A Glorious Institution: The Church in History

Parts 3 & 4

Stanford E. Murrell

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Part Three: The Reformation and Its Aftermath

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Part Three: The Reformation and Its Aftermath

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Chapter 1

The Reformation Begins

The Reformation Era

Around noon time on October 31, 1517, Martin Luther(1483-1546) nailed his 95 theses to the old wooden door of the Castle Church at Wittenburg, Germany. There is a lovely story which says that Frederick, Elector of Saxony, had a dream on the previous night. He saw a monk writing on the Castle Church in letters large enough to be read by the Elector of Schweinitz more than twelve miles away, and with a pen that appeared to reach as far as Rome, where it unfastened the crown of the pope! Since this story cannot be traced back beyond 1591, it is probably a legend; but it satisfactorily pictures the early perception of many, that the simple act of a concerned monk would be used by God. It was the spark that ignited a series of events that ushered in a new age in world history, now known as The Reformation.

During this period, the power of Rome over the souls of individuals would be challenged. Individuals would rise to remove spiritual oppression and restore Christian liberty. Those who led the Reformation were people of faith and conviction. They had high intelligence and tremendous personal courage. Many died to preserve and protect the purity of the Gospel of grace.

The Reformation Era was an exciting and heroic epoch, as people followed their leaders despite all the dangers and sacrifices involved. And the Lord honored those who honored Him: the Reformation spread through Germany, Switzerland, France, the Netherlands, England, Scotland, Norway, and Sweden. God set His people free to worship Him “in spirit and in truth” (Joh 4:23).

The Day God Shook the World

There are specific dates in the history of the world that are of unique importance. The events that transpire on these dates are remembered often in the centuries that follow.October 31, 1517is such a date. Martin Lutherused that day to make his views about certain religious abuses known to the public. Luther felt this could best be done by holding a scholarly debatein the open. He decided to make a civic pronouncement of his theological position. The Lord honored that decision and used it to shake the world!

The seeds of change had already been sown by others. Politically, the power of the papacy was being challenged. In Portugal, Spain, France, and England, national states were seeking to rise. Emperors felt the restrictions of religion on their decisions, and they wanted more freedom from the Church. Elsewhere, the followers of Mohammedcontinued to move against the borders of the Holy Roman Empire. After conquering Constantinopleand the Eastern Empire in 1453, Islamic armies marched across Eastern Europe until they arrived at the gates of Viennain 1529. The world was rapidly changing, and religion was not exempted. When Constantinople was conquered by the Mohammedan Turks, the central power of the Eastern Orthodox Church was lost, and national churches soon emerged.

Other important things were happening. Christopher (literal meaning, “Christ-like”) Columbusmade his valiant voyage, which led to the discovery of the New World. This, in turn, allowed a Spanish empire in the West. Ferdinand Magellancircum-navigated the globe. Meanwhile, the Portuguese claimed territory in Brazil, Africa, and the Far East.

Also during this period, advances were being made in knowledge. The scientific legacy of the Middle Ages includes the Hindu numerals, the decimal system, the discovery of gunpowder, and the inventions of the eyeglass, the mariner’s compass, and the pendulum clock. The invention of moveable type at Mayenceon the Rhine in 1456 by Johann Gutenberg, ensured that learning would be widely encouraged and new ideas would be spread. It is significant that the first book printed by Gutenberg was 200 copies of Jerome’s VulgateBible.[1]Later, printing presses would be used to bring the Scriptures to everyone through clear translations into common languages that all could read. Once people were able to read the Bible for themselves, many would realize that the Catholic Church had become far removed from the ideals of the New Testament.

As the printing press made the Scripturesavailable to a wider audience, so it made people more aware of secular concepts. Humanismwould come to enjoy a wide following as specific ideas were articulated. One belief that found popular appeal was the humanistic teaching that individuals could be made better by moral reformation, apart from religious instruction by the Church. It was also contended that the world itself could be improved by creative thinking on the part of man. To discover how, an appeal was made to the literature of the Classical Age of the Greeks. It seemed that the past would be the key to the future. However, in order to understand the past, the ancient languages of Greek and Hebrew had to be seriously studied once more. The irony is that this led secular scholars back to the Bible,

because the old manuscripts had to be mastered.

To enhance this renewed interest in learning, universities arose to educate a larger number of people. The educational process helped to instill an objective spirit of inquiry into the mind. Individuals were encouraged to challenge established authority, and to think in critical terms. Some of those who were religiously inclined, began to think critically about the state of the Church. It did not take much of a discerning mind to realize that a great deal needed to be changed. There was sin in the sanctuary. The sins of the saints includedsimony(the selling of Church offices), ecclesiastical arrogance, immoralityamong members of the clergy, and the selling of salvation and sanctification throughindulgences.

These and other abuses caused spiritual unrest to concerned souls, which only added to the disturbance of a society experiencing social and economic unrest. People desired more personal freedom, more money, and more opportunities to be individually creative. Multitudes were crowding into towns in a desperate attempt to flee the harsh life under feudalism. There were differing degrees of independence and serfdom among the peasantry of Europe, but for all, it was a very hard way of existence. Life on the land had a regular, monotonous, repetitive pattern. In autumn pigs were killed, and in the spring oxen were led out to plough. People wanted more.

Ecclesiastical Power over People

Though there was renewed emphasis on classical learning, though there was a movement towards humanistic thinking, though emperors wanted more political strength, and though people wanted more personal autonomy, the Church still held a powerful grip upon the hearts of its hearers. This was possible because of specific doctrinal teachings that caused individuals to have hope in the pope, and in his spiritual power. No matter how corrupt the clergy became, nor how many unusual non-biblical theological concepts were conceived, the Catholic Church was able to influence the thoughts of multitudes. Hearts still wanted to know the way to heaven.

A System of Sacraments

According to the Church in medieval times, entrance into heaven was based upon merit. In order to merit eternal life in the presence of God, there first had to be a cleansing by fire after death in a place calledpurgatory. In addition, there had to be evidence of having lived a worthy life. In order to help professing Christians live a worthy life of merit, which would reduce time spent in purgatory, the Church developed a system ofsacraments.

The philosophical undergirding for sacraments is the recognition that man has a mind and a body. He is both physical and spiritual. In like manner, the world is experienced on two levels, the physical and the spiritual. It is obvious that God has ordained that man be touched and helped through material objects and visible means, in addition to faith. There is the fact of theIncarnation, in which God was manifested in the flesh in the person of Jesus Christ (Joh 1:1, 14).

Extending these biblical truths beyond the Bible, the Catholic Church began to teach about a number of other outward and visible signs. These signs, it said, were indicators of an inward and spiritual grace, given and ordained by Christ Himself, as a means by which individuals might receive heaven's blessings and be assured of eternal life. These signs of grace were calledsacraments. In each sacrament there are certain elements that are constant, including the matter and the form. The grace or benefit of the sacrament is given objectively, but apprehended subjectively by "virtuous faith." Medieval tradition recognized seven sacraments.

BAPTISM.In the act of infant baptism, it is declared that original sin is removed, and the soul is incorporated into the Church. The error of baptismal regeneration was embraced by the Church(cp. 1Pe 3:21)!

CONFIRMATION.The completion of baptism is confirmed by the laying on of hands. During this ceremony, it is believed that the Holy Spirit is conferred upon a person so that they are empowered to live out the ethics of the Christian life (cp. Joh 14:16-17; Act 2:1-4).

PENANCE.Realizing that even Christians sin, the Church made provision for penance by confession of sins in the presence of a priest, who was able to declare God's forgiveness and absolve the soul of all transgressions. Outward acts were expected to be displayed by the penitent, manifesting contrition and faith (cp. 1Jo 1:9; Mar 2:7).

HOLY EUCHARIST.In the taking of the Lord's Supper, the soul is strengthened and refreshed. Union with God is found by assimilation of Christ, who is believed to be literally present in the two elements: bread and fruit of the vine (cp. Mat 26:26-30; 1Co 11:23-30).

HOLY ORDERS.Select individuals are conferred with spiritual power and the privilege of ministry (cp. Rev 1:6; 1Pe 2:9).

HOLY MATRIMONY.This outward ritual was designed to enhance a life-long monogamous union between a man and a woman. The benefits of marriage include grace to find help in life, companionship, enjoyment of the act of marriage, procreation, and the ability to maintain sexual honor (cp. Gen 2:24; Heb 13:4; Eph 5:25).

UNCTION.As the sick and dying were anointed with oil, a prayer for grace was offered (cp. Jam 5:14-15).

A Non-Salvation of Penance

Of particular importance was the sacrament ofpenance. Daily, people sinned, and daily they needed to know if they could be forgiven. The Church taught that the priest had the power to pardon sins, in the name of Christ, and to release any soul from the eternal punishment that is visited upon sin. However, those who received the sacrament of penance had to express contrition, after an honest confession to a priest. Then, there had to be satisfaction. The priest determined what satisfaction the erring penitent had to make, in order to display outwardly a heart of contrition. It was not uncommon for the priest to instruct the penitent to fast, recite a specific number of prayers, give alms to the poor, go on a pilgrimage, visit a shrine, or even take part in a religious crusade to the Holy Land. The focus of attention was upondoing somethingto merit the grace and goodness of God, rather than recognizing by faith what God had done and had given to us in Christ's completed sacrifice on the cross, apart from our own works (cp. Rom 5:1-2; Eph 2:8-9; Rom 8:28-29).

Indulgence

Although the system of penance was developed to assist concerned souls in finding comfort after sin, abuse and corruption emerged. The Kingdom of Christ found itself able to make money. Guilt-laden individuals were willing to pay for peace of mind and favor with God. The decision was made to allow a monetary gift to be given to the work of the Lord, through the Church. The impersonal contribution of money would replace outward forms of penitential acts of contrition. And so gold began to replace grace, and the congregation of the righteous became unrighteously greedy. In order to encourage more money to come into its coffers, the Church went so far as to provide the penitent an official document ofindulgence, declaring that the power and pollution of sin was broken, and the soul was under no further obligation to perform acts of contrition as a penalty. The iniquity of selling indulgenceshad begun.

Supererogation

The theological justification for the granting of an indulgence was grounded in the concept ofworks of supererogation. Technically, such works went beyond the demands of God's law and earned a reward. It was believed that Jesus had lived a life of purity and holiness that went far beyond what was necessary to secure the salvation of sinners. Therefore, He must have stored up a rich treasury of merits in heaven that could be appropriated by others.

In like manner, the Church taught that the saints have stored up merits in heaven. Such a storehouse of spiritual treasure is needed because the Gospel comes to men demanding a certain measure of perfection (Mat 19:21). According to Catholic dogma, if the Rich Young Ruler (Mat 19:16-22) had honored the admonition of Christ, he would have performed the works of supererogation, and so would have merited great reward, leading to eternal life. [While the Rich Young Ruler failed in his spiritual obligations, others have not. There are saints who have sold their goods, given their wealth to the poor (or better yet, the Church), and by so doing have laid up treasure in heaven.] To continue the thought, a treasure necessitates a treasurer. As Christ's vicar on earth, the pope must be the one best qualified for this position. Based on this assumption, the Catholic Church began to teach that at his discretion, the pope could credit to a person's account whatsoever merits were needed to ensure salvation.

It is hard to believe that this speculative and scriptureless theology found a wide audience of acceptance, but it did. There was something about these concepts that appealed to Church leaders, and to their congregations. It appealed to the innate pride of self-effort present in all men. The common people were quick to perceive that it is much easier to buy an indulgence, than to endure the process of sanctification, involving the mortification[2]of fleshly desires. The people realized that it might be easier to pay money, in order to help a departed soul out of purgatory, than to pray a person into heaven.

As the common people liked the concept of indulgences, based upon superficial acts of repentance, so the Church leaders quickly grew to like the results of their religious thinking, because money began to pour into the coffers. But as the Church grew rich, its monetary appetite became insatiable. There is a wonderful legend associated with Thomas Aquinas(1225-1274). As the story goes, one day Thomas came upon Pope Gregory Xcounting coins after a worship service. "Look Thomas," cried the pope, "no longer can the Church say 'Silver and gold have I none.'" "And neither," replied Thomas, "can the Church say, 'Rise up and walk.'"

John Tetzel: A Master of Deceit

In the quest for more gold for the Church, official spokesmen were sent into the countries of Europe to raise money. One of the best of these "gospel hucksters" was a man named John Tetzel, an eloquent DominicanFriar. Legend has it that Tetzel would tell audiences, with a flair for the dramatic, "Whenever a coin in the coffer rings, a soul from purgatory springs!" John Tetzeldid not realize that the day was soon coming when he would have to give an account for his actions. First Tetzel, and then the world, were about to hear of the holy displeasure Martin Lutherpossessed against all who were making merchandise of the Gospel.

A Man Named Martin

Martin Lutherwas born in Eisleben, Germany, on November 10, 1483, to devout parents, John and Margaret. His father valued education and made it possible, through hard work in the mining industry, for Martin to attend college in. The University of Erfurt was the most celebrated in all Germany.

Luther arrived at this university in 1501, when he was eighteen years old. Two years later, while browsing in the school's library, Luther made an amazing discovery. As he opened books at random to learn the name of the author, his eye was attracted to one in particular. And as he read the title, his excitement only grew. It was a complete Bible, something almost unknown in those times. As Luther began to study the Scriptures, he was astonished that there was so much more than the select passages from the Gospels and Epistles that the Church allowed to be read on Sundays. Here was a volume the young student was determined to devour.

Always a brilliant scholar, Luther received a Master's degree in 1505. Wanting to please his parents, Luther next took up the study of law in the same university. However, six months later he suddenly changed his mind and entered the Augustinian monastery in Erfurt. The change in direction came because of a religious awakening Luther experienced one day when he was caught in the midst of a thunderstorm.

In the summer of 1505, Luther had decided to visit his parents who were living in Mansfeldt. The vacation proved to be stressful, and Luther returned to school. As he neared Erfurt, he was overtaken by a violent storm. The clouds clapped out thunder, and a tremendous lightening bolt flashed at his feet! Luther threw himself upon his knees believing that he was going to die. Sudden destruction, judgment, and eternity, with all their terrors, appeared before his eyes. Encompassed with the anguish and horror of death, Luther made a vow. If the Lord should deliver him from this danger, he would leave the world and devote himself entirely to God.

A Religious Awakening

When Luther's father learned that his son had given up the study of law, he was more than disappointed; he was outraged! Still, Martin withstood the pressure to reverse his decision about pursuing a religious life. Within six months, Luther had taken the vows of a monk. After studying theology, Luther was ordained a priest in 1507. The following year he was assigned a tutoring position in the University of Wittenburg. While there, Luther obtained the Bachelor of Bible degree in theology.

After one year in Wittenberg, Martin was transferred back to Erfurt, where he received his second degree in theology, after which he was given a prestigious teaching position. At the tender age of twenty-six years, Luther was appointed to teach theSentences of Peter Lombard, the standard textbook of theology.

In the year 1510, Luther was provided an opportunity to travel to Rome as a companion to an older brother in the Augustinian Order. His heart was thrilled at the great privilege of making a holy pilgrimage. Once in Rome, Luther moved from place to place in religious excitement. "I remember," he wrote, "that when I went to Rome I ran about like a madman to all the churches, all the convents, all the places of note of any kind. I implicitly believed every tale about all of them that imposture had invented."

Luther climbed on his knees the Scala Santa, believed to be the stairs (transported from Jerusalem) which Jesus once climbed to reach Pilate's judgment hall. As he climbed the stairs, praying apater nosteron each step (a standard Catholic prayer), doubt crept into Luther's mind. When he came to the top step, he stood up and silently asked, "Who knows whether this is true?"

While many of his religious experiences in Rome were exciting, as Luther continued to tour the historic city, what he saw and heard shocked his spiritual sensitivity. There was open graft, corruption, and immorality. The holy city was not holy at all. Though he remained a loyal Catholic for the time, the seed was sown in Luther's mind that the Church needed radical reformation. After being in Rome, Luther was prepared to say, "If there is a hell, Rome is built over it."

Luther returned to Wittenberg to lecture on the Bible in the University. He taught and preached while continuing his personal pursuit of knowledge, until he received the degree of Doctor of Divinity.

In 1515, Luther began to speak in the parish church. While the parishioners heard him gladly, they did not know that Dr. Luther was still searching for his own personal salvation. Part of the search involved a life of strict asceticism. In a small cell in the tower of the Black Cloister(a residence for monks and nuns), Luther tried to earn salvation by good works. Cheerfully did he perform the most menial tasks. Happily did he pray and fast. With grim determination, Luther flogged himself until he fainted from the self-inflicted pain. Because of this religious ordeal, his body deteriorated until Luther looked like a skeleton. His cell remained unheated despite harsh winters. He maintained all night vigils and only rarely would he sleep on a mat for comfort.

Salvation in a Solitary Cell

And yet, despite all of his efforts, Luther was still burdened with a sense of shame and guilt. His soul was in the deepest depths of despair because, no matter how hard he tried, he knew he had not done enough to merit salvation.

Later, looking back on this period of his life, Luther wrote the pope a letter and said, “I often endured an agony so hellish in violence, that if those spells had lasted a minute longer, I must have died then and there.”

Finally, in matchless mercy, God sent comfort to Luther through several sources. One source was the spiritual writing of Bernard of Clairvaux(1090-1153). Bernard knew something about the free graceof Christ for salvation. A second source of spiritual help came from the kindness of the vicar of Luther’s monastic order. Johann von Staupitzwas able to temper and encourage his zealous monk during the days when Luther’s religious zeal bordered upon madness. But most of all, there was the gift of the Holy Spirit. God was pleased to visit Luther with the gift of redeeming grace (Joh 3:7-8; Ti 3:5).

One day, toward the end of the year 1515, Luther was alone in his cell with a Bible. The Scriptureswere opened to Paul’s letter to the Romans. Luther’s eyes rested upon verse seventeen in chapter one, which declares, “The just shall live by faith.” Suddenly, the sunshine of radiant, Gospel truth broke through the dense clouds of spiritual darkness. “The just shall live by faith!” In a moment of divine illumination, Luther understood. He had been trying to earn salvation by works. But “the just shall live byfaith!”

Romans 1:17 became to Luther the gates of Paradise. After years of trying to merit the merits of Christ, Luther was finally converted. Immediately, he cast himself upon Jesus Christ, and trusted in Him for salvation, forgiveness, and freedom from the power and pollution of sin (Act 16:31).

Ninety-Five Theses

One can only imagine that instance of indescribable joy that came to Martin Lutherin the small, cold cell of the Black Cloister in Wittenberg. In a moment of glory, Luther met the Master. He came to know Jesus Christ personally. His soul was suddenly filled with peace, hope, and joy unspeakable. He was a different person (2Co 5:17).

As a new creature in Christ Jesus, Luther began to see the Church in a new way. What he saw horrified him to the point that he could not keep quiet. An enemy had come and sown seeds of moral corruption in the Church of the living God (Mat 13:25)!

Luther soon discerned that most of the spiritual abuse in the Church could be traced to the system of penance and the selling of indulgences. He rightly perceived that precious souls, for whom Christ had died, were being deceived. Luther was determined to expose the putrid system he found, and hopefully, to change it for the better.

One day, after returning to his cell in the tower, Luther picked up his pen and recorded his views about indulgences in ninety-five theses, which are statements or propositions. It is not hard to imagine Luther writing rapidly, vigorously dipping his pen in the inkwell time and again in order to record as quickly as possible the words that burned in his breast. Having put his thoughts on paper, Luther looked over the statements one last time before descending the stairs that led him down to the massive oak doors of the Castle Church in Wittenberg. There he nailed his document for all to see. Little did Luther realize, as he turned away from the Church door, that he would be used of God to turn the world upside down (cp. Act 17:6). He was only thirty-four years old.

When Luther nailed his theses[3]to the door of the Castle Church, he was not doing anything uncommon. That door served as a public place for gathering information at the University. By putting his document there, Luther was simply inviting a scholarly debateon the merits of his proposition. This was the custom of the period.

A pro-Lutheran artist in 1617 shows Luther one hundred years earlier writing hisNinety-five Theseson the church door. Luther's pen pierces the ears of Pope Leo X, symbolized by the lion, and knocks the crown off the head of Charles V, emperor of the Holy RomanEmpire. Further to the right, the Bible symbolically sheds light on Jesus in the clouds of heaven. The burning goose symbolizes the martyr John Hus, burned at the stake by the Council of Constance for his reforming ideas almost a hundred years before Luther.

Initial Response to Luther

While Luther may have anticipated some general excitement, he had no comprehension that God would use something so small to ignite a religious bonfire that would consume the world (Zec 4:8-10). Within four weeks the Ninety-five Theses, which had been written in Latin, were translated into many languages, printed and carried with incredible speed to every country of western Europe. People immediately wondered what would happen to Dr. Luther! And they also wondered what would happen to the selling of indulgences!

The archbishop of Mainzwanted to build a new cathedral with some of the proceeds from the sale of indulgences by Tetzel. He certainly did not like the frontal attack Luther had launched against a profitable "doctrine." With great indignation he sent a copy of the thesesto Pope Leo X(1513-1521) in Rome. The pontiff was not happy at what he had to read. Many of the propositions challenged papal authority.

While the highest Church official in Rome considered how to deal with the exploding situation, Tetzel enlisted help to publish a set of "counter theses," defending the sale of indulgences. Other loyal Catholics took up the cause as well, such as the Dominican monk named Mazzolini. Mazzolini was serving as an inquisitor in Rome. He wrote a book condemning the conclusions of Luther, as did John Eck, a theology professor.

Having boldly issued a challenge to the Church regarding the selling of indulgences, Luther was forced to defend his position. It would not be easy spiritually, physically, or psychologically. Luther found himself almost alone. Friends he thought he could count on to agree with him, had withdrawn their support–deciding that he had been too rash.

The atmosphere was tense in April, 1518, when the monasteries associated with the Augustinian Order convened in Heidelberg. As expected, the Ninety-five thesessoon became the major topic of discussion. When the convention was over, Luther was more encouraged. Though there had been some intense discussions, they all seemed to be friendly. Luther went back to Wittenberg to write a general answer to his critics in a book calledResolutions. Addressing it to the pope, Luther made a point by point defense of his propositions.

Upon receivingResolutions, the Pope was discerning enough to realize the far reaching implications of Luther's arguments, if left unchallenged. For one thing, the immense income the Church received from the revenues indulgences produced would be severely curtailed. How then, would St. Peter's Cathedralat Rome be rebuilt, not to mention other costly projects?

Even more alarming, the theological foundation of Catholicismwould be undermined. The Church had taught the people to believe that only the priest could administer the sacraments, which were the means of receiving God's

grace. It was basic Catholic theology that, without the sacrament of penance, without absolution and indulgences, there could be no hope of salvation. How then were souls to be saved? Martin Lutherwould have to be answered. He had struck a severe blow at the foundation of the Roman Catholic Church.

Chapter 2

Upheaval!

A Saint Is Summoned to Rome

In July, 1518, Pope Leo Xdiscovered that the meeting of the Augustinian Order had not succeeded in silencing Luther from speaking out against indulgences. A summons was sent for Luther to appear in Rome. Such a summons was serious, for he easily could be charged with heresyin the sight of the Church. If convicted in Rome by the pope of being a heretic, Luther could be put to death by fire immediately.

In the providence of the Lord, Luther had a powerful friend and protector in Frederick the Wise, a devout Catholic. Frederick was a religious zealot, manifested in the fact that he had purchased more than five thousand relics from all over Christendom. Then, to house these artifacts, Frederick had built the Castle Church at Wittenburg, in the region of Saxony where he ruled.

Despite this religious passion for relics from the past and wanting to be loyal to Rome, Frederick was his own man. He could stand against those things he perceived to be wrong, and he believed the selling of indulgences to be wrong. Frederick had forbidden Tetzel to market indulgences in Saxony. Unfortunately, many of the citizens of Wittenburgdid not agree with either Luther or Frederick on this matter. The people were willing to make the short journey to other towns where Tetzel appeared to buy indulgences. It was this foolish activity on the part of the people that prompted Luther to post his Ninety-five Theseson the Church door, as a protest against the indulgence sales.

