



# Pagans, Popes, Peasants, & Presbyterians

**WHAT DOES A 1<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY PAGAN, A 10<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY POPE,  
A 16<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY PEASANT, AND A 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY  
PRESBYTERIAN HAVE IN COMMON?**

33 AD

2016AD



## Why it matters what happened in between...

- Clarifies context in which contemporary problems exist
  - Past suggests the future
- Understand who we are, what we believe, and why
  - Past affects today's decisions/beliefs
- Understand the irreducible Christian character
  - Not repeat mistakes
- Offer gratitude...God saves the Church despite the Church's best efforts to destroy it

## Some of the themes/events thus far:

- ❖ Church began at Pentecost with apostolic leadership in Jerusalem—persecution from outside and dissension from within
- ❖ Paul (and others) take Good News westward to Jews and Gentiles moving from law to love
- ❖ In the face of ridicule, gospel spread through hospitality, love in action for a hurting world
- ❖ Post-apostolic leadership in monastic movement, church fathers/mothers, councils
- ❖ Christian emperor, marriage of church/state, imperfect popes, Crusades, rise of Islam
- ❖ East/West schism, monastics and mystics

## A Clear Need for Reform

- parish priests often completely uneducated
- basic Christian doctrine not being communicated to congregation
- even though priests required to be celibate, many had common-law relationships
- buying and selling of church offices

### Why was it tolerated?

*“No matter how corrupt the church was, no matter how many reform programs were dreamed up, debated, even implemented, the church itself was fundamentally unassailable since it was the gatekeeper to heaven.”*

--and then there was the matter of indulgences...



## 16<sup>th</sup> Century Capital Campaign?

--Pope Leo X's (1513-21) building project  
--indulgence sale:  
eternal sins (vs. God)  
and temporal sins (vs. neighbor)

--if you die with temporal unpaid...  
--once paid, your ancestor moves  
from purgatory to heaven  
--subcontracted to Dominicans



“As soon as the coin in the coffers rings, another soul from purgatory springs.”

# Martin Luther 1483-1540



- planning to be a lawyer, severe storm  
“St. Anne, save me! I will become a monk.”
- Augustinian at Wittenburg
- Dealt with great guilt. Went to his confessor everyday. Reflecting on Romans and the phrase “the righteousness of God.”

Always thought it referred to God’s standards that we were expected to live up to.



- Dawned on him it was righteousness from God to us by faith--  
“justification by faith”

--and then came October 31, 1517....

# The 95 Theses

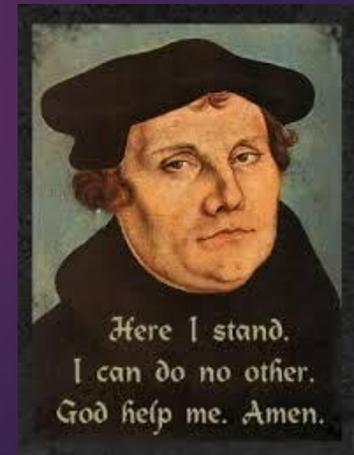
## The Start of the Reformation?



- standard debate protocol
- university bulletin board
- challenged Dominicans
- students send to printer



- 1519-20 Six treatises attacking Catholic doctrine; excommunicated by Leo X
- 1521 Diet of Worms with Charles V
- 1522 Wartburg Castle, NT translated into German
- 1529 "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God"



## 275 A Mighty Fortress Is Our God



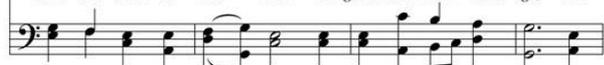
1 A might - y for - tress is our God, a bul - wark nev - er  
 2 Did we in our own strength con - fide, our striv - ing would be  
 3 And though this world, with dev - ils filled, should threat - en to un -  
 4 That word a - bove all earth - ly powers, no thanks to them, a -



fail - ing. Our help - er he, a - mid the flood of  
 los - ing, were not the right man on our side, the  
 do us, we will not fear, for God hath willed his  
 bid - eth. The Spir - it and the gifts are ours through



mor - tal ills pre - vail - ing. For still our an - cient foe doth  
 man of God's own choos - ing. Dost ask who that may be? Christ  
 truth to tri - umph through us. The Prince of Dark - ness grim, we  
 him who with us sid - eth. Let goods and kin - dred go, this



seek to work us woe. His craft and power are great, and  
 Je - sus, it is he. Lord Sab - a - oth his name, from  
 trem - ble not for him. His rage we can en - dure, for  
 mor - tal life al - so. The bod - y they may kill; God's



