faith and practice.
 - e. Infant baptism and original sin is false.
 - f. Calvin's foreordination and predestination is false.
 - g. Christ is the only head of the church.
 - 3. In 1735, records show a man by the name of John Davis was preaching for the Church of Christ in Fife District of Scotland.
 - 4. In 1804, records show there was a Church of Christ in Dungannon, and Allington, Denbighshire, Ireland.

Conclusion:**I. The seed of religious change was planted during the Reformation Movement.**

- A. Credit should be given for those who first took bold steps to reform Roman Catholicism, and later to break from it completely:
 - 1. However, as bold and courageous as these reformers were, they stopped short of completely restoring New Testament Christianity and the New Testament church.
 - a. The result was the formation of numerous religious followings (denominations) that continued to hold to some of the beliefs and practices of Roman Catholicism (although they would deny such).
 - b. Their attempts to return to Biblical teaching, and to preach the truth of the Word of God, was hindered by the long-held beliefs of many leaders of the Reformation Movement.
 - 2. Although later groups took further steps toward restoring the church of the New Testament, the first bold steps to completely break away from all denominational teachings and practices took place during the Restoration Movement of the late 1700's to early 1800's.
 - 3. That movement marked a return to simple New Testament Christianity, and to the one true New Testament church.

Study Questions:

1. What do you see as being some of the most important social and economic factors that led to the rise of the Renaissance, and eventually spark the Reformation Movement? (Explain why)
 2. What do you see as being some of the most important religious factors that led to the Reformation Movement? (Explain why)

3. What beliefs and teachings of the following early reformers are consistent with the Bible? State the Scripture(s) that supports these beliefs.
 - a. William of Occam (1300-1349):
 - b. John Wycliffe (1320-1384):
 - c. John Huss (1369-1415):
 - d. Jerome Savonarola (1452-1498):
 - e. Erasmus (1466-1536):

4. What beliefs and teachings of the following later reformers are consistent with the Bible? State the Scripture(s) that supports these beliefs.
 - a. Martin Luther (1483-1546):

b. Ulrich Zwingli (1484-1531):

c. John Calvin (1509-1564):

4. Explain the error of John Calvin's "TULIP" theory. Give Scriptures to support your answers.
 - a. T = Total hereditary depravity (born in sin).

- b. U = Unconditional election (predestined to be saved).
- c. L = Limited atonement (the blood of Christ saves only those whom God has predestined to be saved).
- d. I = Irresistible grace (the Holy Spirit's power of saving grace is irresistible – which explains why the "elect" will be saved).
- e. P = Perseverance of the saints (essentially "once saved, always saved" – or the impossibility of apostasy).