In truth, there was another reason why Frederick opposed the sale of indulgences. He was interested in promoting a sense of nationalism. Frederick simply did not want to see local money from his country going into the treasury of the pope in Rome. He believed that the money could be better used to advance the work of the University of Wittenberg. And because Luther was its most prestigious and popular professor, Frederick decided to use all of his influence to have the papal summons against Luther dismissed.

Frederick was not without strong political power. At this time the emperor Maximilian I(b. 1459) was old and near death. He had ruled as emperor of the Holy Roman Empiresince 1493. By 1519, it was obvious that a new emperor would have to be selected. There were three contestants for the crown: Charles, king of Spain; Francis, king of France; and Frederick, elector of Saxony.

Pope Leo Xfavored Frederick because he believed the ruler of Saxony would be the easiest to control. A war against the Turks was still being fought; the pope believed that the next ruler of Germany should support that effort. After listening to Frederick's arguments as to why Luther should not appear before him in Rome, Leo X canceled the papal summons. However, the pope had no intention of dismissing the case against the critical and troublesome monk.

Emissaries of the Pope

Leo knew that one of his legates (i.e., delegate), Cajetan, was traveling in Germany in order to attend a diet [4]in Augsburg. Leo sent Cajetan papal authority to order Luther to appear before him in Augsburg. The purpose was to hear Luther recant his charges against the Church. If Luther would not recant, he was to be arrested, bound, and sent to Rome for trial. Upon failure to arrest Luther, Cajetan was to place him and all his followers under theban: denial of access to all the sacraments and priestly functions.

Once more Luther was in a precarious position. To go to Augsburgunrepentant would mean certain death. To deny his conscience would mean spiritual death. And this time Frederick the Wise of Saxony could not secure a cancellation of the papal order. What Frederick could do for Luther, however, was to obtain from the extremely ill emperor Maximilian a pass of safe conduct. Luther was to be guaranteed that he would not be harmed or arrested, regardless of the outcome of his appearance at his hearing.

With this understanding, Luther made the ill-fated journey to Augsburg. In October, 1518, he had three interviews with Cajetan. The discussions became fierce. Luther's friends counseled him to be calm and recant. But Luther refused to renounce those truths which had been taught to him by God. Finally, in the secret of the night, he left Augsburg.

Finding himself in the midst of a situation he could not control, Cajetan urged Leo Xto settle the points in dispute by making an official pronouncement. The pope acted upon this counsel of expediency and issued a "bull" (Latinbulla, a seal; refers to any document with an official seal), that definite statements by certain monks against indulgences were heretical. Without being mentioned by name, Luther and the world knew that he was being regarded as a suspected heretic.

Miltitz and Eck

To press his papal authority, Leo Xdecided to arrest Luther. A special representative was sent into Germany to accomplish this difficult task. His name was Karl von Miltitz. The pope believed that Frederick would allow Miltitz to arrest Luther, since he was a close associate of Spalatin, the private secretary of the elector of Saxony. Furthermore, Miltitz was Frederick's own representative at the papal court in Rome. Now, Miltitz would return to Germany with a gift for his ruler. In a symbolic gesture, the pope sent Frederick the Wise an expensive golden rose as a token of papal love and goodwill. The fragrance of the flower suggested that Frederick honor the request of Rome, to withdraw support from Luther and allow his arrest.

Prior to an official meeting with Frederick, Karl von Miltitz asked for a private meeting with Luther and John Tetzel. Luther made himself available alone for this meeting. The result was surprising. Luther promised not to speak out against indulgences, if his opponents agreed not to speak out against him. He also agreed to put in writing any humility he felt in his heart, thereby expressing subordination to the pope.

Leo was so delighted with Luther's letter that on March 29, 1519 the pope corresponded with him using gracious language. An invitation was extended for him to visit Rome, at the pope's expense, and make his apologies personally at the papal court.

One can only speculate as to what might have happened had Luther made that special pilgrimage. It seemed that the theological differences between Luther and Rome were on the road to reconciliation. Then came the setback. The problem was that while Luther was willing to subdue his language, his fellow professors were not. In particular, there was Andreas Carlstadt, who was determined to debateJohann Eck(1486-1543), a German Roman Catholic theologian. Eck had originally supported the sale of indulgences, and issued a pamphlet against Luther's Ninety-Five Theses. Now Eck was at it again, answering Carlstadt's concerns with more counter theses in which he contended for papal supremacy.

Not to be left on the sidelines in his own University during a theological debateof monumental significance, Luther entered the fray by publishing twelve new theses. In the last one, Luther argued that the claim of papal authority over all the churches rested upon spurious historical ground. Using historical documents, Luther showed that the popes had been claiming supremacy for only four hundred years. Prior to that, for the first eleven centuries after Christ, no claim to supremacy existed.

Such an attack upon the authority of the pope was beyond belief. Once more Martin Lutherhad caused a sensation, and once more Dr. Eck was ready to challenge his conclusions. This time it was Luther who was challenged to a debate. The question would focus upon the supremacy of the pope.

In preparation for debate, Luther diligently studied canon law, which consisted ofDecretals, the decisions of popes and general councils. Luther had been amazed to discover that many Decretals were forgeries. Armed with the verdict of the historical record and the truth of the Word of God, Luther was ready to face the challenge of Eck, at Leipzig on July 4, 1519.

The Leipzig Debate

The atmosphere at Frederick's palace, where the formal debate took place, was electrifying. Armed guards had been posted at every table, to keep the students from Wittenberg from fighting with the students from Leipzig.

As the debate began, it was obvious that both Luther and Eck were equal in verbal and intellectual abilities to their assigned roles. However, not being able to argue his own position based on its merits, Eck cleverly got Luther to concede that he agreed with some of the teachings of John Huss, who had been condemned by the Council of Constance. Luther said Huss had been condemned in an unrighteous manner. As soon as Luther was perceived as siding with an officially condemned heretic, the psychological advantage went to Eck. A wave of astonishment swept over the listening audience. Duke Georgeof Saxony was heard to exclaim, "God help us; that is the pestilence!"

Despite the psychological advantage going to Eck, Luther did win the strategic advantage, in that he based his arguments on fact, using the historical process. Luther pointed out that the Eastern Greek Church had never acknowledged the supremacy of the bishops of Rome. Yet, it was admitted by all, that the Eastern Churchwas Christian. The papacy faced a dilemma. How could the pope claim supremacy over all the churches, and yet a large part of the Church, recognized as Christian, not honor that claim? In addition, Luther noted that the great ecumenical councils of the early centuries did not teach the supremacy of the papacy.

Though the immediate impression might have been that the debate at Leipzig was won by Eck, important results went with Luther. He was far from being defeated. Following the Leipzig debate, the supporters of Luther grew. Among those who joined in Luther's cause was Martin Bucer(1491-1551). In time, Bucer would become a leading Reformer in the crucial German city of Strassburg, capital of the territory of Alsace. A man of great organizational skills, Bucer also possessed the ability to make new and complex thoughts understandable to common people. God would be pleased to use Bucer to mold the mind and heart of another Reformation leader, John Calvin.

Besides gaining more converts, a second result of the debate at Leipzig was that Luther's own thinking was solidified (Pro 27:17). His motive all along was to bring needed change to the Roman Catholic Church, not to leave it. But now Luther had publicly rejected the supremacy of the pope and the infallibilityof the Church councils. The Leipzig debate crystallized the fact that irreconcilable differences existed between Luther and the Roman Catholic Church.

The Gathering Assault

Following the debate, Dr. Eck left for Rome to ask the pope to issue a bull excommunicating Luther. On June 15, 1520, the deed was done. Martin Lutherwas made to be a marked man, assigned to an eternity in hell by the very Church he had tried to serve so well. Rather than listen to Luther and deal with his areas of legitimate concern, the Church decided to excommunicate him and burn all of his writings. Weaving Scripture with a spirit of vindictiveness, the papal bullbegan with the words: "Arise, O Lord, plead thine own cause; remember how the foolish man reproacheth thee daily; the foxes are wasting thy vineyard, which thou hast given to thy vicar Peter; the boar out of the wood doth waste it, and the wild beast of the field doth devour it."

With enormous courage Luther faced this new ordeal, manifesting a holy defiance (1Ti 1:18), faith (Isa 54:17), and perhaps a little bit of common coarseness. He called the papal decree, "the execrable bull of Anti-Christ."

Then, on December 10, 1520, Luther burned the document in public at the gates of Wittenberg. Gathered around him to witness this burning were University professors, students, and ordinary people from towns and villages. Into the fiery flames Luther also tossed copies of canon laws on which the Church of Romerelied for maintaining its authority over the souls of men. As Luther watched the papers turn into ashes, he knew that this was his final act of renunciation of the Roman Catholic Church. During one moment of thoughtfulness, Luther said, "As thou hast wasted the Holy One of God, so may the eternal flames waste thee."

Because the papal bullcalled upon the followers of Luther to recant their allegiance to him in public within sixty days or be treated as heretics, preparation had to be made to withstand the persecutionthat was sure to come. Luther began to publish three significant works. "To the Christian Nobilityof Germany" was published first. This work was a clarion call to abolish the abuses which had been decreed by Rome. "The Babylonian Captivityof the Church" was issued next. This work destroyed the Catholic belief that men could only be redeemed through the priest and the Roman system of sacramental salvation. Finally, "The Liberty of a Christian Man" summarized the privileges and obligations of the believer.

For Luther, the greatest privilege was to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ as personal Savior. The greatest obligation was to receive Him by grace through faith alone. Said Luther in May, 1520, in his pamphlet "On Good Works," "The noblest of all good works is to believe in Jesus Christ." Because of faith in Christ, good deeds would follow (Eph 6:5-9).

The Emperor Joins the Fray

While Luther defied the papal bull in the safety of Wittenberg under the protection of Frederick the Wise, Leo Xwas plotting his next move. In order to regain control of the situation, the pope felt he had to find a way to challenge and curb the growing power of this troublesome monk. The decision was made to appeal to the new emperor, Charles, king of Spain.

Charles V, as he is known to history, was the heir to the domains of Austria and Spain. He had been elected Emperor of the Holy Roman Empireduring the same period that the debate was raging in Leipzig. As king of Spain, Charles also had dominion over the Netherlands, a large section of Italy, and in theory, that part of the world discovered by Columbus. The sum of all this is that, as the elected emperor of Germany and Austria, Charles ruled over a larger portion of the earth than any man since Charlemagne.

It was to this powerful secular monarch that Pope Leo Xappealed for help in handling the spiritual crisis created by Martin Luther. What Leo wanted was for Charles to help bring Luther to repentance, or to the place of physical execution. The pope knew that Charles was a devout Catholic who would not want to see the Church torn apart. Therefore, after much discussion, Charles was persuaded to summon Luther to appear for questioning before him in the city of Worms on the Rhine.

Luther received the royal summons with sadness. He knew he had to go to the Diet or Supreme Council of the German rulers. He was wanted by the papal court and by the royal crown. And so, on April 2, 1521, Luther started to go to the place where he was certain he would die. Prior to his departure, Luther had appealed to Melanchthon, a colleague at the University. "My dear brother," he said, "if I do not come back, if my enemies put me to death, you will go on teaching and standing fast in the truth; if you live, my death will matter little."

Though Luther was heavy of heart he was not afraid. "I will go to Worms," he declared, "though as many devils were aiming at me as tiles on the roof." Along the way, Luther was encouraged by the great crowds that came out to cheer him on. The roads were crowded with people who wanted to get a glimpse of the man who had created so much controversy within the kingdom of Christ. The journey continued until finally, at four o"clock in the afternoon of Wednesday, April 17, 1521, Luther arrived at the Diet of Worms. Just before he entered the conference hall, a well-

known knight said to him, “My poor monk, my poor monk, you are on your way to make such a stand as I, and many of my knights, have never done in our toughest battle. If you are sure of the justice of your cause, then forward in the Name of God, and be of good courage, God will not forsake you.”

Standing Fast at the Diet of Worms

A dramatic scene unfolded. On a splendid royal throne sat Charles V, one of the most powerful of all men to have walked the face of the earth. The emperor was surrounded by his royal court with all of their pomp and pageantry. Also present were six electors of the empire and twenty-four dukes. To show their support for the crown and to display their hostility to Luther, were thirty archbishops, bishops, and abbots, seven ambassadors, and papal nuncios (official representatives from Pope Leo X). Before Charles stood the poor priest, dressed in the black robe of an Augustinian monk. Luther looked at Charles, and the king looked at Luther, for the first time. Both were young men. The king was twenty-one; Luther was thirty-seven.

In the royal room, a table had been placed with the many writings of Luther spread out. The audience grew silent as the Church official spoke. The Presiding Officer was none other than Dr. Johann von Eck! He had only two questions to ask: “1) Are these your writings; and 2) do you wish to retract them, or do you adhere to them and continue to assert them?” The official demanded a simple and plain answer.

Luther was surprised. He thought he had come to defend himself by debating the merits of his works. But there was to be no defense. There was to be no exchanging of ideas. Luther had been asked two questions. He had to respond on the spot.

Luther replied to the inquiry of the Church official. These were his writings. He would admit that. Did he wish to retract them? On that question, Luther asked for more time to respond. The secular members of the Diet consulted and agreed. Luther would be given more time. Court would reconvene twenty-four hours later. The general meeting was over for day one.

Upon casual reflection, it seems that the request by Luther to Charles Vfor more time, was a reasonable and innocent request. In retrospect, it was much more. It was nothing short of brilliance, for the simple request crystallized, and settled, an important issue that dealt with ultimate authority between Church and State.

For many years, the Church had been insisting that it had authority over the State. Secular powers should be submissive to papal powers. When the emperor and German princes granted Luther the requested delay, they were in effect demonstrating that they would not be submissive to Rome. The State was not going to be a tool in the hands of the papacy. The representatives from Rome might want an immediate recantation by Luther and no delay, but the State was willing to wait. Luther would be granted additional time, and a message would be sent that the Church does not have ultimate authority over all others.

On the following day, Thursday, April 18, 1521, at the appointed hour, Luther returned to face Charles Vand the princes of Germany. He had spent much of the night in prayer. He was ready to give the Diet an answer to the second question: whether or not he would denounce his own writings.

Once more the sweltering crowd in the room grew silent. Griped with emotion, from the depths of his soul, Luther answered the question formulated by Dr. Eck (Pro 16:1): “Your Imperial Majesty and Your Lordships demand a simple answer. Here it is, plain and unvarnished. Unless I am convicted of error by the testimony of Scriptures or—since I put no trust in the unsupported authority of Pope or councils, since it is plain that they have often erred and often contradicted themselves—by manifest reasoning I stand convicted by the Scriptures to which I have appealed, and my conscience is taken captive by God’s Word,I cannot and will not recant anything, for to act against our conscience is neither safe for us, nor open to us. On this I take my stand. I can do no other. God help me. Amen.”[5]

With those words, Luther turned and started to leave the room. When a number of Spaniards began to cry out in anger at what they heard, German nobles and others formed a protective circle around Luther. He was escorted to safety as pandemonium erupted. Despite more appearances before the Diet over the next few days, it was apparent that there would be no reconciliation between Luther’s ideas and the Catholic Church. Charles Vwas astonished; he told his courtiers that he “could not see how a single monk could be right, and the testimony of a thousand years of Christendom be wrong.”

Kidnapped!

Amazingly enough, Luther was allowed to leave Worms. The promised safe-conduct would be honored. Luther could go back to Wittenberg, but he was ordered not to preach. During the night of April 26, 1521, Luther left Worms. Two days later, on April 28, Luther reached Frankfurton the Main. On May 1, he resided at Hersfeld where, despite orders to the contrary, he preached the Gospel. On May 2, he came to Eisenachwhere he preached on May 3, before riding on through the forest of Mohra. May 4 found Luther preaching once more, this time in the open air. In the evening his journey continued. Suddenly, in the midst of the forest, five riders with masks came upon Luther, lifted him out of the cart on which he was traveling, and rode off with him into the woods in the direction of Eisenach. Martin Lutherhad been

kidnapped!

The “kidnapping” of Luther had been the idea of Luther’s prince and friend, the elector Frederick of Saxony, whom he would never meet. Frederick had instructed those involved in this scheme to take Luther by “force” to the WartburgCastle in Eisenach, Germany. Though Luther would stay here for ten months (May 4, 1521 to March 3, 1522), he would not be bored. During this period he rested, took walks in the forest, and produced the first translation of the New Testamentinto the German language!

There on one occasion, while looking for strawberries, Luther came across a hare being chased. He later remembered that moment in a sermon. “I saved alive a poor little hare, which I picked up, all trembling from its pursuers. After keeping it in my sleeve for some time, I set it down, and the creature was running off to secure its liberty—when the dogs getting scent of it, ran up, broke its leg, and then pitilessly killed it. The dogs were the Pope and Satan, destroying the souls that I seek to save, as I sought to save the poor little hare.”

Finally, tired of being in isolation for ten months, Luther decided to return to Wittenberg in order to resume his place in the leadership of the movement for a Reformed Church. Luther found a dangerous situation. The German states were engaging in a religious civil warbetween the North and the South. The rulers of the South, led by Austria, were choosing to be loyal to Rome, while many states in the North became followers of Luther.

A Protestation

In 1529, a Diet was held at Speyerto reconcile the warring factions between the Lutherans and the Church of Rome. It was too little too late. Since the Catholic rulers were in the majority, they were able to condemn the doctrines articulated by Luther. In addition, Lutheranismwas forbidden to be taught in those states where it had not been widely received. And even in those states that were already Lutheran, it was required that the Catholics should have religious freedom to advocate the teachings of the Catholic Church. It was to this unequal ruling that many Lutheran princes registered a formal “protestation” at the meeting of the Reichstag at Speyer. In this manner the termProtestantwas born.

In the following year of 1530, a number of Protestant rulers convened in what was called the Schmalkald League. The Emperor Charles Vneeded their support against the Mohammedan Turks, who were threatening the very existence of Vienna. So religious freedom was granted to the princes in 1532, but the peace would be only temporary.

Duly alarmed and afraid of the spread of Protestantism, Catholics united to form the Holy League. Religious fighting broke out in 1546, the year Luther died. Despite initial losses, the Protestant forces were able to defeat the imperial forces in enough encounters to push them out of Germany. At the Diet of Augsburgin 1555, the struggle finally ended—provision was made for a permanent peace. Those who adhered to theAugsburg Confessionwere recognized as Protestants and given legal status and religious freedom. Despite this victory, the Catholics were able to keep a large part of the land, because the terms of agreement contained an ecclesiastical reservation. Any Catholic prince who became a Protestant faced the forfeiture of these estates.

Chapter 3

A New Way of Life for Luther and Lutherans

A New Principle of Christian Liberty

The termreformationseems to be an appropriate word to apply to the sweeping changes that were taking place within the Roman Catholic Churchduring the days of Luther. The invisible "Churchwithin the Church" (Rom 9:6) was being rediscovered, refined, and purified.6And in the providence of God, the changes did not stop there. People took reformation principles into their hearts and applied them to daily life at home, at work, and at play. Many of God's people discovered that life could be enjoyed because there was freedom to worship the Lord informally as well as formally (1Co 10:31). Luther himself discovered a zest for life that more than made up for years of asceticism. Said Luther, "Our loving God wills that we eat, drink, and be merry."

Luther approved of a variety of amusements, enjoyed a good game of chess, and loved music. "I seek and accept joy wherever I can find it. We now know, thank God, that we can be happy with a good conscience." While life was to be enjoyed, religious duties were not to be neglected but participated in most fully. If Luther was correct in his understanding of the Bible, then all believers are priests unto God and must serve as the same. In the service of the Lord there should be joy and freedom of expression. A guiding principle was that if the Bible did not prohibit something, or if no one was hurt, or if the conscience was not violated, then there was to be Christian liberty.

Unfortunately, the practical implications of this principle were not understood nor agreed upon by all. As time passed, debates began to rage over particular acts of behavior. For example, many people who were departing from Catholicismwanted to divest themselves of physical reminders of the Church of Rome. Altars and images were removed from places of worship, sometimes by physical force. Other Protestants chose to keep the main altar, candles, and even some images of Christ. A place was protected for the use of religious artin worship.

Transubstantiation

As Luther continued to consider additional aspects of Catholic dogma, besides indulgences and the supremacy of the pope, attention was focused upon the doctrine oftransubstantiation.According to the Catholic Church, the Lord's Supperis a sacrifice that requires a priest. When the priest blesses the elements of bread and wine, a miracle takes place: the elements become the actual and literal body and blood of Jesus! No matter how often this is done, no matter how many priests are involved, no matter how unworthy a priest may be, a change in substance (transubstantiation) takes place.

Because of the importance of this miracle, Catholic authorities decided that only the priest could drink the wine. It was feared that the parishioners (the laity) might drop some of the wine, thereby spilling the blood of Christ. The laitywas trusted to properly eat the body of Christ, in the form of a wafer, but only after the priest placed the host upon the tongue of the worshipper.

Consubstantiation

Luther came to view the Lord's Supperin a way that radically departed from the official position of the Catholic Church. Luther denied that the Lord's Supper was a sacrifice that should be, or even could be, repeated over and over again, century after century, on a thousand different altars. Appealing to Scripture, Luther taught that Christ was offered once for all, as a substitutionary sacrifice, upon the cross of Calvary (Heb 9:28).

What Luther failed to do, in the view of later Reformers, was to distance himself far enough from the Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation. Luther taught that Christ's body is present in theEucharist(Greek, thanksgiving). While this word is used in the New Testamentto refer to prayer in general, the term had come to be applied to the Lord's Supperby the Catholic Church, because it was at the last supper, prior to His death, that Christ had "given thanks" (1Co 11:23-26).

Luther's teaching on the Lord's Supper has been designated by the termconsubstantiation. According to Lutheran doctrine, the Lord's Supper is the means of receiving God's grace, by which Christ, in a unique and personal way, gives Himself to us. The Lord Jesus distributed the elements of bread and wine at the Last Supper as pledges of the assurance that sins would be forgiven. The believer receives these pledges from the hands of Christ in order to

strengthen faith.

In the observance of the Lord's Supper, primary emphasis is not to be placed on the faith and love manifested by those who partake. Rather, attention is to be focused on the grace of God who manifested Himself in the Person and love of Christ. Finally, the Lord's Supper is to be considered a memorial of Christ, a testimony of faith, and an open expression of Christian fellowship in the unity of faith.

Desiring to return to the original observance of the institution, Luther taught that those who partake of the Lord's Supper should receive the cup as well as the bread (from theAugsburg Confession, Article X, XXII, and XXIV; and theFormula of Concord, Chapter VII). In the same way that Luther moved away from the Catholic teaching of transubstantiation, other reformers would soon distance themselves from Luther's doctrine of consubstantiation.

Spiritual Resources for the Righteous

As the Reformation continued, there was a desperate need for new scriptural material to guide the growth of the saints. Being a prolific writer, Luther was able to provide valuable literary resources. Using Erasmus'Greek Testamentof 1516, the first printed Greek Testament, Luther translated the Scriptures into the language of the German people using a common vernacular. His work was widely welcomed for its simplicity and beauty. Luther believed that every person had the right and the responsibility to read, study, and interpret the Bible.

This basic concept was radically different from the Catholic Church, which believed that only church leaders and educated scholars with linguistic abilities had the necessary ability to understand the Bible properly. The Catholic Church took the position of being afraid that careless study of the Scriptures could lead to careless interpretation. Perhaps they were more afraid of losing control over the minds of individuals. "Knowledge is power" in the wisdom of man.

Because Luther was not afraid of an educated congregation, he did much to dispel the darkness of ignorance. Free primary and secondary schools were encouraged to be established throughout Germany. Luther's ownShorter Catechismwas part of the core curriculum. In this small work, Luther was able to provide a doctrinal foundation for future generations to build upon. Luther also did much towards training the clergy for the work of the ministry.