Long before Isaac Watts began to Christianize the Psalms, Martin Luther had already done so when he created the text and tune for this, his most famous hymn, which is based on Psalm 46. Luther encouraged metrical versions of psalms as well as chanted psalms and new hymns.

“Did we in our own strength  
 confide,  
 Our striving would be losing,  
 Were not the right man  
 on our side,  
 The man of God’s  
 own choosing.  
 Dost ask who that may be?  
 Christ Jesus, it is he.  
 Lord Sabaoth his name,  
 From age to age the same,  
 And he must win the battle.”

--Martin Luther

# Catholic Reformation 1545-1643

## Some of the results:

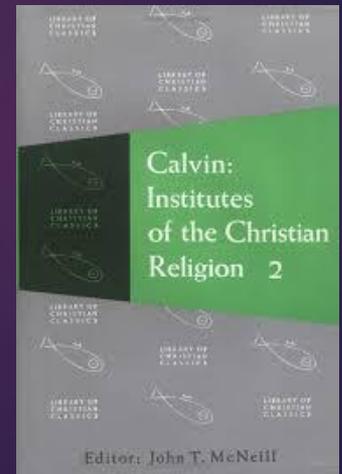
- ❖ New religious orders
- ❖ Ignatius of Loyola founds the Society of Jesus (Jesuits) focus on education, missions, politics
- ❖ Inquisitions to punish heresy
- ❖ Council of Trent (1545-1563)
  - eliminated many of abuses in church
  - strengthened role of bishops
  - drew clear line between Prot/Catholic

# John Calvin 1509-1564



- trained as humanist lawyer
- broke with Roman Catholic Church around 1530
- fled to Basel, published the *The Institutes*, a systematic articulation of Protestant faith.

- 1536, went to Geneva to help reform the church. City council resisted his ideas and expelled
- 1538-41 pastor in Strasbourg
- 1541 returns to Geneva



## Some of Calvin's views:

### ❖ Church governance--4 offices:

pastor—preaching/administering the sacraments

doctors—teachers; originally professional theologians

elders—maintaining Christian moral standards

deacons—social welfare of community

### ❖ Church organizations

Academy of Geneva—train ministers and missionaries

General Hospital run by deacons

--handled all social welfare issues except disease

ex: orphans, teaching trade, relief for poor

Consistory—charged with enforcing morality

religious questions, interpersonal conflict, sexual

## ❖ Church and State

State should not interfere in church affairs including:  
excommunication/preaching schedule/sacraments  
Church should not interfere with civil guidance,  
but give guidance on religious matters  
Pastors, doctors, some deacons full-time state  
employees. Elders had other professions

## ❖ Theology

predestination—salvation depends upon God and  
not us  
sovereignty of God—God concerned with entirety  
of human life and thus so is the Church  
“The Necessity of Reforming the Church”



*“Ecclesia reformata,  
semper reformanda”*

*“The church, in obedience to Jesus Christ, is open to the reform of its standards of doctrine as well as of governance. The church affirms, ‘Ecclesia reformata, semper reformanda secundum verbum Dei,’ that is, ‘the church reformed, always reforming, according to the Word of God’ in the power of the Spirit.”*

*--Book of Order, F-2.02*



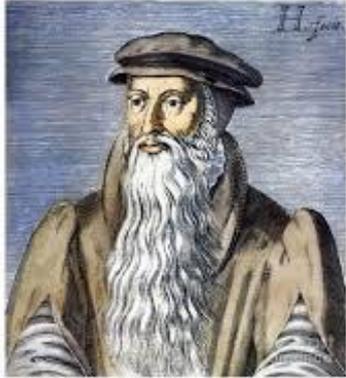
## What it does not mean?