In addition to Scripture translation and the Shorter Catechism, Luther encouraged the singing of new hymns, many of which he wrote himself. Perhaps his most enduring hymn is "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God":

> "A mighty fortress is our God, A bulwark never failing;
> Our helper He amid the flood, Of mortal ills prevailing."

Always believing that there is only one true Church, Luther desired that a formal and official statement of faith be drafted and declared. Historically, this was not a new concept. In 1530, at the Diet of Augsburg, the document was presented and accepted. The statement of faith has become known as theAugsburg Confession.

No ancient creed of Christendom was replaced by this new expression of faith. The Lutheran Churchembraced the Apostle's Creed, and the Creeds of Niceaand Chalcedon. What theAugsburg Confessiondid do was to incorporate the historical positions of faith of the Church and to amplify them.

Master Melanchthon

To assist Luther in his great work of "reforming" a Church in need, God provided him with a wonderful co-worker named Philip Melanchthon. Born in Brettan, Baden, in 1497, the son of George Schwartzerd, Philip was given the unusual name "Melanchthon" (Greek: black earth) by his great uncle John Reuchlin. An exceptionally brilliant student, Philip was graduated in 1511 at the age of fourteen. The next year he received a Master of Arts degree from Tubingen. When only twenty-one years old, he was appointed professor of Greek in Wittenburg. More degrees and honors would be conferred upon him in the years to come.

Perhaps his greatest privilege was that of working with Martin Luther. From the start, Melanchthon was a strong champion and capable defender of the doctrines of the Reformation. His scholarly presence and calming influence was manifested on a number of occasions. Not the least of these was the Diet of Augsburgin 1530, where the basic Lutheran statement of faith was formulated and accepted. It was Melanchthon who wrote anApologyin 1531 to explain this confession of faith to those in the Catholic Church who opposed it.

On a more practical level, Melanchthon was very useful in organizing schools, training the clergy, and publishing the vast body of literature that helped to guide the Reformation through the early years of the movement. He was a man who desired peace. When he died in 1560, Melanchthon was buried alongside his beloved friend, Martin Luther.

Luther at Home

Despite the tremendous burdens of daily leadership, Luther found time by the goodness of God to fall in love with a great lady of grace. Her name was Catherine Von Bora(1499-1552) and on June 27, 1525, she married Martin. He was forty-two and she was twenty-six. Luther liked to tease and say that he married his Katie to please his father, spite the devil, and anger the pope.

Defying a Catholic tradition that was three hundred years old, Luther correctly broke his vows of celibacy—as did Catherine, who was a former nun (1Ti 4:1-3; Heb 13:4). She was a lady of good birth and reputation. Their marriage was pleasant. Later in life Luther would repeat on his own what he had been taught in his youth: "The greatest gift of God to man is a pious, kindly, God-fearing, home-loving wife." Together they would have six children.

As a father, Luther was stern but kind. "Punish if you must," he said, "but let the sugar-plum go with the rod." He composed songs for his children and sang them as he played the lute. The death of his daughter Magdalenaat the age of fourteen brought his heart much sorrow. Like King David, Luther prayed day and night for her recovery, and then submitted her to God, saying, "I love her very much, but dear God, if it is Thy holy will to take her, I would gladly leave her with Thee." After a moment, Luther spoke to Magdalene, "Lena dear, my little daughter, thou wouldst love to remain here with thy father; art thou willing to go to that other Father?" And the child answered, "Yes, dear father, just as God wills." When Magdalenadied, Luther wept many bitter tears for a long period. At her funeral he spoke to her one last time, saying, "Magdalena, you will rise and shine like the stars and the sun." Then he added, "How strange it is to know that she is at peace and all is well, and yet be so sorrowful."

A Faithful Servant

No great man or woman of God has ever been without critics, and Luther was no exception. During his lifetime, Luther knew what it was to pass through the fires of personal persecution. He experienced many of the perils associated with the cause of Christ. But through it all, Luther was faithful. "I bear upon me the malice of the whole world," he once said, "the hatred of the Emperor, of the Pope, and of all their retinue. Well, onward, in God's name!"

Perhaps Luther did not go far enough in some of his reforming practices and doctrine. Perhaps Luther should not have made the Church subordinate to the control of civil authorities. Perhaps Luther should not have been so intemperate in his remarks during the Peasant's Warof 1525, when he called for mass executions of the mob. Certainly he could have co-operated more with the Swiss reformers, thereby presenting a stronger force of resistance against the power of Catholicismin various European states. And there is no doubt that at times he sang too much, ate too much, danced too much, and drank too much. God would hold Luther accountable for going to excess in enjoying some of the things of life, for the anti-Semitism that poured forth from Luther's lips and pen, and for the intolerance he displayed in later life.

It has been observed that Luther should never have grown old. By 1522, some said that he was acting worse than the popes. "I do not admit," he wrote, "that my doctrine can be judged by anyone, even by the angels. He who does not receive my doctrine cannot be saved." By 1529, he was again a little more temperate, though still advocating that even "unbelievers should be forced to obey the Ten Commandments, attend church, and outwardly conform," and heretics should be put to death. Fortunately, his bark was worse than his bite.

Without question, some of the reproof leveled against Luther has been justified. His great faults were as real as his many virtues. But Luther never claimed to be more than he was, a sinner saved by grace. There is no doubt that the day Luther died in Eisleben, Germany, February 18, 1546, multitudes of thankful souls welcomed him home to heaven, where he heard the words of his Lord saying to him, "Well done, thy good and faithful servant" (Mat 25:23). "Well done."

Chapter 4

The Reformation Reaches Beyond Germany

A Foundation for the Reformation

While Martin Lutherworked diligently to fan the flames of spiritual renewal in the Church of Germany, the spirit of the Reformation spread beyond the borders of his native land. The general distinguishing principles of the Reformation may be identified.

A FUNDAMENTAL RESPECT FOR THE SCRIPTURES.For centuries the Catholic Church had diminished the importance of Scripture. The Biblewas not believed to be sufficient for life, so the writings of men and the authority of Church councils were given equal or superior weight to the Word of God. The Scriptures virtually were withheld from the people, for it was not allowed to be translated into the vernacular of the common man. Very few people had even seen a copy of the Bible, let alone held one in their hands. The Reformers restored the Scripture to its rightful position. It was the Bible that was to determine the Church's doctrine, regulate its practice, and guide the daily conduct of the believer.

A RELIGION BASED UPON REASON.The Church of Romehad introduced and advanced many illogical doctrines. And it had forced people to embrace them upon penalty of temporal punishment or eternal pain. There was the mystical doctrineof transubstantiation. There were the greedy and terribly misleading pretensions of papal indulgences. There was the supercilious supply of images in the hour of worship. The Reformers placed before the people of God a creed, a code of conduct, and a way of worship that did not outrage the rational nature of the mind.

A RELIGION OF PERSONAL PIETY.Catholicismdid not encourage individuals to go directly and personally to God the Father. Between the heart of man and the heart of the God of heaven, both popes and councils had interjected their own authority. Before a soul burdened with sin could find divine forgiveness, the priest had to intervene to hear one's confession and then render absolution. No longer could a saint come boldly before the throne of grace. The Virgin Maryand departed saints were interjected, demanding needless mediation.

But with the mighty power of the Holy Spirit, the Reformers swept away all false barriers. They declared the right of private judgment. They proclaimed the Bible's universal priesthoodof the believer with direct access to the throne room of God (1Pe 2:5, 9; Rev 1:6; 20:6), and they emphasized personal responsibility (Jam 5:16). Each soul has the privilege of speaking directly to the Savior, the true source of salvation.

A SPIRITUAL RELIGION.Because a multitude of outward ordinances and ceremonies had been imposed upon the people, the true spiritual nature of the faith had become obscured. The Reformers arose to emphasize an inward religious experience over external ecclesiastical rituals without reality. The Reformers replaced penance with penitence, works with faith, asceticism with true self-denial, celibacy with chastity, and the mass with real spiritual communion.

THE RISE OF NATIONALISM.Desiring to subjugate the world to itself, Rome made each nation subservient to an ecclesiastical hierarchy over which it presided. The Reformers protested against papal intervention into the internal affairs of individual countries, thereby denying religious independence.

At the Diet of Spiresin 1526, it was decreed that in regard to religion "each state should live, govern, and behave itself as it should answer to God and the Emperor." From time to time, when he was not fighting perpetual wars outside his domain, Charles V, Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, attempted to reverse the decree and bring everyone back to the Catholic faith, but national freedom of religionwas reaffirmed at the Augsburg Dietin 1555. The rise of nationalism, encouraged by the Reformers, established the principle that Rome had no right to impose its ecclesiastical discipline, ritual, or creed upon other Christians outside its sphere of influence.

A Mixed Heritage

While establishing these general principles, the Reformers did accept the historic creeds of Niceaand Chalcedon, as well as the Augustinian doctrines of the necessity of inward grace and of justificationby faith. What the Reformers rejected were the many false doctrines of Catholicismthat were not found in the Bible, but are based instead primarily on traditions of the Roman Catholic Church. These included the supremacy of the pope, an exclusive priesthood, the worship of Mary as the mother of God and the queen of heaven, the worship of saints, the withholding of the cup of communion from the laity, indulgences, purgatory, prayers for the dead, monasticism, compulsory celibacy, obligatory confession, and the exclusive use of Latin in public worship.

Ulrich Zwingli

To lead the Reformation in Switzerland, God raised up men such as Ulrich Zwingli. Zwingli was born on January 1, 1484, in Wildhaus, a German-speaking region in Switzerland. A gifted student, Zwingli studied at Bern, Vienna, and Basel. After receiving the degree of Master of Arts in 1506, he was ordained a priest and served a parish at Glarus for ten years. In 1516, Zwingli moved to Einsiedeln, where he would remain for three years. As a scholar, Zwingli was able to study the classics in the original languages.

Unlike Luther, Zwingli never had a crisis of the soul. He studied the Gospel, was illuminated by the Holy Spirit (Joh 3:1-8), and preached what he studied, which meant that he also preached against what was not to be found in Scripture. In particular, in 1517, Zwingli began to oppose a false doctrineof Rome which taught that there was remission of sins for those who made a pilgrimage to a shrine of the Virgin Maryat Einsiedeln. The whole system of relics and mariology was vigorously attacked as people were pointed to the true way of salvation in Christ: "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (Joh 1:29). In 1518, Zwingli turned his considerable oratorical abilities to attacking indulgences.

By 1522, while serving as a priest in a large cathedral in Zurich, Zwingli finally broke with Rome. He removed images from the Church, abolished the Mass, reformed the school system, got married, and preached against celibacy. When opposition to his ministry became too great, the city council decided to hold public hearings. At the open meetings, Zwingli used the opportunity to present theSixty-seven Articles of Faithwhich he had drafted. He managed to persuade the city leaders to endorse his reform efforts. Unfortunately, in 1529, civil warresulted between the Roman Catholics and the Protestants. In 1531, Zwingli was brutally killed in battle. Having been severely wounded in the leg by a spear, and with his helmet bashed in by a stone, Zwingli lay down to die. Eventually, he was struck through by an enemies sword. His body was quartered. The individual limbs were mixed with excrement and burned. His ashes were scattered to the winds.

With the death of Zwingli at age 47, the Protestant cause suffered a setback. Their Christian Civic Leaguewas no match against the Catholic coalition that had also formed and made an alliance with Ferdinand of Austria. The importance of Zwingli's work in Switzerland cannot be overstated. Educated under the influence of Renaissance idealism, he recognized the need for nations to return to God, and so attempted political reforms as well as spiritual regeneration. His theology emphasized the sovereignty of God and the electionto salvation of precious souls.

Zwingli also taught that the Lord's Supperheld no special merit in the salvation of the elect, because it was merely a symbol or remembrance of the sacrificial, substitutionary work of Christ at Calvary. This position served to alienate Zwingli from Luther, who insisted that the body and blood of Christ are really present in the communion. All of this was discussed in October, 1529, when Luther and Zwingli held a conference at Marburg. Because the German and Swiss reformers could not agree, an opportunity was lost to form a spiritual alliance against the forces of the pope.

John Calvin

In the summer of 1536, a young author, age twenty-seven, arrived at Genevato spend the night. With the exception of three years in exile, John Calvinwould remain in Geneva for the rest of his life.

Calvin was born July 10, 1509, in a small town called Noyon, located in northern France near Paris. His father, Gerard, was financially prosperous. He enjoyed excellent political connections while serving as secretary to the bishop of Noyon, proctor (supervisor) in the cathedral, and fiscal procurator of the province. Calvin was introduced to the Catholic bureaucracy at age eleven when he was appointed to be a chaplain. It was an accepted practice to appoint a child to a church office, receive the salary, and then allow an adult priest to perform the actual work for a portion of the revenues. Though Calvin would stay in the Catholic Church structure for many years, he was never ordained to the priesthood.

Despite his father's comfortable position in life, Calvin knew sorrow at an early age when his mother died. His father married again. Young Calvin was sent to Paris to further his education before moving on to study law at Orleans. In 1531, he took his Bachelor of Laws degree.

Sometime during 1532 or 1533, Calvin became a true Christian. He says that his salvation experience was abrupt. While engaged in private study, God, by a sudden conversion, subdued his heart. Like Luther, Calvin had not found peace with God in absolutions, sacraments, penance, indulgences, or intercessory prayer.

While in Paris, Calvin became a religious refugee because of his known sympathies with the principles of the Protestant Reformation. Warned by friends that he was scheduled to be arrested, Calvin left Paris(January, 1534) and found refuge in Angouleme. In May he returned to Noyonand resigned from the offices from which income had been helping to support him.

Calvin was arrested and thrown into prison for the cause of Christ. Upon release, Calvin was hunted from city to city (December, 1534). Compelled to use assumed names, he taught small groups in quiet gatherings in various parts of Germany and Switzerland.

For awhile in 1535, Calvin found rest in Basel, Switzerland. By the grace of God, he was also able during this period to establish a friendship with Martin Bucer, the reformer of Strassburgwho was a professor of theology at the university. It was at Basel, at age twenty-six, that Calvin formulated and published (1536) the first edition of hisInstitutes of the Christian Religion. The work was intended to be a catechism, whereby the fundamental teachings of the Protestant movement were set forth.

Upon reflection, Calvin became convinced that the book could also be useful in explaining to the Catholic ruler of France, Francis I(king, 1515-1547), that those who embraced the Reformation principles were not disloyal citizens. Protestants were not radicals nor revolutionaries, but firm believers in the Word of God. They deserved to be treated in a more kind manner. The Lord was pleased to use Calvin's work, which went through many editions until the last in 1559 (the final edition was three times the size of the first).The Institutes of the Christian Religionis considered by many to be the finest concise expression of evangelical faith. Concerned for his safety once more, Calvin decided to leave Basel and go to Strassburgin southwest Germany, where he could live quietly as a scholar. However, as Calvin passed through Geneva on the way to Strassburg, God had ordained that he would meet "William" Farel.

The Belief of Farel

Guillaume Farel(1489-1565) had first begun to hold regular Reformed worship services in Genevain 1534. He was an experienced champion of the evangelical cause, having seen spiritual success in 1528 in Bern. Together with J. Hussgen (Oecolampadius), Farel was victorious during the Bern Disputation, a forum in which the city leaders decided to embrace the Protestant position. Bern then sponsored the work of Farel as he moved on to minister in Vaud, Neuchatel(1530), and Geneva.

Because of Farel's faithfulness, zeal, persuasive abilities, and anointment of the Holy Spirit, Geneva officially became Protestant in 1535. The city council then moved to legislate what it believed to be Christian ethics. Laws were enacted against drunkenness, gambling, dancing, dice, and many other moral vices. But the laws had little effect upon the personal lives of the people. Farel knew that a mighty man of God was needed to bring souls into conformity with the standards of the Gospel. The city needed a man of conviction, strength, and integrity. The city needed John Calvin!

Hearing that Calvin was in town for the night, Farel sought him out, much to Calvin's great surprise. He had entered Geneva as a stranger and had no idea that anyone knew he was there. Farel told Calvin what was on his heart. The city needed him. Calvin shook his head in disagreement at the implications. He was too young for an important leadership position. He knew nothing of the problems of Geneva. He was timid by nature and wanted to live the life of a scholar. He was not prepared for fierce, personal, and prolonged religious struggles. Calvin would go on to Strassburgwhere there was peace and safety. There he could study and write.

Farel listened to Calvin's comments and grew more intense. The discussion continued until Farel grew weary and angry. The forty-seven year-old man stopped talking and stood up. His beard fell upon his chest. His eyes were fiery as he looked at the youth twenty years his junior. Farel would speak one last time. He would speak as a prophet of God, and he would bring the wrath of heaven down upon the head of this obstinate young man. With coldness in his voice Farel said, "May God curse your studies if now in her time of need you refuse to lend your aid to His Church!" This was too much for Calvin. He was shaken. How could he refuse to help when such words were spoken? He would concede to the will of God as manifested through Farel. Calvin would stay in Geneva and the two men would become close friends in the work of the Lord. Geneva could be grateful that Farel had found for them a wonderful spiritual leader.

A Great Work in Geneva

When John Calvinmade the monumental decision to stay in Genevaand work with Farel, he could not have imagined the fantastic future of tragedy and triumph that awaited him. The life of Calvin was in three distinct phases:

Phase I First stay in Geneva Aug., 1536 - April, 1538
Phase II Exiled in Strassburg May, 1538 - Sept., 1541
Phase III Return to lead Sept., 1541 - May, 1564.

The beginning of Calvin's ministry in Geneva was very humble. He was accepted by the Great Council(the civil ruling body in Geneva) and approved by the presbytery(the subordinate ruling body of the Church). With no other ordination he began his ministry on September 5, 1536, by preaching on the Epistles of St. Paul in the Church of St. Peter. But trouble began soon after that, when Calvin and Farel placed before the city council three proposals.

First, it was suggested that the Lord's Suppershould be administered on a regular basis. Communion was to be closed in the sense that every person not living a godly life would be disciplined even to the point of excommunication. The minister of the Gospel would determine who was a fit communicant to receive the Lord's Supper. Calvin and Farel were shocked to find the people of Geneva giving themselves to dancing, gambling, drunkenness, and adultery. An

entire district of the city, known as the Brothel Queen, was given to prostitutes. Farel and Calvin felt a moral obligation to hold people spiritually accountable for their sins.

Second, it was proposed that a catechism which Calvin had written should be adopted. Thethirdproposal stated that every citizen should embrace as a standard theConfession of Faith and Disciplinedrafted by Farel. The objectives of Calvin and Farel were to make Genevaa true and righteous "city of God," while maintaining the autonomyof the Church from the state.

The Great Councilof the city approved the proposals in November, 1536. Anyone who openly transgressed the moral code was to be excommunicated and sent into exile. The order was given. In July, 1537, all citizens were to gather at the Church of St. Peter and give their allegiance to theConfession of Faith and Discipline. Anyone who displayed any form of Catholicism, such as carrying a rosary or sacred relic, or observing a saint's day, was subject to punishment. Gamblers were placed into the stocks. Known adulterers were paraded through the streets before being sent into exile.

Banished!

It was all too much. The people had grown to enjoy the lenient moral discipline they had found under Catholicism. Militant groups began to come together. The Patriotsreorganized themselves. They had freed the city once from oppressive secular rules, they would free it again from these strangers in their midst, who wanted to make all men saints. Others, called Libertinesor Liberals, desired liberty of conscience, morals, and worship. They joined with the Patriots and those who secretly remained Catholics. In the election of February 3, 1538, this new coalition won the majority in the Great Council. Now they were in a position to confront the zealous ministers of St. Peter.

Farel and Calvin rose to meet the challenge against their authority. They denounced the Council and refused to serve communion unless the Council members accepted Church discipline. The Council met and decided to banish the two ministers, which was done on April 23, 1538. They were ordered to leave the city within three days. The people rejoiced with public celebrations.

Farel returned to a pastoral ministry in Neuchatel. He would never go back to Geneva. Calvin traveled to Strassburgat the invitation of Martin Bucer, who had been won to the Reformation cause after listening to Luther during the great Leipzig Debate. After eighteen months of constant conflict in Geneva, Calvin was ready for the peace of Strassburg.

Here he would study and preach—and get married. He asked Farel and Bucer to help him find a wife with specific qualifications. "I am none of those insane lovers," wrote Calvin, "who, when once smitten with the fine figure of a woman, embrace also her faults. This only is the beauty which allures me: that she be chaste, obliging, not fastidious, economical, patient, and careful for my health." In 1540, with Farel officiating, Calvin married Idelette de Bure, a poor widow with several children. They had one child, a son, who died in infancy. When Idelette died in 1549, Calvin wrote of her with great love. He never remarried, but chose to live in marital loneliness during the last fifteen years of his life.

Life in Strassburgwas a time of peace for Calvin, but also of much activity. There were a number of French Protestant refugees who had fled to Strassburg (in Germany) to escape the persecutionthey faced in France. Calvin would be a pastor to them. Calvin would also have the opportunity to meet many of the leading men of the Reformation, as he attended various conferences in Germany that had been called by the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V.

Charles V(ruler, 1519-1558) was determined to restore the unity in the body of Christ by bringing the Protestants and Catholics together again. If he were ever to revive the universal empire of Charlemagne, he must have peace in his immense kingdom. Charles was not only the Emperor of Germany, but the sovereign of Spain, Portugal, Austria, much of Italy, Burgundy, and the Netherlands. And he really wanted unity! But it was not to be. The differences of the Reformers were too great. Time could not be reversed, and the divisions could not healed. But some good did come out of the conferences. While Calvin and Luther never met, Calvin became friends with Melanchthon and other Lutheran leaders.

Return to Geneva

As Calvin enjoyed a more serene life in Strassburg, the situation in Genevawas deteriorating. The Catholic Church saw an opportunity to regain its lost influence. Cardinal IacopoSadoleto wrote theEpistle to the Geneveseurging them to return to their Catholic faith (1539). It was a masterful document, full of diplomatic courtesies and theological exhortations.

The Great Councilthanked the Cardinal for his letter, promised a response, and became concerned. Who could adequately respond to such a gifted representative of the Catholic Church? A number of citizens were already asking to be released from their oath to support theConfession of Faith and Discipline. Perhaps the city would return to Catholicism!

Calvin learned of the situation in Genevaand wrote a reply to the Cardinal. He would be just as diplomatic, and just as forceful, with his theological exhortations. He too regretted the division of the Church, but the corruptions were so

great that reformation was needed. The papacy had been taken hostage by Anti-Christ! Reading Calvin's reply in Wittenberg, Martin Lutherregarded it as an effective response. "I rejoice," he said, "that God raises up men who will...finish the war against Anti-Christ which I began."

Geneva would remain Protestant. The Great Council was impressed with what Calvin had accomplished with his letter, and they even wondered if perhaps they should not invite him to return. Good preaching had not replaced the messages of Farel and Calvin at St. Peters. People had no respect for their new pastors and so returned to gambling, drunkenness, street fighting, adultery, the singing of lewd songs, and running unclothed through the streets. The four magistrates who had led the original movement to banish Farel and Calvin had proven to be unworthy leaders. One was put to death for murder, another was charged with forgery, and a third with treason. The fourth died while trying to escape arrest.

Over a period of time, a majority of the members of the Great Council came to the conclusion that Calvin should be recalled. On May 1, 1541, his sentence of banishment and that of Farel were annulled. Calvin and Farel were declared to be honorable men after all. A delegation was sent to Strassburgto inform Calvin of that fact.

At first, Calvin was not impressed with the news. He enjoyed life in Germany and did not want to leave to return to a hostile environment. However, he would visit Geneva. When Calvin arrived, September 3, 1541, he received so many gifts, honors, apologies, and promises of co-operation that he felt compelled to stay and see what could be done for Christ.

The Rule of the Righteous

To assist him in the great work of guiding the city of Geneva and reforming it along biblical terms, Calvin formulated a new ecclesiastical code. On January 2, 1542, the Great Council ratified the set of rules for the governing of the Church. The leadership of the ministry would be invested in four offices: pastors, teachers, elders, and deacons. The pastors of Genevawould be recognized as "The Venerable Company." They would have the oversight of the Church and train candidates for the ministry.

This new Consistory(the local Church's ruling body) would have authority to demand obedience to the rules outlined in Calvin's manual of Church Order, and to discipline those who were slow in obedience. Discipline would vary from private warnings to public rebukes. Fines could be levied. "Should anyone come after the sermon has begun, let him be warned. If he does not amend, let him pay a fine of three sous." Heresy was punishable by death, as was witchcraft and striking a parent. Discipline was expected by all. No facet of life would go undisciplined or unexamined by the spiritual leaders. This examination included such things as the color of clothing that was worn, the length of hair, and how many dishes could be served at a meal.

Pharisaic or Pure Religion?

As might be expected, there were various reactions to the new policies and practices implemented in the name of Christ by the Consistory. Some idealized what was happening in Genevaand wanted to be part of it. From Wittenburg, Germany, in 1610, a Lutheran minister named Valentin Andreaewrote a glowing report of what he had seen and heard while visiting Geneva. "When I was in Geneva, I observed something great that I shall remember and desire as long as I live. There is in that city not only the perfect institute of a perfect republic, but, as a special ornament, a moral discipline which makes weekly investigations into the conduct, and even the smallest transgressions, of the citizens...All cursing and swearing, gambling, luxury, strife, hatred, fraud, etc., are forbidden, while greater sins are hardly heard of. What a glorious ornament of the Christian religion is such a purity of morals! We must lament with tears that it is wanting[7]with us [Germans] and almost totally neglected. If it were not for the difference of religion, I would have been chained to Geneva forever."

Not everyone was willing to give such glowing reports. Many felt they were chained to Geneva, but not because of their free will. As early as December 16, 1547, the tension in the city was so great that the Patriotsand Libertinescame to a meeting of the Great Councilwith weapons. They wanted, no, they demanded, an end to the power of the Consistoryover the citizens. Angry words were exchanged. Suddenly Calvin entered into the room, faced the mad mob, and then, striking his breast, said, "If you want blood, there are still a few drops here; strike, then!" The bold invitation was almost acted upon as swords were drawn. But no one wanted to be the assassin. The moment of passion passed and Calvin was able to put down the revolt by the force of his personality and the grace of God, who gave him the courage and the words to speak in the hour of crisis.

Still, there was the problem of people appearing to obey rules and regulations of righteousness, but without true godliness. The records of the Great Councilreflect a large number of children being born out of wedlock in a community of 20,000. There were many cases of children being abandoned, and of marriages being forced. Ecclesiastical sentences of death were being passed for witchcraft and heresy. Calvin's own son-in-law and step-daughter are listed among those condemned of adultery.

The single, darkest spot on the overall glorious record of the great reformer is Calvin's part in the case of Michael

Servetus(1511-1553). Servetus was an extremely well-educated Spanish physician. He was also a heretic, from a Christian point of view, who was militant in his opposition to the historic Christian faith. Servetus denied the deity of Christ, the doctrineof the Trinity, and salvation by grace through faith alone. When he came back to Geneva after being sent away, Servetus was arrested, tried, found guilty, condemned as a heretic, and finally, on October 27, 1553, was burned to death on the hill of Champel, just south of Geneva. Even the gentle Melanchthon in a letter to Calvin expressed his thanks for the punishment of such a blasphemous man.

Calvin's Contributions

The influence of Calvin upon Geneva and the rest of the world is without measure. Out of every country in Europe, refugees from the persecutionof Rome or inquirers in search of biblical truth made their way to see this great man of God, who was poor in health so much of his life. Calvin suffered over the years from severe headaches, gout, and asthma with hemorrhages of the lungs. He barely ate, fasted often, slept only six hours a day, refused to leave the city, was pure in his private life, and could not be bribed. Pope Pius IV once said of him, "The strength of that heretic consisted in this, that money never had the slightest charm for him. If I had such servants my dominion would extend from sea to sea." From Geneva, visitors carried home Calvin's truths to teach and his principles and practices to implement. Because these were rooted in Scripture, individual lives were changed, then nations, and then the world.

From Calvin people learned afresh the biblical doctrineofpredestination. To "predestine" means to establish or arrange beforehand all that shall come to pass. It means to foreordain. God has predestined all things according to the counsel of His own good will (Rom 8:29; Eph 1:5, 11). Predestination takes into account not only what shall come to pass, but also the order in which events will take place. The doctrine incorporates: 1) which men will perform which deeds, 2) who is to be saved and who will not be saved, and 3) everything else! There are no "accidents" for the Christian, only incidents. All things, no matter how inconsequential or important, happen in accordance with the will of God, for the ultimate achievement of what He considers to be admirable (Rom 8:28).

As Calvin taught the doctrines of grace,[8]people listened and learned of a great and glorious God. They listened again as he spoke of the spiritual presence of Christ in the consecrated bread and wine, thereby avoiding Zwingli's position of communion being mere symbolism, and the Catholic's position of Christ's corporal presence.

In other areas, Calvin taught what he believed to be a proper mode of Church worship. Simplicity, he argued, should be followed instead of ceremony. The mind should be appealed to rather than the bodily senses. It was all right to combine liturgical order with freedom of expression.

Calvin taught the essential equality of ministers and the priesthoodof all believers. He taught that laymen should be allowed to share in Church governmentthrough the institution of a plurality of elders. And he taught the spiritual independence of the Church from the state, although the Church should have a moral influence over secular rulers.[9]

Chapter 5

Blood and Violence in the Body of Christ

A Spiritual Battle

One of the most shocking realities in the study of Church history is the amount of killingand the number of violent acts that professing Christians have perpetrated on one another and upon their enemies. While many people embraced Christianity and quietly lived out the ethics of the kingdom of God, in each succeeding century a scarlet thread of bloody violencewas also woven into the fabric of faith by fallen humanity, struggling to implement high and noble ideals. This part of the story of the Church must not be ignored. It must not be glossed over. It must not be justified as being acceptable behavior because the Church was caught up in turbulent times of social upheaval.

The search for vindication for engaging in brutality, in the name of the Prince of Peace, only reveals the truth that the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked (Jer 17:9). Violence begets violence. Unfortunately, more often than not, the origin of conflict cannot be identified so that balanced blame can be assessed. Once name-calling starts in the name of Christ, once persecutions are practiced, once fines for religious infractions are levied, once imprisonments are implemented, once burning and beheadings begin, an objective observer has trouble discovering the righteousness of anyone in the carnage that is left behind. The Church must recognize this dark side of itself and assess what is happening, even if the truth condemns (1Pe 4:17).

In the search for the origin of violence (Jam 4:1), the Bible reveals that the affairs of man are part of the great angelic conflict. The Apostle Paul reminds the Church that, “we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places” (Eph 6:12). The demonic servants of the devil do not want to see peace among men, and so there is a spiritual stirring up of trouble (2Co 11:15). The Scriptures are often taken and twisted by misguided souls who have not learned to handle properly the Word of Truth (2Ti 2:15; 2Pe 1:16). Error rides securely on the back of truth.

The Peasants Misunderstand

When Martin Lutherdefied the Church and challenged the Holy Roman Emperorwithout impunity, the dams of discipline and awe among the peasantry were broken. The news spread from serf to serf. Every man was a priest! There was freedom for the Christian man in the kingdom of Christ!

Other revolutionary ideas followed. The circulation of the New Testamentby way of the invention of the printing press, helped to destroy political, as well as accepted religious, orthodoxy. Individuals could read for themselves that the practices of the Church were far removed from the teaching of Scriptures. The early Church shared and held all possessions in common. Christ had compassion for the poor and the oppressed. There was the promise of a new heaven and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells. It was not wrong to dream of a time when the “poor...would inherit the earth” (Mat 5:3, 5).

All of this was good and true. Society should be changed. Evil should be challenged. However, what was not true is that the Scriptures provided people the right to rebel, with hatred and murderous intent, against ordained authority (Rom 13:1; Mat 22:21). The peasantseither did not, or chose not to, understand that Christ did not come to conquer this world with a sword. Rather, He came to conquer the hearts of men by dying on a cross!

Soon after the Reformation began in 1517, pamphlets began to appear in Germany with a common theme: revolt. It was argued that the peasants must arm themselves and revolt against the clergy and the state. Luther and the Reformers were not the cause of the willingness of the peasants to revolt, for they had just grievances. But the new principles of the Reformation, when misapplied, provided fuel for the flames of discontent.

Thomas Munzer

Leaders of the peasants surfaced. One such man was Thomas Munzer(c. 1490-1525). Munzer, born at Stolberg, Germany, studied at Leipzig and Frankfurt“an der Oder.” Though a student of medieval realism, he was well read in the Scriptures, knowing Greek and Hebrew. He also enjoyed reading the German mystics. With the help of Martin Luther, Munzer was placed as a minister at Zwickauin 1520. However, he soon managed to alienate the artisans in the city, who wanted a greater role in government. He also managed to estrange those in government, who wanted to be free of ecclesiastical powers. By 1522, Munzer had been asked to leave.

His travels finally brought him as parish priest to Allstedtin 1523, where he promoted liturgical reform by introducing German liturgies, psalms, and hymns. Munzer preached the doctrineof salvation by grace through faith alone. But then he went beyond the Gospel to teach that military might should be used to convert the masses. In a sermon on Daniel 2, Munzer insisted the dukes of Saxony use force in forming the Church, so that salvation could come to the common man, after which there would be a democratic theocracy established. When called upon to explain before the Weimar courtjust what all of this meant, Munzer left Allstedt and went to Muhlhausen, Nuremberg, Basel, and then back to Muhlhausen.

During this time he had a change of heart as to the amount of power earthly princes should hold over people. Munzer sided with the peasants in their open revolt against established authority. In the free city of Muhlhausenin Thuringia, Munzer found people willing to follow him. Heinrich Pfeiffer, an ex-monk and co-worker, had already aroused the passions of the people. Munzer would exploit them.

On March 17, 1525, violence erupted. Armed followers of Pfeiffer and Munzer successfully overtook the city. An "Eternal Council" was established to rule Muhlhausen. Monks were driven out of the cells, and the property of the Church was confiscated. But no communist commonwealth was ever established.

Instead, leading citizens of the town sent for imperial troops to regain control. Munzer once more organized the peasants to resist the coming conflict. "Forward!" he cried; "forward while the fire is hot! Let your swords be ever warm with blood." But the brave words were not enough. The passion of the peasants was not enough. The city was retaken and the peasant revolt was crushed in Muhlhausen. Munzer's body was not allowed to be buried; it was hung to rot on spikes. Those who had lived by the sword, died by the sword (Luk 21:24).

The Peasants' War Continues

In the weeks and months to follow, town after town became a battle-ground as The Peasants' Revolt grew in strength. Martin Luthersaw his world literally going up in flames. The smell of death and destruction was in the air. From the press of Wittenburg, in the middle of May, 1525, Luther issued the pamphletAgainst the Robbing and Murdering Hordes of Peasants. Luther was angry and did not conceal an ounce of his wrath. The vehemence of the pamphlet shocked prince and peasant alike. Siding with the imperiled princes, Luther wrote, "Any man against whom sedition can be proved is outside the law of God and the Empire, so that the first who can slay him is doing right and well." That was just the beginning of a verbal diatribe against the peasants, who were labeled with many unflattering terms.

The peasants were shocked. They felt betrayed. They thought Luther would understand. But Luther showed no mercy to them. Mercy, Luther insisted, was reserved to Christians in private acts of charity. The state must protect all the people and show no mercy. To allow the peasants to go unchallenged would be the end of civilization. Left to their passions and ignorance, the peasants would overturn all law, destroy government, demolish the means of production, and disrupt distribution of goods and services in Germany. They must be killed as mad dogs, said Luther, just as a mad dog will kill a man.

Many of the peasants felt that Luther and Lutheranismhad justified their cause, aroused them to hope and action, and then deserted them in the hour of need. Some grew angry. Others grew bitter. Many returned to the Catholic Church. Some turned to alternative groups such as the Anabaptists.

The Anabaptists

Anabaptistwas the name of contempt given to a portion of professing Christians in the sixteenth century who existed outside the Catholic Church, and who operated independently of the Reformation movement. The term "Anabaptist" simply refers to one who "baptizes again." Anabaptismwas considered by its many critics to be a dangerous movement within the body of Christ. It was said to be full of heretical concepts and was known to have ruthless leaders. However, those who were attracted to the movement were impressed by the personal pietythat was encouraged, the self-sacrifice that was evident, the hard work insisted upon, and the frugality that allowed others to be helped through acts of charity and kindness born of a communal spirit. In addition, no one was to be sued or taken to court, and no oaths were to be uttered.

Anabaptism began formally in Neustadgasse, Switzerlandin 1525, when individuals formulated new ideas departing from those taught by the Reformer Huldreich Zwingli. Men such as Conrad Grebal(1498-1526) and Felix Manz(c. 1498-1527) were among those who proposed new and radical ideas. In his formative years, Grebal received a good education that included study in Basel, Vienna, and Paris. While living in Zurich, he embraced the ministry of Zwingli. With Felix Manz, Grebal joined with Zwingli in the study of the Greek New Testament. There was great excitement over the plans to continue to reform Zurich. Reformation had already begun in 1519.

But then a change took place among the men. Grebal and Manz came to believe that the Reformation leaders of the city of Zurich were not doing enough to advance the kingdom of God. They argued with Zwingli that neither prudence, nor fear of men, was pleasing to the Lord. More radical measures had to be taken, though in a non-violent way. Besides, there was no essential difference they could discern between having a Christian government and having a

non-Christian government. It would be better for the Church and State to be separate. Other changes should also be made in order to have a Church based upon the New Testamentpattern. For Grebal this meant a rejection of singing in public worship.

In addition, the emerging leaders of a counter movement within the Reformed circles had come to believe that the name “Christian” should not be applied to all people indiscriminately through a baptismat birth. The title of “Christian” should be reserved for those who had professed Christ as Lord and Savior and then were re-baptized (being first baptized as infants). Others agreed. In 1524, in communities just outside of Zurich, Wilhelm Reublinand Johannes Brotliwere found to be preaching against the baptizing of infants. They were ordered to cease their teachings and not to gather groups together for worship.

Opposition to the Anabaptists

Because Zwingli himself opposed these new views and practices, conflict was inevitable. Fellowship with Grebal and Manz was broken. The small group of Anabaptiststhat they led in Zurichdecided to take radical steps. First, they would meet in secret for Bible study, prayer, and communion. Second, they would re-baptize each other in order to establish the true Church once more on earth. Third, they would commission one another to become tireless ministers, missionaries, and shepherds, thereby building up the body of Christ on earth. Finally, they would expect and accept physical persecution, which they believed would shortly come. They would not use any earthly weapons to defend themselves against personal attacks, but rely upon the Lord for divine deliverance.

The persecutioncame. Many in that first group were put in prison. After a few months of trying to stay together despite hardships and secret meetings, the assembly disbanded. But the movement did not die; many of the new ideas had found a following. Grebal, who continued to preach outside of Zurich in other communities, enjoyed great success.

People could understand the concept of sinners being found in the midst of the saints, because of the indiscriminate policy of baptizing infants and confirming the unconverted. People could understand how it was possible for those who had grown up in the Church, to turn away from the teachings of Christ and live a life contrary to the Gospel, all the while feeling safe and secure. People could understand how others could be religious, but not righteous. People could understand how others could feel no need to change, because they believed they were already part of the Church of the redeemed. The ideas of the Anabaptistsfound fertile spiritual soil in which to grow.

Unfortunately for the Anabaptist movement, Grebal died of the plague in 1526, after suffering imprisonment for his beliefs. On January 5, 1527, Felix Manz, who had also found success in attracting followers, was publicly executed in Zurich by drowning. He had been charged with the crime of re-baptizing professing Christians. Manz became the first martyr of the Swiss Brethren.

The Movement Grows

As might be expected, the death of Felix Manzdid not stop the rapid spread of the movement throughout Europe. Other leaders emerged in various places to carry on the causes of separating the Church from the State, and of re-baptizing those who professed faith in Christ. One such man in the south of Germany was Hans Denck(1500-1527).

Denck was born in Upper Bavaria into a well to do, God-fearing family which was able to give him a good education. From 1517-1519, Denck studied Latin, Greek, and Hebrew while reading the mystical and humanistic manuscripts that were available. In 1523, he was appointed headmaster of the reputable St. Sebald Schoolin Nuremberg. But then Denck was expelled from Nuremberg on January 21, 1525. He had been found to be too critical of Lutheran doctrine. Leaving behind a wife and child, Denck lived the life of a fugitive. He went to Augsburg, where he became an Anabaptist.

From city to city Denck moved, winning converts to the Anabaptist movement. The StrassburgReformer Martin Bucer began to call him the “pope of the Anabaptists.” Denck died of the plague in Basel in November, 1527. Perhaps his most important legacy for the Anabaptist cause was that he baptized Hans Hutt(d. 1527), who would prove to be one of the most vigorous and successful of the Anabaptist leaders in Austria and Moravia. Hutt is credited with making more converts to Anabaptism in the south of Europe than all the other Anabaptists combined, thereby earning the title “Apostle of Austria.”

Because the Anabaptist movement was new and diversified, strange practices and doctrines emerged in the name of spirituality. For example, because the Bible said that people must become as little children in order to enter the kingdom of heaven, some began to behave like little children in a literal manner. They played with toys, drooled, and babbled like babies. One Anabaptist from Thuringiaclaimed to be the Son of God. In addition to such nonsense, violenceand bloodshed followed the Anabaptist movement for years to come.

Transformed by the Power of God

Fortunately, there is another side to the Anabaptist story. A change did come to this movement under the guidance of

men such as Menno Simons. In 1524, Simons was priest at a Catholic Church in the province of Friesland. But there he began to question the doctrine of transubstantiation. The Scriptures were sought afresh. Church history was studied. The writings of Luther and other Reformers were read. Finally, in 1536, Simons left the Catholic Church and joined with the Frisian Anabaptists. A gifted speaker and organizer, Simons traveled widely and attracted many followers.

In time, others took to calling his convertsMennonites, a term which has survived to the present day. Menno preached the peace of God and the love of Christ, and these replaced militant passion. Industry, prosperity, and respect came to the Anabaptist movement. Today, direct descendants of Anabaptists number more than 730,000 in 57 countries. There are 21 distinct religious groups that claim to be able to trace their origins back to the Anabaptist movement, among them Mennonites, Amish, Hutterites, Mennonite Brethren, and Brethren in Christ. A radical movement was transformed to become the cornerstone for kindness and Christian charity, while the major Christian doctrines were embraced: God as Father, the deity of Christ, the true Church being a body of converted and baptized believers, the Bible as the infallible and authoritative Word of God, and the second coming of Christ. Once more, the grace of God had redeemed a part of the world (2Co 5:17).

Chapter 6

Reformation Faith Is Found in France

The Need for Reform

As the Spirit of the Living God moved upon the hearts of people in Germany, so God was working in the lives of many in France. There was a growing desire for spiritual renewal. Over the years, people had begun to look at the Church with a more discerning eye. Some had become concerned because the papacy was completely under the domination of the French kings for about seventy years. This "Babylonian Captivity" (1309-1376) decreased the prestige of the Church.

Then there was the Great Schism(1378-1417) when the world had two popes; one in Rome and one in Avignon, France. The popes denounced and damned, excommunicated and anathematized[10]each other, in a desperate struggle for power and prestige. A Church council was held in Pisain 1409 to end the Great Schism. Instead, things were only made worse when the current reigning popes were deposed and Alexander V was appointed to the office. Now the world had three popes—and a very perplexed Church!

The deplorable state of spiritual leadership manifested in the highest echelons of the visible Kingdom of Christ filtered down to corrupt the clergy and the laity. Sincere converts to Christ wanted nothing to do with the blatant expressions of sins that had become all too acceptable inside organized religion. Something had to be changed. Christians knew that Christ came to save His people from their sins (Mat 1:21). Jesus did not come to leave souls chained in the kingdom of darkness (2Co 5:17).

Unless spiritual reformation came to the Church in France, radical groups would continue to survive—such as the Albigensesin the southern part of the country. The Albigenses were named after the town of Albi.

During part of their early history in the 11th through 13th centuries, the Albigenses embraced Manichean doctrines and practices. The predictable result was a mystical asceticism, based on the concept that matter is evil and light is the only good. As heretical as these concepts were, the Albigenses were ruthlessly persecuted for two other beliefs: their criticism of the clergy, and their teaching that they were the only true church. Rome would not tolerate such a rival concept, and sought to annihilate the Albigenses.

The Waldenses

Another radical group making their presence known in France was the Waldenses. Unlike the Albigenses, the Waldenses consisted of what amounted to be a Protestant community, which was Calvinistic in principle[11]prior to the Reformation.

The history of this people is clearly identified with Peter Waldo, who was converted in 1170. After giving up his goods to the poor and preaching a life of self-abnegation, Peter Waldo died in AD 1217. His hardy mountaineer followers survived to become known as "The Poor Men of Lyon." They had severe demands for membership: rejection of private property, a temperate way of living, separation of husband and wife, and a willingness to fast three days in the week.

On the positive side, in doctrinethe Waldenses denounced indulgences, purgatory, and masses for the dead. They said that the sacraments were not effective when administered by unworthy priests. And they also insisted that the apostles, and not Peter Waldo, originated their beliefs and practices.

What attracted people to these radical groups was not so much their doctrinal distinctive, but the seriousness of a spiritual life with integrity. The Waldenses in particular gained a following because they embraced a simple and literal belief in the Bible. This belief gave a holy boldness to condemn the Church's lust of power and lust of money. The Waldenses lived a life of poverty that provided a feeling of moral superiority—and the right to speak against the Church's wealth, pride, and worldly pleasure. As preachers of apostolic purity, they rejected Rome and its papal claim. The Waldenses helped others to see the need for independence from Rome, in order to enjoy personal peace in the quest for Christian perfection.

Jacques d'E'taples Lefevre

The movement towards religious reform in some parts of France found hearts ready to receive the widening influence of more prominent spiritual leaders such as Lefevre, Luther, and Calvin.

Jacques Lefevre(Jacobus Stapulensis Faber, 1455-1536) was born in Picardy, France. After being trained as a humanist scholar, he settled in Paris as a teacher in the University (in 1492). With 300,000 people, Paris was one of the largest cities in Europe. Lefevre's fame spread widely, thereby attracting many students, including William Farel–who would help to lead the Reformation in Geneva and Neuchatel.

As an independent thinker, Lefevre was critical of the Church of Rome. He also openly proclaimed the doctrine of justificationby faith. In 1512 Lefevre publishedCommentaryon the Epistle to the Romansin Latin. Other important works followed, each of which emphasized the free grace of a free Gospel. For such thoughts the Sorbonne, the school of theology that dominated the University of Paris, condemned Lefevre as a heretic. He fled to Strassburgin 1525. Margaret, the sister of King Francis I, heard of his plight and came to his rescue. She had read some of the Lutheran literature, and endorsed the attacks upon the immoralityand greed of the clergy.

While Lefevre never severed his relationship with the Roman Catholic Church, he did influence the thinkers of the Reformation through his high regard for the Bible as the only true guide to eternal life, and by his view on the doctrine of the Lord's Supper. Lefevre believed that Christ is present in the Eucharistby His own good pleasure, and not because of any priestly transubstantiation of bread and wine.

Lefevre knew that these doctrines were unacceptable to Rome. He also knew that his views were divisive. Still, Lefevre longed for the unity of the Catholic Church and, like Erasmus(c. 1466-1536), would not leave it. He died at the age of eighty-seven in 1536.

Though Lefevre refused to be totally identified with the Reformation, there was no turning back. In the providence of the Lord, the works of Martin Lutherand the leadership of men like John Calvinwould guarantee that spiritual renewal in France continued. Though he had fled from France to Geneva for safety, Calvin was able to keep in close contact with developments in all parts of Europe. He was also able to maintain an extensive correspondence with Protestant ministers and missionaries in Catholic territories–including France.