1. *Newer is always better*
2. *The church can reform itself*

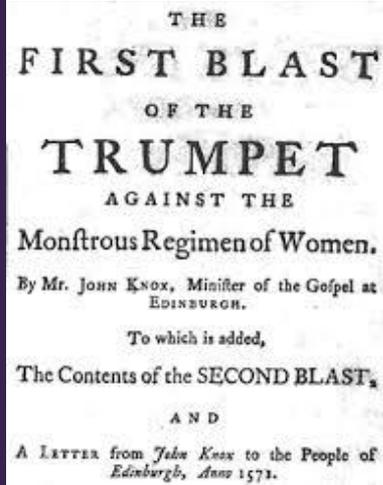
## Why the church needs reforming?

1. *Because of who we are*
2. *Because of who God is*

# John Knox 1513-1572



"A man with God is  
always in the majority."  
~ John Knox



- Minister in Scotland, fled to Geneva
- At time, Scotland ruled by Mary Guise, pro-Catholic; France by Catherine de Medici wife of Henri II and Mary Tudor in England. All were Catholic and encouraged the the of Protestants. In 1556 he wrote (Calvin urged him not to do so!)
- Establishes the Church of Scotland in 1559; the “mother church” of Presbyterianism

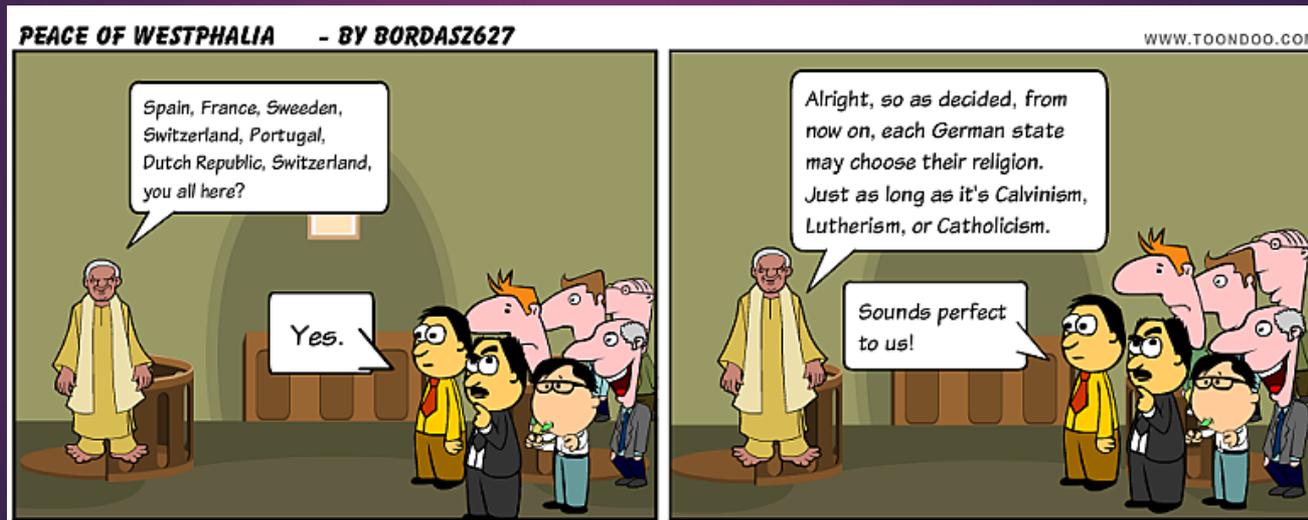
## Meanwhile, in other settings of Christendom...