The Death of Jean Leclerc

The Reformers knew that neither King Francis Inor the Sorbonnecould halt the flow of Reformation ideas from crossing the Rhine and coming into France from Frankfurt, Strassburg, and Basel. The writings of the Reformers were anxiously desired by workingmen, who were willing to give their lives to be free of the doctrines of the Catholic Church. One such man was Jean Leclerc, a worker of wool in the town of Meaux. When Bishop Briconnetpublished on the doors of his church cathedral a bull of indulgences, Leclerc torn it down and put in its place a sign which said that the pope was Anti-Christ. Leclerc was arrested and punished by being branded on the forehead in 1525. Though he moved to Metz, unbridled zeal motivated Leclerc to smash religious images before a public procession could offer incense to religious idols of the Church. Leclerc was once more arrested. His right hand was cut off. His face was disfigured. His head was bound tight with a band of red hot iron. Before he could lose total consciousness, Leclerc was burned at the stake (1526). The Catholic Church grew more forceful in the persecutionof opponents. Between 1526 and 1527, several more Protestants were executed for "blasphemy," which meant they denied Mary and that the departed saints had the power to intercede in prayer.

The Cruelty of a King

Watching all of this happen was Francis I(king, 1515-1547). For many years the king vacillated between tolerance for the Protestants in his kingdom, and the power of the Church. He knew that his sister was religiously inclined to show favor to the Protestants. But then, she did not have to depend upon the Church for funds and authority. In the end, Francis came down on the side of the Catholic Church. He may have been frightened by the Peasant's Revoltin Germany to allow too many Reformation ideas to flourish in France. The Protestant cause seemed to promote social unrest. He ordered it stamped out.

Between November 10, 1534, and May 5, 1535, twenty-four Protestants were taken to stakes in Paris and burned alive. This became too much even for the pope. Paul IIIrebuked Francis for needless harshness, and ordered him to end the ill-treatment of his subjects.

Taking advantage of the reprieve, the Waldenses, quietly existing in some villages along the Durance River in Provence in 1530, began to correspond with Reformers in Germany and Switzerland. To their detriment, this activity was discovered and reported to Rome. A papal legate was sent to examine the situation. The Inquisitionwas established. The Waldenses appealed to Francis who ordered that the prosecution cease (1533). But Cardinal de Tournonwas determined that the prosecution should not cease. He charged the Waldenses with treason against the government. He then persuaded the ever-vacillating King to sign a decree on January 1, 1545, that all of the Waldenses found guilty of heresyshould be eliminated. Mass executions began. Blood flowed. In the one week of April 12-18, several villages were burned to the ground. In one village alone 800 men, women, and children were killed. In two months, the number killed rose to more than 3,000. Twenty-two of the thirty villages were destroyed. Seven hundred men were hanged. The Protestants in Switzerland and Germany heard of these horrors and vigorously protested. In

contrast, Spain sent Francis messages of commendation, and the persecutions continued. A year later, a small Lutheran gathering was found in Meauxunder the pastoral guidance of Pierre Leclerc, brother of the branded Jean. Eight had their tongues torn out; it was October 7, 1546.

The Gallic Confession of Faith

Despite these acts of violence, the Protestant Church continued to exist and grow in Lyons, Orleans, Reims, and in a multitude of other towns and cities. The true Church militant would yet be triumphant in France. By 1559, fully one-sixth of the population of France was considered to be Protestant. This is why a synod was allowed to be held in Paris in May of that year. At this synod a creed was adopted known as theGallic Confession. The Confession had initially been prepared by John Calvinhimself and his pupil, De Chandieu.

The Confession opens with an explanation to the King that it is from "The French subjects who wish to live in the purity of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." Then, in theForty Articles of Faith, the ethics and beliefs of the French Church are set forth regarding God the Father, the Holy Scriptures, the Trinity, sin, salvation, justification, the sacraments, Church, government, and Christian duties.

Having been revised and approved by the Synod of Paris, this Confession was later delivered by Beza to Charles IXin 1561. It was then adopted by the Synod of La Rochellein 1571 and solemnly sanctioned by Henry IV(reigned, 1589-1610). What a wonderful testimony this Gallic Confession is to the grace of God. The Protestant saints in France had been found faithful. They had paid the price. They had traveled a long, violent, and often bloody road. But then they were justly rewarded. The day came when Protestants were able to shout from the rooftops and openly confess their faith in the only Savior of souls, the Lord Jesus Christ. What greater privilege could any Christian want?

The Reformation Reaches the Netherlands

Many of the spiritual conditions that mandated a need for religious reform in Germany and France, could also be found in the Netherlands(Hollandand Belgium together at that time), which was then controlled by Spain. The existence of absentee bishops, worldly clergymen, idle monks, and immoral priests necessitated Church reform. Erasmuswrote brilliant satires against the Catholic Church in such works asThe Praise of FollyandFamiliar Colloquies. Still, it would not be easy to accomplish ecclesiastical reform. In addition to the powerful hold of Catholic dogma upon the hearts of people, the conflicting ideas of the Reformers were present in the general population. Some people wanted to follow Luther, and others Zwingli. Still others were Anabaptists. Someone was needed to help bring order back to society.

Thoughtful heads turned toward Switzerland. Emerging Church leaders went to Geneva to learn from Calvin what principles and practices to implement. Among the many suggestions offered was to write a formal confession of faith. This suggestion was accepted, and in 1561 Guido de Bresdrafted theBelgic Confession. It is also known asThe Netherlands Confession, or theThirty-seven Articles.

Two years later, theHeidelberg Catechismwas published and became very popular. This Calvinist work had originally been written in 1562 by Zacharias Ursinus, a professor at the Heidelberg University, and Caspar Olevianus, the court minister at Heidelberg, at the insistence of the German Elector of the Palatinate, Frederick III "The Pious"(1559-1576). It was the desire of Frederick to use the catechism in schools in order to move his territories from Lutheranismto the Reformed faithand practice of Calvin and Zwingli. [Gradually the termreformedhad come to be associated with them, and not with Luther.]

TheBelgic Confession, theHeidelberg Catechism, and theGenevan Psalter,translated by Dathenus, became the foundation documents for the Church in the Netherlands. A strong foundation of faith was needed, because formal Catholic opposition to the growing Protestant community continued. Charles Vof Spain, and then his son Philip II(b. 1527; reigned 1556-1598), tried to stop the drive toward political freedom and Protestantism. A formal Inquisition was initiated in the Netherlands. At times, the persecutionwas so intense that any Protestant synod had to meet elsewhere, as one did in 1571 in Emden, in East Friesland near the border in Germany.

While the spiritual dream continued for a reformed Church, the physical sword of warfare was picked up and wielded to bring it all to pass. William of Orange organized armed resistance by Dutch patriots, who fought on land and sea, being aided by a navy supplied by Queen Elizabeth. At one point he saved the city of Amsterdamfrom Spanish siege, by breaking the North Sea dikes and flooding the surrounding approaches with water. Although William was assassinated in 1584, the battles continued, until finally the Dutch were able to force all foreigners to leave in 1609. In 1648, thePeace of Westphaliaformally recognized the independence of the Netherlands and the official establishment of the Reformed Church.

Chapter 7

John Knox and the Scottish Reformation

A Spark Ignites Scotland

The professing Church of Jesus Christ in Scotlandneeded a spiritual reformation as much as the Church in other parts of Europe. The clergy were greedy. A papal envoy at the dawn of the sixteenth century reported to the pope that the income of the Church in Scotland was more than all other income combined. The corrupt clergy encouraged the sins of the laity, which flourished in the absence of truth, accountability, and the fear of God.

There had been attempts at reform, but they met with great resistance. In 1433, Paul Crawarwas convicted by the Church and burned at the stake for bringing into the country the doctrines of John Wycliffeand John Huss. In 1494, thirty of the followers of Huss were brought before the Bishop of Glasgow, and accused of speaking against all of the following: religious relics and images, the confession, the ordination of priests, their power to forgive sins, the doctrine of transubstantiation, purgatory, indulgences, masses for the dead, the celibacy of the priesthood, and the authority of the pope. Though the men retracted in fear, the truth could not be suppressed.

By 1523, the writings of Martin Lutherhad found their way into the country. A copy of Wycliffe's New Testament was translated into the Scottish language, to the delight of many and to the horror of Rome. Men like Patrick Hamilton, who preached the doctrine of justificationby faith, were invited by James Beaton, Archbishop of St. Andrews, to come and defend their position. Hamilton did in 1528—and was burned to death for his efforts. Two other "professors," as the early Reformers were called, were burned in 1534. In 1544, four men were hanged and a woman was drowned for their faith.

Because these incidents were few and separate from each other, there was little public outcry. Something more drastic had to happen to capture the minds and imagination of the masses. The hanging of George Wishartdid just that. His death marked the first telling event of the Scottish Reformation.

During the 1540s, George Wishart was among those brave souls who traveled and preached the message of God's redeeming, sovereign grace. John Knoxheard Wishart preach and joined his happy band, as a body guard able to wield a two-handed sword. For five weeks Knox traveled with Wishart. Then Wishart sent him away, because he knew that arrest was imminent.

Cardinal David Beaton, the new archbishop of St. Andrews, ordered the arrest to take place in January, 1546. After Wishart was found guilty of heresy, he was strangled and then his body burned on March 1. But it was too much. John Knox summarized the feelings of many when he wrote that George Wishart was, "a man of such graces as before him were never heard within this realm, yea, and are rare to be found yet in any man." His death would be avenged.

The Castiliansand Their Capture

On May 29, 1546, a group of nobles and criminals forced their way into the Cardinal's palace bedroom where he was entertaining his mistress, Marion Ogilvy. Beaton pleaded that he should not be killed because he was a priest. John Leslieand Peter Carmichaelwere not impressed with that fact, and they stabbed him with their small daggers. The third assassin, James Melville, called upon the Cardinal to repent of the execution of Wishart; then he ran him through twice. With his dying breath Beaton cried out, "I am a priest, fye, fye. All is gone." His body was first disgraced and then thrown into the same dungeon which had not so long ago held George Wishart. "Now, because the weather was hot," Knox later wrote, "it was thought best, to keep him from stinking, to give him great salt enough...to await what courtesies his brethren the bishops could prepare for him. These things we write merrily." Knox approved of the murder; he believed that God used men as the instruments of His wrath and judgment.

The death of the Cardinal might have vindicated the execution of Wishart, but it also immediately launched a revolt against the Catholic policy that Beaton had made with the French. The Cardinal had negotiated a treaty with the French to keep the Protestant English from coming into Scotland. Opposed to this policy were the patriots who were known asCastilians. Because Knox was sympathetic to the Castilians, he too became a wanted man.

Following the murder of Cardinal Beaton, the Castilians fled to the castle of St. Andrews on the coast of Scotland. Knox went to be with the band of warriors. Everyone there believed that Henry VIIIwould send forces to rescue and protect them, since they were Protestant and sympathetic to his rule. But Henry sent no help. Instead, in July, a French fleet sailed up and bombarded St. Andrews Castle. After four weeks, those inside the castle were overpowered and imprisoned as galley slaves. John Knox was among those taken captive.

Life as a Galley Slave

A typical French galley shipof this period was between 100 feet and 150 feet long, 30 feet wide, and stood about 6 feet above the water line. It was not seaworthy in rough weather; in cold weather the ships would dock. About 150 galley slaves rowed, six to the oar. The 25 oars, about 45 feet long, passed through the sides of the ship. When not involved with other duties on board a sailing vessel, the slaves were chained to the oars. There they sat in uncomfortable uniforms—consisting of a coarse brown tunic, a vest, two shirts, and two pairs of canvas trousers. There was a red cap for the head but no shoes for the feet. Under the watchful eye of the comite (the captain of the guards), the prisoners worked with the threat of the whip of the souscomites (guards in the galley) not far away.

At 33 years of age and in good health, John Knoxsurvived this nineteen month ordeal, and even managed to express some acts of passive defiance. On one occasion he was exhorted to take communion. A little statue of Mary was passed among the crew members to be kissed. When no one was watching, Knox threw the statue overboard. He wrote that no one tried to force anyone to submit to "idolatry" after that.

Though no English forces had prevented their capture, the English government took a great interest in the plight of the galley prisoners, and sought their release. It may have been at the request of King Edward VIthat Knox and his fellow prisoners were freed from the galleyNotre Damein February, 1549.

Marriage and an Unusual Mother-in-law

With gratitude in his heart, Knox made his way to England, where he became a Protestant clergyman. Knox was placed as the minister in Berwick-on-Tweed. It was there that he first befriended forty-five year old Elizabeth Bowes, who had five sons, ten daughters, and a Catholic husband.

Under the preaching of Knox, Mrs. Bowes was converted to the Protestant faith. She was very pleased when her fifth daughter Marjory(Margaret), agreed in 1553 to become the wife of the pastor who had led her back to Christ. In contrast, her husband Richard was not at all happy with the proposed marriage. But there was nothing that could be done. The wedding finally took place around 1555, when John Knoxwas about fifty years old.

The situation became more complicated when Mrs. Bowes left her husband in 1556, in order to live with Marjory and John in Geneva, where the couple had moved. Four years later, Marjory died (1560). Though Knox remarried, Mrs. Bowes remained with him and his new bride. While no unethical behavior was ever discovered, this unusual arrangement provided his critics with material to use in slanderous comments. Knox remained silent and maintained his relationship with Mrs. Bowes.

Because he was so close to his mother-in-law, Knox was able to confide in her freely. The ardent reformer was acutely aware of his own faults and failures. While preaching to others, Knox believed he was preaching to himself. "Although I never lack the presence and plain image of my own wretched infirmity, yet seeing that sin so manifestly abounds in all estates, I am compelled to thunder out the threatening of God against the obstinate rebels. In doing whereof—albeit, as God knoweth, I am no malicious nor obstinate sinner—I sometimes am wounded, knowing myself to be criminal and guilty…in all things...that I reprehend in others. Judge not, mother, that I write these things, debasing myself otherwise than I am. No, I am worse than my pen can express" (Letter to Mrs. Elizabeth Bowes, June, 1553).

The "Black Rubric"

While the future of marriage and unusual family relations awaited Knox, the immediate relationship with the English congregation of Berwickhad deteriorated in 1549, despite his obvious abilities to preach. By all accounts, the sermons of Knox were electrifying. After calmly exegeting a biblical passage for half an hour, he was prone to make personal application. At that point he would become "active and vigorous" according to one hearer. "He made me so to grew [quake] and tremble, that I could not hold pen to write."

There was fire in the soul of this man. There was a religious and patriotic passion that burned in his breast. Knox could not, and would not, keep quiet—especially about controversial subjects. For example, in 1550 Knox was called upon to defend his attacks upon the Catholic mass before Tunstall, the bishop of Durham. Fearing controversy, the bishop reassigned Knox to the south of England. There, Knox began to preach against the Anabaptists. Then he found fault with the liturgy in theBook of Common Prayer(1552), for it required those receiving communion to kneel while partaking of the elements.

Knox was opposed to people kneeling for communion. He taught that a rubric(a bold heading) should be included in theBook of Common Prayer, stating that kneeling did not mean belief in "the bodily presence of Christ in the elements." This became known as the "black rubric." Knox's criticism of theBook of Common Prayeralienated even Archbishop Cranmer. But Knox did not care. He would preach the truth as he understood it, and suffer the consequences for his faith.

Mary Tudor

The doctrinal concerns of Knox were compounded by political considerations when King Edward VI(b. 1537), son of Henry VIIland Jane Seymour, died on July 6, 1553 at the tender age of sixteen. His half sister Mary Tudor, a devout Roman Catholic, was crowned Queen by Stephen Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester and a valued advisor. Mary was determined to return the Church of England to Rome, even if it meant official religious persecutionof the Protestants. Because of this she is often called "Bloody Mary."

"Bloody Mary" caused the Church of Englandto hold Latin services once more, while forbidding Protestant doctrine and worship. Next, she married a Catholic, Philip IIof Spain. The marriage proved to be a disaster: Philip returned to Spain, and there were no children.

Meanwhile, with Mary's approval, Gardiner began to prosecute Protestants as heretics. The first Protestant execution was that of John Rogersin February, 1555. Rogers was guilty of translating the Scriptures into the language of the people.

Other Reformers followed him to heaven. When Hugh Latimerand Nicholas Ridleydisputed with Roman Catholic theologians on the doctrine of the Mass, they were placed in the Tower of London. After being tried for heresy, they were burned at the stake on October 16, 1555. When the bonfire was finally lit, Latimer called out: "Be of good comfort, Master Ridley, and play the man. We shall this day light such a candle by God's grace in England as, I trust, shall never be put out!" It is said that Latimer died quickly while Ridley suffered slowly and with great pain. Foreseeing that such persecutions would take place, Knox had fled England to become a refugee in Dieppe, France, in January of 1554.

Compliments for Calvin

Safely on the mainland, Knox wrote many open letters exhorting the Protestants to stand firm. He then went to Genevain 1554, where he came under the strong influence of John Calvin. His heart was stirred at what might be when the Church was able to righteously influence the government. Knox described Geneva as "the most perfect school of Christ that ever was on earth since the days of the Apostles."

From Geneva, Knox received a call to minister to the English refugee congregation in Frankfurt. Calvin encouraged Knox to accept the German pastorate, which he did. However, once more his confrontational spirit was manifested when a number of the English refugees in Frankfurt wanted to use the EnglishBook of Common Prayerin the hour of worship. Knox refused. When a compromise order of service could not be reached, Knox was ordered by the city authorities not to preach. Disgusted, Knox left Frankfurt and returned to Geneva, where he became the co-pastor of a small English congregation of some two hundred souls.

Meanwhile, in Scotland, the Reformation efforts continued. The work was made more difficult because after the death of James Vin 1542, Scotland was ruled by his wife, Mary of Guise. Mary, of noble French birth, was sympathetic to the Catholic faith. Her daughter, also named Mary, was sent to France to be educated and married to the Dauphin. In light of these things, it was obvious to some of the Church leaders that the presence of Knox was needed for ultimate success against Catholicism. In August, 1555, Knox returned to Scotland and spent nine months preaching in the newly emerging Protestant congregations in Edinburgh, Dundee, St. Andrews, Brechin, and Perth. His popularity caused the Catholic bishops to become alarmed. In May, 1556, he was summoned to Edinburgh to face spurious legal proceedings.

Although the summons was cancelled by Queen Mary of Guise, Knox felt compelled to leave the country and return to Geneva. Here, he believed he would be left alone. But it was not to be. Many of the Protestants in Scotland still wanted Knox to lead them, and he in turn wanted to bring reform to the Church. Beyond that, Knox wanted to reform the government of the land as well.

A Political Mistake

Knox believed that political and religious reform could best be done if women were not allowed to rule. Appealing to select Scriptures and the early church fathers, Knox published a pamphlet in 1558 against all female monarchies in general, and the rule of Catholic Mary Tudor in particular. The title of the pamphlet wasThe First Blast of the Trumpet against the Monstrous Regiment of Women. It was a political mistake, as Knox later conceded, saying "MyFirst Blasthath blown from me all my friends in England." Now numbered among his most bitter enemies was the Protestant Queen, Elizabeth I, who had suddenly been elevated to the English throne.

Banished from England by the new Queen, Knox set sail for Scotland. In May, 1559, he arrived ready to preach. Within days, he spoke at Perthagainst the sin of idolatry. After the service, a riot erupted. Altars were destroyed, images were demolished, and houses of worship were burned. The regent Queen Mary of Guisethreatened to deploy troops to restore the peace. Both Protestant and Catholics began to take up arms and stake out territories. Mary entered Perthonly to be met with resistance. Deciding that she could not win the battle, Mary signed a truce on May 29, 1559.

Knox, savoring the taste of victory, left Perth and moved on to St. Andrews. There, he again preached against "all

monuments of idolatry," much to the dismay of many. Predictably, social unrest followed. Catholic churches were entered, images were taken by force and destroyed before the eyes of the Catholic clergy.

It was all too much for the delicate Queen, who really had no real heart for religious hatred and bloodshed. Extremely ill, Mary of Guisefled to Leith, and tried to delay the victorious and rampaging Protestants with negotiations, until help could arrive from France. While she waited, the Protestants moved to win their own political and military support from Elizabeth of England. Soon, an English fleet in the Firth of Forth (a narrow bay surrounded by mountains) blocked any landing of French troops to help Mary. Having returned to the castle of Edinburgh, she wanted the nightmare of civil and religious unrest to end. Knowing the end of her illness was near, she kissed her retinue one by one—and then laid down to die. On June 10, 1560, the Queen was dead.

Her troops had been left in the city blockaded and starving, and they soon surrendered. A measure of peace finally was made possible when theTreaty of Edinburghwas signed on July 6, 1560. According to the terms of the agreement, all foreign troops were to leave Scotland—except 120 French troops. In addition, the long absent Mary (1542-1587), daughter of Mary of Guise and James V, was to be allowed to return to the country and acknowledged as Queen of Scots (reigned, 1561-1569). However, she and her husband Francis IIwere to relinquish all claim to the English crown. Moreover, she was not to make war or peace without the consent of the Estates(the ruling nobility).

Spiritual Victory in Scotland

By these and other restraints, the nobles and the Scottish Reformers won strategic political and religious victories over the returning Queen. The Protestant Church moved to take immediate advantage of the situation. Under the leadership of Knox and with the approval of Parliament, a Confession of Faith was adopted. In August, 1560, the legal acts were passed by Parliament to do away with the Mass on pain of corporal punishment, dispense with the jurisdiction of the pope, and repeal any and all laws which did not conform to the Reformed faith. TheFirst Book of Disciplinewas offered to the General Assembly when the national church met in December, 1560. Later, in 1564, theBook of Common Orderwould be accepted as the official worship book of the country.

Taking personal advantage of the triumph of the Protestant faith, the nobility of Scotland denounced purgatoryas a myth, and then claimed that the Catholic Church had taken their ancestral land by fraud. Perhaps the land should be returned? A vote taken by Parliamentmandated that restitution should be made. Most of the ecclesiastical property acquired by the Catholic Church was soon restored to those laitylandowners who were Protestant.

Death of the "Thundering Scot"

Despite the civil unrest that the country had endured, despite the posturing for position and power, and the obvious temptation for the new leaders to retaliate in kind for past grievances, the Scottish reformation probably shed the least blood and lasted longer than any reformed movement in other countries. Solidifying the Protestant position in Scotland was helped in large part because Mary Queen of Scotswas not a wise ruler. She alienated important Church leaders such as John Knox, and also the moderate elements of society, who probably would have honored her right to rule regardless of her religious views. Then, by claiming to be the true heir to the English throne, Mary angered Elizabeth, who began to view her as a rival. Next, Mary alarmed the Protestants of England, who feared a return to Catholicismif Mary ever found the military power to invade England. A way had to be found to eliminate Mary Queen of Scots. It would not be difficult.

Mary's ultimate doom began when she married Henry Darnley, who also laid claim to the throne of England. After he was blown up in a house where he was staying, Mary married the man who was suspected of the murder, the Earl of Bothwell. The people of Scotlandwere outraged, and Mary was deposed. Fleeing to England, she was arrested and kept as a political prisoner by Elizabeth. In the end, Mary was executed at Fotheringay. Mary Queen of Scots died because she would not stop giving her consent to Catholic plots to overthrow Queen Elizabeth.

Meanwhile, the triumphs of Protestantism that John Knoxwas involved with had taken their own toll. Even victory has its price. Knox had grown old in the struggle, feeble in body, and perhaps a little more reflective. Near the end of life he wrote, "I know that many have complained much and loudly, and do still complain of my too great severity, but God knows my mind was always free from hatred to the persons of those against whom I denounced the heavy judgments of God." On November 9, 1572, John Knox preached for the last time. Five days later, the "thundering Scot" was dead. He was absent from the body and face to face with the Lord.

Chapter 8

Reformation Comes to England

The “Morning Star” of the Reformation

It is a sign of sovereign grace whenever a nation enjoys a divine visitation. England was once favored by God in a special way. Under four successive rulers, the Reformation brought radical changes to the Church in the country. The reigns of Henry VIII(1509-1547), Edward VI(1547-1553), “Bloody Mary” (1553-1558), and Elizabeth I(1558-1603) would be largely remembered for their relationship with the Church and with the leaders of the Reformation. And the “morning star of the Reformation” was John Wycliffe(1320-1384).

Born in Yorkshire and graduated from Oxford, Wycliffe had dared to boldly challenge the authority of the pope. He criticized the sale of indulgences, by denying that such non-spiritual transactions had power to release a person from punishment in purgatory. Wycliffe did not stop there. Having received a doctorate of theology (1372), he did not hesitate to deny the reality of transubstantiation. He declared that the bread and wine do not change into the actual body and blood of Christ during Communion.

The pope rebuked Wycliffe and urged Oxford Universityto dismiss the radical professor. The request was denied. Wycliffe was free to pursue his studies and other projects—such as translating the Scriptures from Latin into English. The New Testamentwas completed around 1380, and the Old Testament in 1382. The Church authorities were outraged that Wycliffe had made the Scriptures available to all. They felt that the Scriptures in the hands of the common man would lead to misinterpretations and doctrinal abuses. When the Council of Constancemet, Wycliffe was condemned as a heretic, even though he had died. His body was ordered to be dug up, his bones burned, and his ashes thrown into the Swift River.

But the desecration of his corpse did not matter. The ideas of Wycliffe had found fertile soil in which to grow. His work would live on afterhim, reflected in the fact that one of his associates, John Purvey(c. 1353-1428), produced a revision of the Wycliffe Bible in 1388. Like Able, John Wycliffe, being dead, yet lived (Heb 11:4).

The Powerful Prayer of a Dying Professor

The desire of John Wycliffe to place a copy of the Bible into the hands of every person burned brightly in the hearts of others, such as William Tyndale(c. 1494-1536). A Hebrew and Greek scholar from Oxford University, Tyndale was willing to challenge the Catholic belief that only the clergy were qualified to read and correctly understand the Scriptures. Said Tyndale, “If God spare my life, ere many years, I will cause a boy that driveth the plough to know more of the Scripture than thou dost.” God spared the life of Tyndale long enough for His servant to complete the translation of the New Testamentin 1525. During the next five years, fifteen thousand copies in six editions were smuggled into England from Hamburg, Germany, where Tyndale had fled in order to work. His final revision of the Bible appeared in 1535. In that same year, Tyndale was found and arrested. Brought before an ecclesiastical court, he was unjustly judged to be a heretic, and was sentenced to die. In Antwerp, on October 6, 1536, Tyndale was strangled and burnt at the stake. Allowed to speak one last time, William Tyndale cried out to heaven, “Lord, open the King of England’s eyes.”

A Potentially Splendid Sovereign

One of the great privileges in the study of history is the opportunity to see clearly the sovereign hand of Almighty God over the affairs of men. God can take all things, including the pride and arrogance of man, and make them serve His own purpose—as He did in the life of Henry VIII, son of Henry VIIand Elizabeth of York. Born in the year 1491 at Greenwich, Henry was brought up as the crown prince, following the premature death of his elder brother, Arthur.

It was obvious to many that Henry would one day make a splendid king. He had an abundance of natural gifts: tremendous intelligence, physical beauty, athletic ability, a sense of humor, charming manners, tolerance, and the capacity to show clemency. There was great excitement throughout England in 1509, when the announcement was made that Henry VIIIwas king of England at the young age of eighteen. Here was a young man to admire because, according to Sir Thomas More, he “has more learning than any English monarch ever possessed before him.” The only question to be answered was what Henry would do with his kingdom.

The Cardinal of the King

Realizing his need for guidance in affairs of State, young Henry found in Thomas Wolseysomeone to rely upon. Wolsey was only three years older than Henry, and was a priest. Born at Ipswich of humble parents, Wolsey had risen to the attention of the royal court through his intellectual achievements at Oxford. He knew how to get along with others, while manifesting an ability for management and negotiation. Wolsey served Henry VIIas a diplomat. Now, he would serve his son with tremendous success. Each political victory brought Wolsey more rewards and more royal power, all at the pleasure of Henry. As long as Wolsey made decisions that enhanced the power of the king, Henry was inclined to give him much leeway.

Weaving a Tangled Web

The legal power Wolsey held translated into spiritual power. He was made a Cardinal, and desired to have the papacy as well, which he openly sought in 1521 and again in 1523. While Wolsey longed for the papal robes, the Protestants had to be dealt with, and reform had to come to the clergy. Wolsey was very much aware of ecclesiastical corruptions. But after some initial policies were passed, Wolsey lost interest in monastic reforms.

Nor was he overly concerned with the Protestant movement. With the English Reformers, Wolsey decided to try and persuade them to be quiet–rather than to persecute them. He did hire a secret guard to report on suspected heresy, to examine the prevailing literature, and to report on who should be arrested. But there he stopped. No hereticwas ever burned at the stake because of his orders–Wolsey showed surprising restraint. When Hugh Latimerdenounced the sins of the priests, the bishop of Ely asked Wolsey to silence him. Instead, Wolsey gave Latimer license to preach in any Church in the country.

Meanwhile, the Cardinal's foreign policy began to collapse. Though allied with Charles Vof Spain, the war with France (1522), which Wolsey had allowed England to engage in, proved to be a disaster in both money and men. The check and balance of power among nations, which Wolsey had tried to establish, was ruined when Charles not only defeated the forces of France, but captured Romeand the Pope in 1527. Unless the continent was to be ruled by Charles, something had to be done. England had to switch sides and fight against her own ally. So in January, 1528, England joined France in war against Charles.

A Questionable Marriage

To make diplomatic matters worse for Wolsey, Charles was the nephew of Catherine of Aragon, from whom Henry VIIIhad decided to get a divorce. In addition, Pope Clement VII, who alone had the ecclesiastical power to grant Henry a divorce, was being held captive by Charles.

Catherine of Aragonwas the daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella. She had come to England in 1501, at the age of sixteen, to be married to Arthur, aged fifteen, the eldest son of Henry VII. The marriage ceremony took place on November 14. Arthur died on April 2, 1502. The great question that emerged was whether or not the marriage had been consummated by the young couple. The Spanish ambassador sent "proof" to Ferdinand that the marriage had been consummated; Catherine denied everything.

Henry VIIwas in a dilemma. He did not want the tremendous dowry that Catherine had brought with her to go back to the coffers of Spain, nor did he want a powerful alliance with Ferdinand to be broken. Appealing to the Scriptures (Deu 25:5), the English monarch proposed that Catherine marry Prince Henry, though she was his elder by six years.

Not everyone in the Church agreed that such a union should or could take place along biblical grounds. Nevertheless, Pope Julius IIgranted a special dispensation in 1503, and a legal marriage was made formal. The bridegroom was only twelve. In 1505 Prince Henry asked to have the marriage annulled, but his father prevailed upon him not to do that. In 1509, six weeks after Henry VIII's accession to the throne, the marriage was celebrated in public. Catherine of Aragonwas Queen of England, for a while.

A Sovereign Wants a Son

The marriage was not to last, for Catherine could not give Henry what he wanted above all else: a son and a male heir to the throne. Desperately, Catherine tried. On January 31, 1510, she bore her first child, who died at birth. A year later she bore a son, but in a few weeks the child also was dead. A second and third son also expired soon after birth (1513, 1514). Henry began to think of a divorce, or better yet for him, an annulment. Catherine tried again, and in 1516 she gave birth to the future Queen Mary. In 1518, Catherine delivered yet another baby, stillborn. Meanwhile, at age two, the young princess Mary was betrothed to the dauphin of France. If Henry had no son, his daughter Mary would inherit the English throne, and her husband, the future king of France, would become the king of England. Never! Never! Henry would not think of that. He must have a son. Catherine must not deny him a divorce. Nor must the Church!

By now, Henry had grown weary of Catherine. His lustful, roving eyes fell upon Elizabeth Blount, whom he took as his first mistress (1518). She gave him a son in 1519. Henry made him Duke of Richmond and Somerset, and considered making him a successor to the throne. Then he found another mistress, Mary Boleyn(1524), who had a charming sister

named Anne. Henry was first infatuated, and then obsessed with Anne. He must have her as wife. No doubt she could give him an heir. By March, 1527, Henry had set in motion the process for having his marriage to Catherine annulled. Cardinal Wolsey assured him that a papal annulment easily could be attained. How wrong he was.

The final story of Henry's divorce from Catherine is sordid and filled with great sadness. The Queen did not deserve to be treated in the way she was. Indeed, she expressed herself on this matter on June 21, 1529. Having been granted an audience with the king, Catherine cast herself on her knees before him, and pleaded that their marriage last. She reminded him of her efforts to bear children. She had endured his extra marital affairs. She had been a good and faithful wife in the eyes of the law and in the sight of God. Henry picked her up from the floor and assured her that she was not to blame. But he would have a son!

The Pope Says No

Cardinal Wolsey was doing everything he could to secure for Henry the annulment desired. The main problem was that the pope was still a prisoner in the hands of Charles Vof Spain, and Charles did not like how his aunt was being treated. There would be no annulment given by the Catholic Church, and Henry must obey the ruling of Rome. Perhaps Charles thought that he could help make Henry remain a good Catholic. After all, in 1521, Henry had written a tract against Martin Luther,The Assertion of the Seven Sacraments, and received from Pope Leo Xthe title "Defender of the Faith."

But if Charles or the pope thought they could contain the proud monarch of England, they were wrong. Henry was furious. He was angry at the pope, and he was outraged at the political and spiritual power Charles Vof Spain held. He was upset at Catherine for not giving him a divorce. And he was livid at Cardinal Wolsey for not being able to do anything within the Church. Did not anyone have an idea of what to do next? Thomas Cranmer, the Archbishop of Canterbury, did.

The Supremacy of the King

Aware of the mood of the nation in religious matters, Cranmer knew that the time was ripe for a break with Rome. He shrewdly suggested that the matter of a divorce be submitted to the leading universities of England and the continent. In this manner, Henry VIIIfound men willing to give him biblical sanction for obtaining a divorce. The next steps were both logical and audacious. Henry halted the transfer of financial resources from going to the pope, and then he had Parliamentdeclare him to be the head of the Church of England(1534). The law which passed was called theAct of Supremacy. The provision was made that the king, not the pope, was the head of the Church of England.

An annulment was then pronounced by Archbishop Cranmer. Henry VIIIwas finally free to marry his mistress. A royal marriage took place; Anne was already pregnant. The result of this unholy union was a daughter, Elizabeth. Anne did not live to see her daughter reign. She was beheaded on a charge of adultery in 1536. Other wives followed. There was Jane Seymour, who gave birth to Edward; Anne of Cleves, whom Henry divorced soon after the marriage; Catherine Howard, who was beheaded within a year on the charge of adultery; and Catherine Parr, who outlived the monarch.

While Henry was making a mockery out of Christian marriage, others were beginning to mock him, or so Henry thought. One thing was certain: not everyone was willing to accept Henry as the supreme head of the Church. As the Reformers had rejected the ultimate authority of the pope, so they consistently rejected the attempt of one man to be made the head of the Church. In his arrogance, Henry had another law passed, theLaw of Treason and Heresy. This law made a hereticof anyone who did not embrace the doctrines of the Catholic Church, and who did not acknowledge the king as the head of the Church in England. The penalty for violation of these laws was death. Soon, both Catholics and Protestants were being executed for not bending their knees or will to Henry, including Sir Thomas More, Lord Chancellor of England. More had been very zealous in causing many English Lutherans to be burned at the stake. Now he was the one who would not acknowledge 1) the legitimacy of Henry's divorce from Catherine, and 2) the king as head of the Church. On July 1, 1535, Sir Thomas More was beheaded.

Flickering Hope

When Henry died in 1547, many were not sorry to see him depart. Devout Christians wanted him to go and receive his own just reward. Henry had left behind a new Church structure, but he had made no provision for a Protestant theology. He only changed the political head of the Church. Henry also left behind a legacy of brutality and violence, while never moving too far from Catholic dogma. So there was much work to be done if the Church in England was truly going to be reformed. Still, the sins of a king served the true Sovereign of the Universe, for the suffering saints in England would yet produce much spiritual fruit.

When Henry VIIIdied in 1547, his son Edward VI(1547-1553) succeeded him to the throne. Because he was but a nine year old child, his uncle, the Duke of Somerset, was made regent. Somerset and his government were supportive of the Reformation. Changes were allowed to be made in the doctrine and form of worship in the Church of England. In

1549, Parliamentpassed theAct of Uniformity, which made the use of theBook of Common Prayermandatory in the services of the Church. It is also called theFirst Prayer Book of Edward VI. A communion table took the place of the altar, and the preaching of the Word was honored. A new creed was formulated by Thomas Cranmer, the first Protestant archbishop of Canterbury. With the help of other theologians, including John Knox, the Church of Englandadopted theForty-two Articles. All of these reforms moved the Church of Englandaway from the Church of Rome.

“Bloody Mary”

But the Reformed measures were to be challenged. When he was only sixteen years old, Edward died unexpectedly of tuberculosis (1553). His half-sister Mary ascended to the throne of England. Mary (ruled, 1553-1558) was a devout Catholic and proceeded to undo twenty-five years of blood and sacrifice. Reformation leaders were arrested or removed from office. The Catholic form of worship authorized by Henry VIIIwas implemented again.

Many Protestants feared for their lives and fled to the continent. There was good reason to run and hide. In the year 1555 alone, seventy-five people were burnt to death for their beliefs. Even Thomas Cranmer, the Archbishop of Canterbury who had helped secure the separation of the Church of Englandfrom the jurisdiction of Rome, did not escape persecution. Late in 1555 he was excommunicated in Rome. Cardinal Pole was appointed to take the vacated office.

Mary was determined that Cranmer be put to death, even though he had renounced Protestantism publicly by signing a statement to that effect. Nevertheless, the Queen wanted his execution, and the date was set for March 21, 1556. Just before he was to die, Cranmer renounced his renunciation. He was sorry he had denied the Protestant faith. Then, in a dramatic gesture, Cranmer put into the flames the hand that had signed the denial. He kept the hand there until it was burned to a shrivel. Then, overcome by the flames, his body scorched, Cranmer died a martyr’s death.

Mary continued to persecute the Protestants until the day of her death, November 17, 1558. She had needlessly destroyed the lives of over three hundred people by causing them to be burned at the stake. She is worthy of her graceless name, “Bloody Mary.”

Hope Springs Eternal

The death of Mary brought her half sister, Elizabeth, to the throne of England. Elizabeth I(ruled, 1558-1603) was sympathetic to the Protestant position. Persecution came to an end, as did the threat of a Spanish invasion. Elizabeth would remain single and rule alone. More importantly, she would allow religious reforms to take place. For example, despite strong opposition, Parliamentpassed a secondSupremacy Acton April 29, 1559, making the sovereign of the land the head of the Church of England. Then, once more, the government rejected all papal authority. TheSecond Prayer Book of Edward VIwas revised. Finally, after a slight change was made in 1563, theForty-two Articles, which are basically Lutheran in point of view, were reduced in number toThirty-nine Articlesand adopted. All of these provisions are known as theElizabethan Settlement. The pope had hoped that Elizabeth would return to the fold. When she did not, her papal excommunicationwas decreed in 1570.

Elizabeth’s reign was not without religious conflict. The Puritansopposed the Queen’s propensity for liturgy, and she opposed their demand for the removal of bishops, which in theory was a direct challenge to a hereditary monarch. “No bishop, no king,” she reasoned.

Also opposed to Elizabeth were the Independents, or Congregationalists, who emerged during her reign. They believed in separation of Church and State and resisted the hierarchical authority of the Church of England. The Baptistsarose to object to infant baptism. They believed in baptism by immersion after a profession of faith. Despite these relative minor religious skirmishes with the Crown, the Protestant faith would thrive in England—and grow in power to influence all of Europe.

Chapter 9

Counter Reformation and Continuing Conflict

The Religious Zeal of Ximenes

There is a temptation in the study of Church history to present an unbalanced view. Those who favor the Protestant position tend to present the body of material that makes the Protestants look best. Those who would favor the Catholic position want their point of view to prevail. Even the cults have their own religious historians, to make sure that the past is written in a certain way that is favorable to their cause.

While it is impossible not to be affected by one's doctrinal beliefs, culture, and religious affinity, any attempt at some objectivity leads to the conclusion that some people can be found in the most difficult places, and in the most trying of circumstances, attempting to do the will of God as they understand it should be done, regardless of how we might label their general position.

In the Catholic Church, prior to the official Reformation period that broke out in Germany under the influence of Martin Luther, there were sincere reformers in various countries. In Spain, there was Ximenes, a Franciscan monk, who desperately wanted the Church to become better and more pure.

Ximenes ministered during the dark days of the reign of Queen Isabella I(1451-1504) and her husband Ferdinand IIof Aragon, who sponsored the Inquisition. While the Inquisition itself was cruelty incarnate, through the reform work of Ximenes, a part of the Church knew something about spiritual renewal–a generation before Martin Lutherbegan the Reformation in Germany.

Initially placed in charge of several monasteries because of his special organizational and leadership skills, Ximenes began to correct blatant spiritual abuses such as the buying of Church offices. By attacking the papal sale of indulgences, he earned the enmity of the pope. However, Ximenes was protected by Queen Isabella and was able to continue his work. He enforced strict discipline in the monasteries under his care. New schools were established for the study of theology, so that the people could have an educated clergy. High moral standards were demanded of the priests. Any individual who did not comply with an ethical code of conduct was removed from office.

While Ximenes brought about external change, essential internal concerns that involved the heart of the Church were not challenged. Like many good men, Ximenes had a zeal for God, but not according to biblical knowledge. The pope was still looked to as the head of the Church, the sacraments remained, and the worship of idols was not abolished.

Realizing the Need for Reform

Because men like Ximenes did not go far enough in correcting internal corruption and doctrinal abuses in Catholic theology, the Protestant Reformation had to happen. When it finally came, the Catholic Church knew a response was needed. There were too many people leaving the Catholic Church. Some of the best and brightest, some of the most sensitive and spiritual, and some of the most gifted men and women were not going to stay in a social structure that allowed abuses to go unchallenged and uncorrected. It was obvious that the Catholic Church had to set its house in order. Furthermore, the Catholic Church had to find a better way than torture to motivate its members to be as zealous as the Protestants were for their cause. Even the most devout Catholic could not condone forever the use of the Inquisition.

The Nightmare Years

First established by Gregory IX(pope, 1227-1241), the purpose of the Inquisition (inquirere: Inquisition) was to inquire into the spread of teachings which were officially opposed to the faith of the Church. All Catholics suspected of heresycould be called before the local tribunal, where punishment could be rendered. It was sincerely believed that spiritual infidelity had to be corrected in order for the soul to be saved. By original design, the Inquisition was not to be a means to impose the Christian faith upon Jews, Muslims, or non-Catholics at large. Rather, the Inquisition was to be used to secure the salvation, coercion, and punishment of the disciples of Christ. In the sixteenth century, the Inquisition found ardent supporters to protect the Catholic faith, especially in Italy and Spain. Cardinal Giovanni Caraffa, Ignatius Loyola, and Charles Vunited to urge the restoration of the Inquisition. Pope Paul IIIagreed (1542) and appointed

Caraffa, with five other cardinals, to reorganize the Inquisition. Authority was to be granted to specific clergy throughout the Christian world, to do whatever was necessary to keep souls in the Church. The Inquisitors, Local and General, were usually selected from among the members of the Franciscan and Dominican Orders, with the latter being preferred for their alleged knowledge of Scripture. Specific rules were established:

1. When the faith is in question, there must be no delay, but on the slightest suspicion rigorous measures must be taken with all speed.
2. No consideration is to be shown to any prince or prelate, however high his station.
3. Extreme severity is rather to be exercised against those who attempt to shield themselves under the protection of any potentate. Only he who makes plenary confession should be treated with gentleness and fatherly compassion.
4. No man must debase himself by showing toleration toward heretics of any kind, above all toward Calvinists.

When Caraffa became Paul IV(pope, 1555-1559), the Inquisition began in earnest, horrifying Catholic and Protestant alike. Cardinal Seripando wrote, “the Inquisition acquired such a reputation that from no other judgment seat on earth were more horrible and fearful sentences to be expected.” Once the members of the Inquisition went to work, no one was safe, and nothing was sacred. Books were burned—including Bible translations. In 1559, Paul IVpublished the first papal Index. It listed all the forbidden books, including forty-eight heretical editions of the Bible. Sixty-one printers and publishers were put under the ban of excommunication. No book was to be read without a Churchimprimatur(meaning, “let it be printed”).

As certain books were no longer safe to be read, words were no longer safe to be spoken. Men who had been pillars of the Church were arrested on the slightest suspicion of a careless comment. The mad Pontiff pursued his victims. “Even if my own father were a heretic,” he vowed, “I would gather the wood to burn him.” No one doubted the truthfulness of the statement. And so, the bones of Church members were broken. Limbs were stretched. The most barbaric methods of torture the depraved minds of men could conceive were used. Blood flowed freely.

By the grace of God, Paul IVdied after only four years of an unrighteous rule. Rome celebrated his death with four days of uninhibited joy. Crowds tore down the statue of the pope, dragged it through the streets, and threw it into the Tiber River. The buildings of the Inquisitionwere burned, the prisoners set free, and all documents were destroyed.

The Council of Trent

While members of the Inquisitionwere doing deeds of unspeakable darkness in the name of the Light of the World (Joh 1:4-8), in the little city of Trent in the mountains of northern Italy, a Church council was meeting. Paul III(pope, 1534-1549) had initially summoned the council, which would meet sporadically from 1545 to 1563. Twenty-five sessions would be held. The purpose of the Council was to reflect the Protestant initiative and formulate a confession of faith. A catechismwas also adopted. When its work was completed, some obvious Church abuses were corrected by the Council, but the supremacy of the papacy, and the whole system of salvationby works, still stood as foundational truths. In addition, the Council embraced the validity of believing that the seven sacraments could bestow merit on the Christian. Furthermore, tradition was to be valued as much as the Bible, the fourteen apocryphal books of the Old Testament were to be included in the sacred canon of Scripture, purgatorydid exist, and there was value in the invocation of saints, images, relics, and indulgences. Point by point the Protestants would continue to resist these basic Catholic beliefs as having no Scriptural support. The battle for the hearts and minds of millions throughout the world would continue in earnest.

The Cruelty of Charles V

In this ongoing struggle for the minds of men, the Catholic Church had always had a powerful ally in the emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, Charles V. Immediately after the Diet of Worms, the king vowed “To root out heresy, I shall stake my crown and my life.” He was serious. After defeating the armies of France, turning back the Muslim Suleimanat Vienna, and withstanding Barbarossain the Mediterranean, Charles was free to “root out” Protestant “heretics” who disagreed with the Catholic traditions.

In 1546, a new wave of persecutionbegan. Protestants were burned to death as heretics in Italy, Spain, France, England, and Scotland. The Lutherans of Germany were grievously afflicted, while in the Netherlandsthe saints fell victim to the Spanish Inquisition. More than 18,000 were slaughtered.

Charles was able to viciously suppress the work of the Protestants until he suffered a political setback. One of his closest supporters, Maurice of Saxony, turned against him. Charles could have been captured and held a prisoner, but he was allowed to escape. When asked why he let the king flee, Maurice said, “I did not have a cage good enough for such a fine bird.”

By 1555, Charles was forced to sign thePeace of Augsburg. The hurting was halted. According to the terms of the treaty, each prince of a territory would have the right to choose whether his kingdom would be Lutheran or Catholic. In this choice, the common people would have no voice. They would have to accept the religion of their ruler.

On September 28, 1556, Charles V, Emperor of Germany, king of Spain, and lord of the Netherlandsmade his way to Spain, where he would remain until his death on September 21, 1558. It did not help the cause of the Catholic Church that Charles was becoming senile. Perhaps some taint of insanity was inherited from his mother's blood.