- 1534 – Act of Supremacy made Henry VIII head of Church in England
- 1546 -- Luther dies at age 62
- 1549 – Book of Common Prayer introduced
- 1555 -- Peace of Augsburg between Charles V and Lutheran Schmalkaldic League granting tolerance for Lutherans
- 1558 – Elizabeth I restored Protestantism in Eng.
- 1611 – King James Version of Bible published
- 1633 – Galileo declared heretic for supporting scientific theories of Copernicus

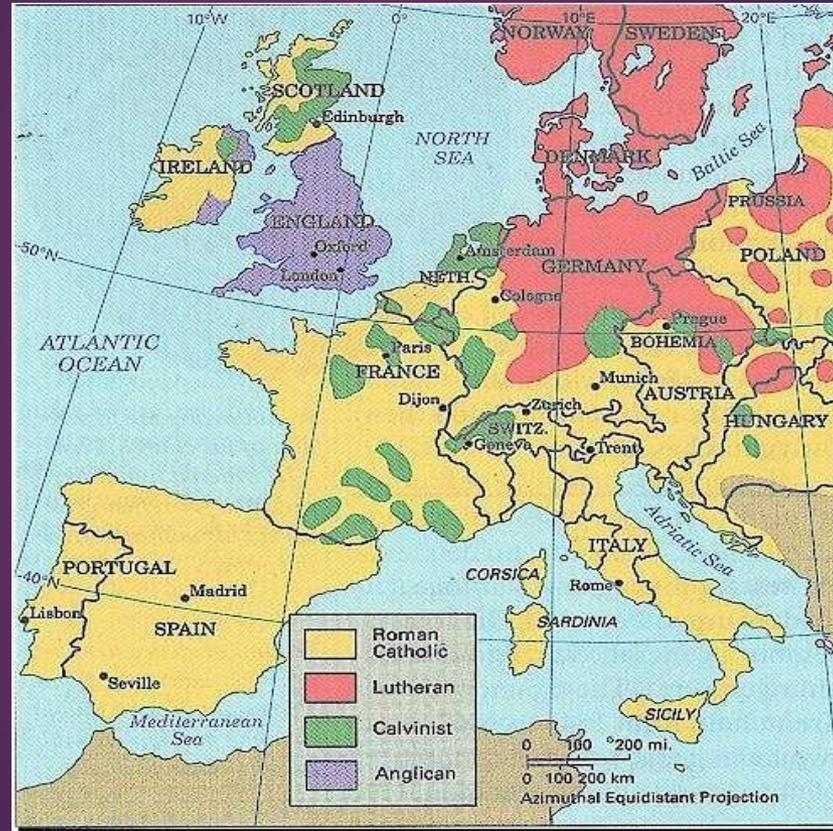
# The Unofficial End of the Reformation

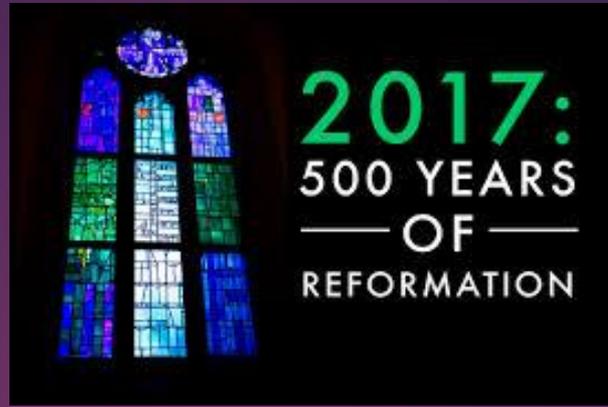
## Peace of Westphalia—October of 1648

- end of 30 year's war in Germany
- end of 80 years war Spain vs. Dutch
- disallowed papal meddling in Germany
- upheld Peace of Augsburg, adding Calvinism



# How the religious map looked @1650





## Some enduring gifts of the Reformation

- saved by grace through faith
- the authority of Scripture
- Scripture in the language of the people
- priesthood of all believers
- sovereignty of God
- engagement in the world
- democratic governance



## Some Enduring Questions

- what is proper role of religion in politics?
- how does the church need to be reformed today?
- who are the voices in Christendom that are outside the mainstream who we need to hear?
- what is to be our relationship with other faiths?