In the final years of life, Charles was without mercy. He recommended vicious penalties to "cut out the root" of heresy. He regretted more than ever having let Luther escape him at Worms. By royal command, no woman was to be allowed within two bowshots of the monastery walls where he was staying, which was a monastery in name only. Charles had turned it into a palace. Changing his will, Charles ordered that 30,000 Masses be said for him after his death. Such royal instructions could be commanded because of a religious system that denies the simplicity of the Scriptures, which teach, "it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Heb 9:27). Today is the day of salvation. "Today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts" (Heb 3:15). Charles never understood that salvation does not come by Masses being said, or the sacraments being honored. Salvation is by grace through faith alone in the Person and work of Jesus Christ dying a substitutionary death at Calvary. "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Act 4:12).

The Power of Passionate People

Though Charles proved in the end to be counter-productive to the goals of the Counter-Reformation, the Catholic Church looked upon other sincere men with better hope. Some of the more earnest Catholic reformers were Teresa de Cepeda, Ignatius Loyola, and Francis Xavier.

TERESA DE CEPEDA (1515-1582)was the daughter of a Castilian knight of Avila, who read to his family each day from the lives of the saints. Her mother, a chronic invalid, enjoyed having read aloud romantic stories of chivalry. Teresa would vacillate between idyllic love and Church martyrdom. At ten she told everyone she was going to become a nun. Four years later Teresa had become a beautiful young woman with many admirers. It was only natural that she fall in love with one of them, but then Teresa became afraid. Her heart was divided between the world and the Church, and a choice had to be made. At age sixteen, Teresa became an Augustinian nun.

As the years passed, Teresa grew disappointed with the external behavior of those she found in the convents. Her own spiritual life was filled with visions of heaven. On one occasion, Teresa thought an "exceedingly beautiful angel" pierced her heart several times with "a long dart of gold," tipped with fire. "So real was the pain that I was forced to moan aloud, yet it was so surpassingly sweet that I would not wish to be delivered from it. No delight of life can give more content. As the angel withdrew the dart, he left me all burning with a great love of God." Such visions would continue throughout her life.

Teresa wanted others to know spiritual joy. But in order for that to happen, reform had to take place. A new convent had to be established with behavior conducive to Christian conduct. Despite opposition, Teresa would know success. In 1562, on a narrow street in Avila, the new convent of St. Joseph was opened. Eventually Teresa would establish seventeen convents, all of which would be obedient to the strict, Carmeliterule emphasizing asceticism, self-discipline, and prayer—in a loving and cheerful manner.

A gifted administrator and writer of mystical experiences, Teresa published herAutobiographyin 1562. Respected in life, Teresa was revered in death. Claims were made that her body never decayed, and miracles took place at her tomb. An appeal was made to the pope to beatify her.Beatification(Latinbeatus, blessed, andfacere, to make or do) is the formal papal assurance that a deceased person, having lived a holy and heroic life, deserves to be called "blessed," and is therefore enjoying heaven without the pains of passing through purgatory. This was done in 1614. Eight years later Teresa was exalted and pronounced to be a patron saint of Spain. The only other person having received this honor was the Apostle James.

IGNATIUS OF LOYOLA(1491-1556)was born into a powerful and wealthy Basquefamily living in the province of Guipuzcoa (Spain). Little could anyone imagine the impact Inigo Lopez de Onaz y de Loyola would have upon the world. Trained to be a soldier, Ignatius suffered a severe wound while fighting the French armies at Pamplona, capital of Navarre, a territory claimed by Spain. His leg was shattered by a cannon ball (May 20, 1521).

The victorious French were kind to their captives. Ignatius was put on a stretcher and his bones were set. But his bones were wrongly set. They had to be broken again and reset. The second operation was horrendous. A stump of bone stuck out from the leg. A third operation was performed to set the bones straight. This procedure was more successful, but it left one leg shorter than the other. A long, tortuous period of convalescence began.

During this time, Ignatius asked for books to read. He was given a copy of theLife of Christby Ludolfus. A powerful spiritual awakening took place in the heart of Ignatius. One day Ignatius rose from his bed of affliction, knelt, and dedicated his life to being a soldier unto death of Christ, the Virgin Mary, and the Church.

While the spiritual journeys of Ignatius took him to many parts of the world, he chose to exist as an extreme ascetic. The once handsome, wealthy, and attractive aristocrat abused his body, to the point that his hair fell out, his beard was unkempt, his face became haggard, and his clothes rotted off his back. There was an intensity about the man that attracted others. He believed he knew how to advance the cause of Christ: individuals must become soldiers of the

cross through rigid discipline and holy obedience.

For Ignatius, this meant slavish subservience to the Church. He and his followers would do whatever task the Church asked, no matter how menial or humiliating it might be. Out of this vision for spiritual soldiers came a core group of committed Catholics. They were formally recognized by Paul III(pope, 1534-1549) when he issued a papal bullestablishing theRegimini militantis ecclesiae, "For the rule of the Church Militant," the Society of Jesus (the Jesuits), September 27, 1540. Valuing not only holy obedience but also education, the Jesuitssent its dedicated missionaries to Europe, India, China, Japan, and the New World.

FRANCIS XAVIER(1506-1552)was the youngest child of a Basqueofficial, Juan de Yasu, and his wife Maria. Though a large portion of the family wealth was lost during border disputes between France and Spain, enough money remained to allow Francis to study law and theology at the University of Paris. While in Paris, he met Ignatius of Loyolaand became one of his most loyal supporters. Ordained a priest in Venice (1537), Francis began a life of dedicated service.

His travels took him to the large Portuguese settlement of Goa (India), which was the source of a profitable spice trade. In Goa, Francis founded a missionary college. He also helped to defend the native Indians against foreign abuse. In 1545, Francis traveled to Malacca in the Malay Peninsula, and to the Molucca Islands, which are today part of Indonesia. From there he prepared to go to Japan (1549), where he successfully established a Christian community. He was the first to preach the Gospel of Christ to the Japanese.

He returned to Goa in 1552, desiring to explore the empire of China. While trying to gain an entrance to China, Francis died on Shangchuan island, off the southern coast of the mainland. Francis has justly been criticized for displaying an intolerance of oriental religions, using the Inquisition in Goa, and using governmental policies to pressure people into becoming Catholics. However, Francis has also been praised for a life of devotion to the Church, resulting in the bringing of over 700,000 people into the Catholic Church. Believing that the good he did outweighed the bad, the Catholic Church canonized him in 1622.

The contributions of these people to the Catholic cause greatly enhanced Church unity. The Council of Trentalso helped to bring an end to further Catholic divisions—by establishing a sense of unity through a creed, a catechism, and a sense of stability.

A Fragmented Faith

Meanwhile, the Protestant community was not so united. It continued to fragment for a number of reasons, none of them noble.

1. One major cause for Protestant divisionwas the lack of a central government with ecclesiastical control. The movement was not helped by its own teaching in this matter, which held suspect central power in the Church or State. While the privileges of the universal priesthoodof the believer were exalted, in practical terms this teaching served to undermine the authority of ministers in the local assembly, and the power of the corporate Church.

2. Another difficulty was that in some nations, a class divisionarose. When Martin Luthertook a firm stand against the populace in the Peasant's War of 1525, the lower classes felt betrayed. Many in this segment of society turned against Luther and the Reformation, and returned to the Catholic Church. The movement was then confined to the middle and upper classes of society in Germany.

The rise of the Anabaptistsdid nothing initially to advance the cause of the Reformation. Many of the early Anabaptists were religious zealots. People felt that not only the Church was threatened by the Anabaptists, but so was all social and political order in nations. The Catholic Church took advantage of this innate fear to teach that the Reformation as a whole was disruptive to society and should not be supported.

3. As the Protestants divided along class lines, so there was a tendency to divide along educational lines. To be a devout follower of Luther, Zwingli, and Calvin required prayerful study and careful thinking. While the Reformation leaders appealed to the mind, the Catholic Church continued to appeal to the emotions and senses of the general populace. There was pomp and ceremony, pageantry and programs, mystery and majesty seen physically in elaborate ceremonies in the Catholic Church. For many, the contrast between that and the bareness of the Protestant Church was too much. Catholicismpromised salvation while Protestant sermons demanded the heart be constantly searched for the root of righteousness. In Protestant theology there was a constant emphasis upon sin, salvation, sanctification, and eternal damnation. It was just easier not to have to think so much about so many serious topics. It was easier to be a Catholic!

4. The Protestant movement fragmented even more when its own foundational doctrine was abused. The essential teaching of the Reformation was that "justification is by faith alone apart from human works or merits." A careless thinker might assume that good works are not associated with salvation. If that is true, then it does not matter how one lives. Therefore, why not live life as one pleases while singing, "Free from the Law, O happy condition; sin as you please for there is remission!"

By embracing a system of salvation built upon "easy believism," people persuaded themselves that sin was not

something to be taken seriously. Grace and love would cover a multitude of sin. The Catholic Church was quick to point out that a belief in salvation apart from works would tend to justify a life of unrestrained liberty (see Romans 6 for Paul's answer).

In addition to the abuse of doctrine, the division of doctrine brought a disruption of fellowship. Lutherans did not feel that they could have open fellowship with Calvinists.

5. Finally, geography played a role in dividing the Protestant Church. While France, Scotland, and the Netherlandsenjoyed a common unity by embracing the creeds of Calvinism, they were geographically apart. Physical fellowship among the various churches was difficult to achieve because of natural barriers.

Despite the fragmentation of the Protestant movement, the central work of calling individuals to Christ continued. In many ways the message was communicated that life is short, death is certain, eternity is real. There is a hell to shun, a heaven to gain, a God to fear, and a Savior to love. Like a mighty army, the Church of the Living Lord marched on. It had been bruised and bloodied on the spiritual field of battle, but never defeated. The Church was fragmented, but not faithless. It was divided, but not disloyal to the divine command to take the Gospel to every nation (Mat 28:19-20):

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen."

Chapter 10

The Reformation in England Continues

More Purity for the Church in England

As the principles of the Reformation continued to change individuals, they in turn changed society. Unfortunately, cultural change can produce tension, unrest, and conflict. In the seventeenth century, England found herself in the midst of great social disharmony. The social turmoil came, in part, because the Elizabethan Settlementof 1563 did not resolve the continuing concerns expressed by thePuritans, the movement that sought to be totally biblically pure toward God and set apart from men's ways.

The Elizabethan Settlement is a term used to describe the position of the Church of Englandnear the beginning of the reign of Queen Elizabeth (1558-1603), as established by theAct of Supremacyand theAct of Uniformity. In a cautious manner, the first act defined the authority of the State in the Church, while the second established the required use of theBook of Common Prayer.

In 1558, when Elizabeth succeeded "Bloody Mary" Tudor (b. 1516 - d. 1558) to the throne of England, she discovered that many Protestants had returned from religious exile enamored with the concepts advocated by the great French reformer, John Calvin(1509-1564).

By using the Acts of Supremacy and Uniformity, the new Queen sought to avoid any more Church controversy. But her desires were not realized. There were those who wanted to see the Church of Englandcompletely divested of any reflections from Rome. Specific demands were being made by the Puritans: a sincere and spiritually-minded pastor, able to preach, was to be placed in every parish; there were to be no distinguishing clerical garments; no one should kneel at the Lord's Supper; rings were not to be exchanged at weddings; and the use of signing of the cross at baptism must cease (the Roman Catholic movement of the hand in the shape of a cross).

These acts were objected to because of the symbolism associated with them. The clerical garments reminded the Puritansof the priests in the Catholic Church—and of the power they once wielded. The kneeling at communion was considered to be an acceptance of the Catholic belief of the physical presence of Christ as taught in the doctrine of transubstantiation. The exchanging of rings at weddings reminded the Puritans of the Catholic dogma of marriage being a sacrament, rather than a social institution to be honored by all. The signing of the cross at baptism was believed to be a superstition without any corresponding spiritual meaning. Therefore, it should not be used.

As the Puritansconsidered these things, they thought of other practices that would make the Church of Englandmore distinct from the Catholic Church, and therefore more holy and pure. In each parish, elders should be appointed to exercise Church discipline; the office of Bishop should be done away with; local assemblies should have the right to select their own ministers; and all ministers were to be considered equal. A Presbyterian form of Church government(with local church autonomy) should replace the Episcopalian form (with a hierarchy of central authority).

The Authority of God's Word

The Puritanswanted these reforms because they were convinced that the Word of God directed the way the Christian life should be lived, and the way the local Church should be administered. This emphasis on the Bible, instead of tradition or human reason, became the main source of authority for the Puritans. They wanted to be a people of the Book. They wanted to be holy. They wanted a renewed emphasis upon strict morality. Going to the theater, playing cards, and dancing were frowned upon and preached against. Honoring the Sabbathwas mandatory. There should to be a distinct separation between Church and State.

Thomas Cartwright

One prominent leader of the Puritan movement was Thomas Cartwright(b. 1535). A graduate of Cambridge, Cartwright spoke out openly against corruption in the Catholic Church. As a result, he was driven from his teaching position at St. John's College when the Catholic Queen, Mary Tudor, ascended the throne in 1553.

As Cartwright exposed moral and doctrinal corruption in the Catholic Church, so he spoke against spiritual pollution in the Church of England, to the dismay of the Protestant Queen Elizabeth. Cartwright's reward for his honesty was removal from the teaching profession to which he had returned. He was decreed guilty of declaring that the Church of England had forsaken certain practices of the New Testament, and was banished from the country.

While living as a religious exile in Geneva, Switzerland, Cartwright was able to meet Theodore Beza, the Protestant leader who had replaced John Calvinupon his death. Desiring to return to England, Cartwright went home, but found he could not stay; he would not keep silent. After issuing a pamphlet,Admonition to the Parliament(1572), alleging there to be unworthy officials in the Church of England, Cartwright was once more compelled to leave the country.

Still, he spoke what was on his heart, always trying to purify the Church of England, spiritually and structurally. In the place of an Episcopal form of government, Cartwright argued for a Presbyterian type, in which local churches united to form asynod, or assembly, while recognizing the autonomyof each Church. Cartwright's concepts of Church governmentwere widely received by other Puritan leaders. He died in 1603.

The Independents

Frustrated with the slow pace of reforming the Church of England, some concerned Christians decided to separate in dissent. They would leave the Church of Englandto create a new religious work, becoming known asSeparatistsor Dissenters. From this movement would come theCongregationalists, or Independents, stressing the freedom of the local assembly to select ministers, maintain Church autonomy, and worship without formal rituals.

Persecutionof the Puritans

Despite their noble intentions to purify the Church of England, the Puritansfound themselves afflicted by the Crown for their beliefs. For almost forty years after the death of Queen Elizabeth (d. 1603), the Puritans were persecuted directly and indirectly. There was public ridicule and private slander. The Puritans were subject to fines and imprisonments. Perhaps it was only natural that they allied themselves with those who politically opposed King Charles I(1600-1649). The Puritans longed for a legal forum to alter their harsh treatment, and advance their own agenda. In 1640, they found what their hearts desired. In that year the "Long Parliament" met, after an eleven year absence of convening. The Parliamentwas so named because it was determined not to disband, even if the Crown commanded its dismissal.

In the Long Parliament, the Presbyterian Puritansfound themselves in the majority. They realized that they were now in a position to take revenge on past injustices. Two leading opponents of the Puritans had been the Earl of Straffordand William Laud. The king had made Laud bishop of London in 1628 and Archbishop of Canterbury in 1633. Under his leadership, many Puritans fled to America. Once the Puritans gained political power, Strafford and Laud were brought to trial, condemned, and executed—by beheading.

King Charles I

Meanwhile, relations between Parliamentand King Charles continued to deteriorate. It was inevitable that there be tension because Charles, the younger son of King James I, believed in the concept of "the divine right of kings." This worldview held that God Himself made kings and not men. Therefore, while men and Parliaments might give counsel to the king, his word was ultimate law. Legally, the king could do no wrong. Therefore, any movement to remove a king, or even curtail his power, was a violation of natural rights and divine law.

Succeeding his father to the throne in 1625, Charles could not bear the concept of having limitations placed upon his royal commands. If Parliamentwould not do what Charles wanted, he would rule without them. The king did rule from 1629 to 1639 without Parliament. However, needing funds to fight the Scots, Charles summoned the English Parliament in 1640. Renewed confrontations came.

Alarmed by arbitrary actions taken by the Parliament, and its growing popularity with the people, Charles decided to arrest five members who were opposed to his reign. Armed soldiers were sent to seize select members who spoke against the Crown, but the House of Commons moved to protect their leaders. Willing to use military might to suppress this open rebellion, in 1642 the king left London, raised the royal flag at Nottingham, and engaged the country in civil war.

The People and Parliament Challenge the Crown

Initially, the majority of the nobles and country gentlemen supported the king. As capable horsemen they were known as Cavaliers. Opposing the king, and supporting the side of Parliament, were shopkeepers, small farmers, and entrepreneurs. These opponents of the Crown became known as Roundheads, because they cut their hair very short—the shape of the round head could be seen.

When the hostilities began, the king's forces were victorious for a very simple reason: the general population was not trained in the art of war. A wealthy farmer, elected to the House of Commons in 1628, said plainly that, "A set of poor tapsters [those who repaired pots and pans] and town apprentices cannot fight men of honor successfully." Oliver Cromwell(1599-1658) was right. The army raised by Parliament to fight the forces of the king, needed to be trained in a professional manner. Perhaps Cromwell could help, and he would.

Cromwell began by forming a new regiment, the Ironsides. The men who served in this regiment were never defeated on the field of battle. Seriously devout in their personal life, they did not swear or drink, and they charged their enemies singing psalms. Later, an army of twenty-one thousand men, patterned after the Ironsides, was created. The New Model Armyalso consisted of God-fearing soldiers who sang psalms, studied the Bible, and prayed when they were not fighting.

Supported by the Scots, the Ironsides defeated the king's army at Marston Moor(1644), and at Naseby(1645). Charles was compelled to surrender in 1646. However, ever the politician, while in custody Charles led the Scots to believe that, if they joined his side and invaded England, he would support their desire for a Presbyterian form of Church government. The Scots believed the word of the king and, on August 20, 1648, invaded England. Unfortunately for them, they were soundly routed by Cromwell's forces at Preston. The Model Army was now supreme in England.

This allowed "Pride's Purge" to take place on December 6, 1648. In the early morning hours, Colonel Thomas Prideand his soldiers seized the House of Commons by force. They barred or expelled 140 Royalist and Presbyterian members. Forty members who resisted the coup were sent to jail. Oliver Cromwellsupported this use of physical force, which left what was called the "Rump Parliament." Charles Iwas arrested, brought to trial, and found guilty of being a tyrant, traitor, and murderer.

His trial began on January 19, 1649. An impromptu panel of judges convened in Westminster Hall. Soldiers stood guard. The galleries spilled over with spectators. Charles was seated in the midst of this chaotic assembly, alone. John Bradshawacted as the presiding officer. The charges against the King were read, and he was instructed to answer. Charles did answer. He insisted that the court had no right to try him. Nor did it represent the people of England. Furthermore, the Rump Parliament was more of a tyrant than he. From the galleries the people cried out, "God save the King!" Bradshaw grew fearful. Four nobles stepped forward and offered to die in the King's place; this would not be allowed. The death sentence was pronounced and signed by fifty-nine judges, including Oliver Cromwell.

On January 30, 1649, Charles Iwalked from St. James Palace to the steps of the high scaffold erected in front of the royal palace of Whitehall in London. Before the great multitude that had gathered to witness the bloody spectacle, Charles was beheaded. The king went to his execution with personal dignity. The dark deed was done with one strike of the sharp ax. The executioner held the severed head up high—the crowd could see the death of their sovereign. One eyewitness wrote, "There was such a groan by the thousands then present, as I never heard before and desire I may never hear again." Later, many more would regret what had been done. Following the demise of Charles I, an alleged autobiography was published,The Royal Image, which won him renewed respect posthumously. The time would come when the people of England desired a restored monarchy. Until then, the Great Rebellion would continue. A strong military man would guide the country.

A "Lord Protector"

With the death of the king, Oliver Cromwellwas the undisputed leader of the nation. Though he did refuse to be crowned king, Cromwell was willing to serve as "Lord Protector" of England from 1653 to his death on September 3, 1658. As a national leader, Cromwell made several important contributions. Perhaps the most important was establishment of peace in England, Scotland, and Ireland after ten years of violent civil conflict.

With civil peace in the land, the opportunity came for Cromwell to renew diplomatic relationships with many European countries. He strengthened the army, built up the naval forces, and restored respect for England's voice in world affairs. Finally, Cromwell established the principle of freedom of worship. Individuals could benon-conformist: they could refuse to submit to the established Church of England. They could also avoid the Presbyterian form of Church governmentpreferred by Parliament. Cromwell himself was an independent Congregationalist. He believed that local assemblies should be able to choose their own pastors, and enjoy their own order of worship.

Cromwell condemned the disruptive acts of such organizations as the Society of Friendsand the Fifth Monarchy Men. Individuals belonging to these societies would interrupt traditional Church services, in order to advance their own agendas. Having studied the book of Daniel, the Fifth Monarchists believed that Jesus Christ was about to come to England and establish His Kingdom (the Fifth Monarchy—the execution of Charles Iwas the end of the fourth monarchy). In a month, perhaps a year, only two at the most, Christ would come to reign. In sermons, pamphlets, and planned acts of insurrection, the Fifth Monarchists shared their own view of millenial certainties.

While Cromwell contained the zeal of these religious enthusiasts, he did allow members of the Jewish community to live without opposition in England. However, with members of the Catholic faith, and with members of the Anglican Church, Cromwell was not so gracious. Severe restrictions were placed upon their acts of worship.

An Assembly of Saints

While the Civil War raged in England between Parliament and the king, changes were made in the Anglican Church. In 1643, the episcopal form of government was abolished by Parliament. A new structure was requested. It would be formulated by an assembly of one hundred twenty-one clergymen (the "divines") and thirty laymen: 10 members of the

House of Lords and 20 members of the House of Commons. This Westminster Assembly of Divinesmet at Westminster Abbeyin London.

Most of those who were present when the Assembly convened in 1643, were Presbyterian Puritans. Eight Scottish commissioners were allowed to be part of the gathering, in appreciation for their aid in fighting the king. While the Scottish representatives had no official role in the proceedings, their presence remained influential. The Assembly held 1,163 sessions between July 1, 1643, and February 22, 1649. A quorum of 40 members was required.

As work proceeded, aDirectory of Worshipwas prepared to replace the Episcopal prayer book. In addition, a new confession of faith was drafted for the Church of England. ThisWestminster Confessionwas the last of the great Protestant creeds of the Reformation era. Work on the Confession began in July, 1645, and continued, with interruptions, until its completion in December, 1646.

The Confession is a summary of major Christian beliefs in 33 chapters. Orthodox biblical theology permeates the Confession, with emphasis on the covenant relationships between God and man. The Confession was presented to both Houses of Parliament in 1647, under the title:The Humble Advice of the Assembly of Divines, Quotations and Texts of Scripture Annexed Presented by Them Lately to Both Houses of Parliament.

Though the Confession was only used briefly by the Church of England, it was adopted for common use in 1647 by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. TheSavoy Declarationof 1658 of the English Congregationalists, and theLondon Baptist Confessionof 1677,[12]both incorporated large parts of theWestminster Confession. Today, this document remains an authoritative statement of faith in many Presbyterian churches.

To help explain the Confession, aLarger Catechismwas prepared by the Westminster Assembly, to be used by ministers in the pulpit for public teaching. AShorter Catechismwas published for instructing the children.

The Restorationand Its Persecutions

The success of the Puritansin reforming the Church of Englanddid not last. When Oliver Cromwelldied in 1658, his son Richard, took the reigns of political power. Because Richard did not have the leadership skills or the political stature of his father, he ruled for only two years (1658-1660), and earned the humiliating nickname “Tumble Down Dick.” Richard’s demise paved the way for Charles IIof the House of Stuart to be restored to the English throne of his father (Charles I) in 1660.

As the restored Stuart king of England, Charles II (1660-1685) issued a general pardon to all who had fought against his father in the great Civil War, but he did not mean it. By May, 1662, Parliament was once more controlled by Anglican members, sympathetic to the Episcopal Church. It passed a new Act of Uniformity, and printed a new Prayer Book, reversing the changes made by the previous, more Puritan, Parliament. The new laws were called theClarendon Codeafter the politician who proposed them. One measure of the Clarendon Code was anAct of Uniformity(1662), which required all clergy to give “their unfeigned consent and assent” to everything that was in theBook of Common Prayer.Any form of Church service, other than that officially prescribed therein, was prohibited.

When over 2,000 Presbyterian ministers of the Gospel could not in good conscience subscribe to theAct of Uniformity, they were driven from their pulpits, reduced to poverty in many cases, and forced to hide as fugitives. In 1665 theFive Mile Actwas passed, forbidding these ejected ministers to come within five miles of a city or town. TheFive Mile Actwas designed to deprive them of the power to earn a living of any sort. These Puritan Dissenterswere persecuted in earnest in both Scotland and England. The Covenanters, as the Protestants in Scotland were called, were hunted like wild animals. They were chased by bloodhounds to the sound of bugle calls. Many were hanged or drowned. But these measures did not succeed, for the Lord knows how to take care of His own (Psalm 1). The bravery of these men remains to this day.

Bunyan and Milton

Among those who suffered for their faith was John Bunyan(b. 1628). Born at Elstow, Bedfordshire, Bunyan came to faith after he overheard some godly women talking about a life of grace. Bunyan realized that he knew nothing about such a religious experience, but he would like to know.

Moving to Bedfordin 1653. Bunyan united with an Independent congregation. By 1657, he was preaching the Gospel of redeeming grace with great success. He had already begun a writing career. His first pamphlet was a tract against the QuakersentitledSome Gospel Truths Opened. This was followed byA Vindication of Some Gospel Truths Opened. His third work was on the parable of the rich man and Lazarus entitledSighs from Hell, or the Groans of a Damned Soul(1658).

Bunyan continued to write and to preach as aNon-conformist–someone outside the official structure of the Church of England. In 1660 official persecutionagainst the Non-conformists was renewed. Bunyan, caught up in the new cycle of violence, was arrested and imprisoned. As stressful as the circumstances were, his imprisonment was not as severe as it could have been. There were no prohibitions on visitors, and there were periods of parole.

While in prison Bunyan wrote his spiritual autobiography,Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners. This was followed

in 1663 withChristian Behavior.The Holy City(1665) came next to reveal the symbolism of the heavenly city described in Revelation. Bunyan's greatest work,Pilgrim's Progress, was published in 1678.

As a prolific writer, all of the works of Bunyan were designed to help build-up the Christian's faith. In August of 1688, Bunyan rode through a heavy rain on his way to preach in London. Within a few days, he developed a violent fever and died. He was buried in Bunhill Fields, London.

Another Puritan, a man with unusual intellectual and literary gifts, was John Milton(b. 1608). As a young man, Milton enjoyed an exceptional education, with the opportunity to travel widely. In addition to English, Milton was fluent in Latin, Italian, Greek, Hebrew, and Aramaic, with a working knowledge of French and Spanish.

When the English Civil War began, Parliament invited Milton to serve as a chief apologist for the government. While the years in the service of the government were exciting and eventful, Milton's private life was filled with sorrow. His first two wives died bearing children. A son and a daughter also died in infancy, although three other children survived. Then, at the age of forty-seven, Milton went almost totally blind.

Marrying a third time, Milton settled down to live a quiet life until his death in 1674. During these twilight years (1660-1674), Milton wrote some of his greatest works, including the epicParadise Lost(1667), setting forth the story of man's creation and fall.Paradise Regaineddepicted the temptation of Jesus and His victory over Satan.Samson Agonistes(1671) set forth the trials and tribulations of the biblical hero, Samson.

Return England to Catholicism?

While men like Bunyan continued to strengthen the spiritual life of Independent congregations, others were convinced that England should return to the Catholic Church. During his life Charles IIvacillated between unbelief and Catholicism. On his deathbed in 1685, the king finally professed faith in the doctrines of the Romans Catholic Church. His brother James IIascended the throne without any moments of uncertainty. James II was a devout Catholic with a religious and political agenda of returning England to Catholicism. He found an ally in this objective in Louis XIV, king of France.

In the providence of God, William III(1650-1702) of the Netherlandsemerged as a protector of the Protestant faith against the Catholic king, Louis XIVof France. His wife, Mary (b. 1662), was the daughter of the Catholic English king, James II. In fear and anguish, English Protestants appealed for help to William IIIof Orange, governor of the Netherlands(1672-1702). He readily responded. At the head of an army, William crossed the sea from Holland in 1688 and defeated the forces of James—who was forced into exile. William and Marywere crowned king and queen of England. William would reign from 1689-1702. Mary, recognized as a British joint sovereign, died in 1694.

In 1689, James made an earnest attempt to regain the English throne. Support was found in southern Ireland when he landed there with a French army. The people in northern Ireland were Protestant, and chose to unite with William as "Orangemen" (an informal title which continues to this day). In 1690, the decisive battle of the Boynetook place. King James II, who had been watching the battle from a discrete distance, saw his army defeated, and he fled to France. William's victory allowed Holland, England, and America to continue to embrace the Protestant faith.

During the reign of William and Mary, religious toleration was given to all Protestant Dissenters: Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Baptists, and Quakers. The Catholics were placed on the defensive in England.The Toleration Actof 1689allowed freedom of worship to those who were willing to: 1) pledge allegiance to William and Mary; 2) denounce the authority of the pope; 3) renounce transubstantiationand the mass; 4) forsake the invocation of the Virgin and saints; and 5) embrace the doctrinal portions of theThirty-nine Articles.

A Summary of the Thirty-Nine Articles

TheThirty-nine Articles, formulated in the Canterbury Convocation of the Church of Englandin 1563, were a restatement of theForty-two Articlesset forth in 1552. TheThirty-nine Articleswere used to support statutory law passed by Parliament in 1571. All ministers in the Anglican Churchwere required to acquiesce to them—or face penalties, persecution, and imprisonment. The historical effect of theArticleswas to bring uniformity to the Church of England.

Articles 1 to 5 declare the historic faith of the creeds of Christendom concerning the Trinity, emphasizing the Person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Articles 6 to 8 affirm the Scriptures as containing "all things necessary to salvation." The ancient creeds are "to be received and believed: for they may be proved by most certain warrants of Holy Scripture."

Articles 9 to 18 deal with the subject of personal religion. The orthodox doctrine of the Reformation is presented concerning free-will, grace, justification, predestination, and good works.

Articles 19 to 36 are concerned with the nature, constitution, structure, order, and authority of the Church. The sacraments are discussed. There is total rejection of purgatory.

In Article 28 the Catholic view of the Lord's Supperis renounced, as well as the Zwinglian interpretation. The doctrine is insisted upon that there is a real partaking of Christ, whose body is received in a heavenly and a spiritual manner by faith.

Articles 37to 39 concern the national Church and its relation to the State. It is in this section that member churches of the Anglican community have had to make the most changes, in order to conform with changing political realities.

The Puritan Legacy

While the Puritanswere not able to hold onto parliament or eliminate the state church permanently, they were such men of God in their personal lives that many of them were enabled by the Lord to write clear, deep, and blessed Christian books. In the last 50 years, Banner of TruthPress has begun to republish these, and in turn the books have stimulated a revivalof interest in the "pure doctrines" of the Reformation. Some of the authors include the following.

RICHARD BAXTER(1615-1691)was one of England's most respected and renowned preachers in an era of great ministers. He was one of the foremost spokesmen of the Puritan party within the Church of England. Baxter is the author of more than 160 works, includingThe Saints' Everlasting Rest(based on Hebrews 4:9). Those who would live a "heavenly life upon earth" are warned not to live in known sin, fellowship with the ungodly, argue over non-essential matters of Christian doctrine and conduct, or manifest a spirit of pride.

THOMAS GOODWIN (1600-1679).His parents devoted him to the Lord and to the work of the ministry when he was a child. Their desire to honor the Lord was not in vain. Gifted with intellectual abilities, Goodwin was admitted to Christ's College at the age of 13. After his conversion, Goodwin was appointed to the lectureship at Trinity Church, Cambridge, but resigned in 1634 for non-conformity. After pastoring in Holland, he returned to London. Thomas Goodwinwas one of the divines at the Assembly of Westminster. His works have been reprinted in 12 volumes.

JOHN OWEN(1616-1683).Born at Stadhampton, Oxfordshire, John Owen was educated in the classics and theology before being ordained a minister in the Anglican Church. Dissatisfied with the changes mandated by Archbishop William Laud, Owen left that structure to become a leading theologian of the Congregational churches. When civil war broke out in the nation, Oliver Cromwellmade Owen his chaplain during his military campaigns in Ireland and Scotland (1649-1651). A prolific writer and scholar, some of his greatest works areThe Display of Arminianism(1642),Doctrine of Justification byFaith(1677), andThe Death of Deaths in the Death of Christ.

THOMAS MANTON (1620-1677).In 1640 at the age of twenty, Thomas Mantonwas ordained deacon in the Anglican Churchby the bishop of Exeter, even though the official minimum age was twenty-three. His life would be spent serving the Lord. Manton knew great success as a public orator; crowds would gather to hear him preach. But he also knew suffering through imprisonment, being jailed for six months after departing from the State Church. With others Manton drew up theFundamentals of Religion(1658)—all the while trying to reach an accommodation with the bishops. His many Puritan works include commentaries onJames(1651) andJude(1658). Thomas Manton was a beloved minister of the Gospel and respected by conformists and non-conformists alike.

STEVEN CHARNOCK (1628-1680).Charnockwas acknowledged during his lifetime to be a Puritan preacher of sincere convictions, wisdom, and great learning. His fame as a theologian was widely appreciated and manifested in his various works:A Discourse on Divine Providence; Discourses on Christ Crucified; Discourses on Regeneration, the Lord's Supper, and Other Subjects,andDiscourses upon the Existence and Attributes of God(1682)—which has become a classic.

Chapter 11

The Rise of New Expressions of Religion

A Fight without a Reasonable Finish

Born in a religious belief that "the just shall live by faith," the Reformation era ended in a social blood bath that included political, economic, and social considerations. Once more, the world was changed through three decades of physical violence (1618-1648). ThisThirty Years' Warwould eventually involve most of the countries of western Europe, though it was fought mainly in Germany. At first, the struggle was basically a religious contest between Catholics and Protestants. In time, other factors changed its character. For example, Sweden and France entered the conflict to control the growing power of the Holy Roman Empireand its ruling family.

Armed struggles began in Bohemiaafter years of verbal conflict between Catholics and Calvinistic Protestants. In 1618 the Bohemians rejected the rule of the newly elected Catholic Emperor Ferdinand II(1578-1637), and elected the Protestant Calvinist, Elector Frederick V(1596-1632) of Germany. The predictable result was open civil war.

The Thirty Years' Warcan be divided into four distinct parts. In Part I (1618-1623), the Catholic armies were victorious over the Protestant forces in Bohemia, Moravia, and Austria. Frederick was completely defeated at the Battle of White Mountain(1620), deprived of his electorate (1623), and sent into exile until his death. His wife Elizabeth, daughter of James I, King of England, went into exile with him. They had been married in 1613.

In Part II (1623-1629), the battle ground shifted in Europe. Initially led by Christian IV of Denmark, the Catholics again defeated the Protestant armies. On August 26, 1626, at Lutter am Barenberge, Germany, the main body of the Protestant army was routed. Towns and villages were pillaged in the aftermath.

In Part III (1630-1632), the various Catholic coalitions disintegrated. This allowed the zealous Lutheran, Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden, the "Lion of the North," to lead the Protestant forces to victory. He gave his life in the effort.

In Part IV (1632-1648), the war engaged all of Europe, as nation after nation struggled for power and political advantages.

Finally, the war was brought to an end by thePeace of Westphalia, signed at Munster on October 24, 1648. Switzerland and the Dutch Republic (the Netherlands) were established as independent states. The Holy Roman Empire and the Hapsburgs(Germany) were weakened. France emerged as the chief power on the Continent. Catholicism, Calvinism, and Lutheranismwere all recognized as legitimate religions. Each prince or ruler was allowed to determine which religion he and his region would embrace. The religion of the prince would be the religion of the people.

A Tree of Life

Despite the political and religious wars, the roots of the Reformation produced a mighty spiritual tree with strong branches, which received nourishment to produce a variety of spiritual fruits (cp. Rev 22:2). In England, the common people and those who served in the House of Commons, could freely eat from the Tree of Life. One member of the House of Commons, Sir Walter Mildmay, founder of Emmanuel College in the city of Cambridge, had prayed that this would happen. It is reported that Queen Elizabeth had said to him: "Sir Walter, I hear you have erected a Puritan foundation." "No, Madam," he replied, "far be it from me to countenance anything contrary to your established laws; but I have set an acorn, which when it becomes an oak, God alone knows what will be the fruit thereof."

Besides Walter Mildmay, there were other men under the early Stuarts to influence English Puritanism, such as William Perkins(1558-1602). His conversion to Christ came by a chance remark. One day as he was walking down the streets of Cambridge, he overheard a woman warn her child to "beware of drunken Perkins." His heart was smitten with sin by Almighty God. Shortly thereafter, "drunken Perkins' could be found preaching the Gospel of redeeming grace. He gave up the bottle for the Bible. In the years that followed, multitudes heard him gladly. He has been called "the Calvin of England."

Richard Sibbes(1577-1635) was another Cambridge Puritan who was used in a mighty way by God. Crowds gathered to hear him preach. Someone wrote, "Of this blest man, let this just praise be given: heaven was in him, before he was in heaven."

As people gathered to hear the Gospel, none presented it more clearly than Thomas Goodwin(1600-1679). Goodwin came to faith when he was nineteen years old. One day the Spirit of the Lord moved him to ride on horseback 35 miles, from Cambridge to Dedham, Essex, to listen to the preaching of the Puritan John Rogers, whereupon he was

converted. Rogers was preaching against the sin of neglecting the Word of God. Suddenly, he began to personify the Lord. Another Puritan, John Howe(1630-1705), describes the scene and the sermon:

"'Well, I have trusted you so long with my Bible [preached Rogers], but you have slighted it; it lies in such and such houses all covered with dust and cobwebs. You care not to look into it. Do you use my Bible so? Then you shall have my Bible no longer.'

"Next he takes up the Bible from its cushion, and seemed as if he were going away with it, and carrying it from them; but immediately he turns again, and personates the people to God, falls down on his knees, cries and pleads most earnestly,

"'Lord, whatsoever Thou doest to us, take not Thy Bible from us; kill our children, burn our houses, destroy our goods; only spare us Thy Bible, only take not away Thy Bible.'

"And then he personates God again to the people: 'Say you so? Well, I will try you a little longer; and here is my Bible for you. I will see how you will use it, whether you will practice it more, and live more according to it.'"

A Man of Conscience without Conviction

The Congregationalists, or Independents, reflect another sturdy branch of the Reformation tree. In doctrine they remained Calvinistic. In Church government, there were distinct changes. Radical changes in Church government in England were advocated vigorously by Robert Browne(c. 1550-1633), who was greatly influenced by Puritantheology. Graduated in 1572 from Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, Browne taught school. When he began to preach near Cambridge, Browne was confronted by Anglican Churchofficials. Refusing to accept an episcopal license, he and Robert Harrisonestablished a separatist congregation in Norwich. This bold adventure brought persecution. Browne was put in prison.

After being released, he and a large portion of his congregation fled to Middleburg in the Netherlands(1582) to avoid future acts of religious hostility. It was in Middleburg that Browne wroteA Treatise of Reformation without Tarrying for Any. In this work, Browne argued that the authority of civil magistrates did not extend to doctrine, worship, or discipline in the Church. Jesus Christ rules over His people; and not the pope, nor the bishops, nor the king of England. The resurrected Christ guides His flock, through the power of the Holy Spirit, and the Word of Truth as contained in the Scriptures.

While many others began to find some of Browne's arguments persuasive, he personally did not have the courage to continue to live out the implications of his own initial convictions. He returned to England in 1585 because his congregation had become disruptive and divisive. While remaining sympathetic to the Puritancause, by 1591 Browne was willing to become the rector of a local parish church. He had found a way in his own heart to be reconciled to the Church of England. Browne lived in relative obscurity until he was arrested for striking a policeman. He died in prison.

While Browne did not finally follow the practices of the principles he articulated, his concepts of separation between Church and State, with the Church being obedient to Christ, influenced later generations of believers in England and America. Others would implement his ideas concerning the autonomyof the local Church, the right for the local assembly to elect its own pastors and officers, and consideration by the whole congregation of important matters related to the Church.

A Burst of Anger and a New Bible

While the Separatist congregations struggled to survive, the Puritanscontinued to make efforts in reforming the Church of England. High hopes were held that James I, the new king, would help. James ascended the throne in 1603 following the death of Elizabeth I. He was the son of Mary, Queen of Scots by Lord Darnley, her second husband.

Though James had been reared a Presbyterian, he immediately embraced the Anglican principles and practices. In gratitude, the bishops and arch-bishops gladly paid him homage, and in time were well rewarded.

Prior to his official coronation, the Puritanshad already presented the new King with a petition of reform signed by a thousand ministers. ThisMillenary Petition, as it became known, asked for the immediate removal of specific clergymen who still embraced practices that were associated with Catholicism.

In 1604, James decided to call a Church conference to discuss the issues involved. Bishops and Puritansgathered to debatein Hampton Court, London. The king, acting as chairman, threatened to "make the Puritans conform or else harry them out of the land." The proceedings came to a sudden halt when one of the Puritans used an unfortunate word. He referred to the gathering as a "Synod," a word associated with Presbyterianism. James I broke out in anger.

"If," he said, "you aim at a Scottish Presbytery, it agrees as well with a monarchy as God and the devil! No bishop, no king." The Church conference was over. The King correctly perceived that if the presbyters could replace bishops, he himself could soon be driven off the throne by popular demand.

Following the conference, three hundred Puritan ministers were soon driven from the Church of England. One good thing did come of the Hampton Court conference: a decision to begin the translation for a new English Bible. The king wanted the popular Geneva Bibleto be replaced because it had marginal notes, written by Separatists and

Independents, that opposed the best interest of the monarchy. In 1611 the Authorized Versionwas published.

There were two Addresses placed in the forefront of the Authorized Version. The first Address honored King James I and Queen Elizabeth I, who is spoken of as "that bright Occidental [western] Star." The king is referred to as the "most dread Sovereign, which Almighty God, the Father of all mercies, bestowed upon us the people of England, when first He sent Your Majesty's Royal Person to rule and reign over us."

The second Address,The Epistle Dedicatory, denounces both Catholics and Puritans. A complaint is registered against those "Popish Persons" who desire to keep the people in ignorance and darkness by denying them the Scriptures in their own language. The Puritans are alluded to as being "self-conceited brethren who run their own ways and give liking unto nothing but what is framed by themselves, and hammered on their anvil." There was one other significant result of the Hampton Court conference. Many of the Separatists left England for Holland—with the dream of finding ultimate freedom of worship in a place called America.

A Short Chronology of Two Congregations

In 1602, there emerged a distinct part of the Separatist movement that would become known as "Baptist." An early prominent leader of this period was John Smyth(c. 1560-1612), a former minister in the Church of England. Smyth had been ordained in 1594 by the Bishop of Lincoln, and was elected a Fellow at Christ's College. Being attracted first to the Puritans, and then to the principles of the Separatists, Smyth became the leader of a Separatist congregation in Gainsborough.

The Lord blessed and soon a second congregation was meeting in the home of William Brewsterat Scrooby. In 1604 James Robinson, also a former minister of the Church of England, became the pastor of the people in Scrooby.

While the Scrooby congregation was growing, the Gainsborough assembly knew the pains of persecution. In 1607 the people, still led by John Smyth, sought religious refuge in Amsterdam. In 1609 the Scrooby congregation, under the combined leadership of Robinson and Brewster, relocated in Leydenin the Netherlands.

The peace that the Separatists enjoyed in the Netherlands allowed time for spiritual growth, and the formulation of far-reaching evangelistic objectives. A portion of the Gainsborough congregation felt led of the Lord to return to England in either 1611 or 1612, and established the first permanent Baptist Churchin England. The Baptist movement would continue to grow. By 1644, seven congregations could be identified as "Baptistic." By 1649 John Mylesand Thomas Proudcould be sent forth by the London Baptists to preach the Gospel in Wales.

Distinctive Baptist Beliefs

One of the reasons for the growth of Baptist congregations was the movement's distinctives. The Baptistsdid not recognize sacraments per se, as did many other Christians. They believed in two ordinances, the Lord's Supper, and the baptismof professing believers. Early Baptists preferred to be baptized in "living waters," or water that flows in a river or a stream. In the Baptist Churchgovernment, the congregation ruled. It had total autonomy; it could call a pastor and dismiss him. There were no bishops or superintendents in the Baptist structure. No group had any governmental power over other individual congregations.

Initially, Baptists embraced the doctrine of particular (definite) redemption, as set forth in 1644 in theLondon Confession, and in the 1689Confession of Faith.[13]Chapter 11 of theConfession, "Of Justification," Paragraph 3, states the following about particular recemption.

"Christ, by His obedience and death, did full discharge the debt of all those that are justified; and did, by the sacrifice of Himself in the blood of His cross, undergoing in their stead the penalty due unto them, make a proper, real, and full satisfaction to God's justice in their behalf; yet, inasmuch as He was given by the Father for them, and His obedience and satisfaction accepted in their stead, and both freely, not for anything in them, their justificationis only of free grace, that both the exact justice and rich grace of God might be glorified in justification of the sinner" (Heb 10:14; 1Pe 1:18-19; Isa 53:5-6; Rom 8:32; 2Co 5:21; Rom 3:26; Eph 1:6-7; 2:7).

Charles Haddon Spurgeon (1834-1892), a London Baptist minister, has clearly articulated this belief. "We are often told that we limit the atonementof Christ, because we say that Christ has not made a satisfaction for all men, or all men would be saved. Now, our reply to this is, that, on the other hand, our opponents limit it: we do not. The Arminians say, 'Christ died for all men.' Ask them what they mean by it. Did Christ die so as to secure the salvation of all men? They say, 'No, certainly not.' We ask them the next question. 'Did Christ die so as to secure the salvation of any man in particular?' 'No. Christ has died that any man may be saved if [he does this or that...],' and then follows certain conditions of salvation. Now, who is it that limits the death of Christ? Why, you! You say that Christ did not die so as infallibly to secure the salvation of anybody. We beg your pardon, when you say we limit Christ's death; we say, 'No, my dear sir, it is you that do it.' We say Christ so died that he infallibly secured the salvation of a multitude that no man can number, who through Christ's death not only may be saved, butaresaved and cannot by any possibility run the hazard of being anything but saved. You are welcome to your atonement; you may keep it. We will never renounce ours for the sake of it."

In political matters, the Baptists believed in a separation between Church and State. Though the king and Parliament had legitimate powers, they had no power over Church matters. During the Civil Wars and theInterregnum(1630-1660), between King Charles I and Parliament, the concept of a separation between Church and State caused many people to join the Congregationalists in general, and especially the Baptist movement.

The Savoy Synod

To maintain the growth they enjoyed, an assembly of Congregational leaders met in the Savoy Palace in London on September 29, 1658. The Synod adopted aDeclaration of Faith and Order Honored and Practiced in the Congregational Churches. Based largely on the CalvinisticWestminster Confession, theSavoy Declarationincluded a section on “The Institution of Churches and the Order Appointed in Them by Jesus Christ.” It advocated the Congregational form of Church government.

Chapter 12

The Changes in the Church Continue

Contending for the Faith

The Bible teaches that there is a faith "which was once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 1:3). There is a body of truth that has been discerned in each generation of believers as being non-negotiable. Cardinal doctrines of Christendom include the virgin birth, the deity of Christ, His true humanity, His substitutionary death at Calvary, His burial, His resurrection, His ascension into heaven, His Second Advent, and salvation by grace through faith alone. These truths, no person can deny and remain in the sphere of true saving faith. These truths form the fabric of the Christian faith that clothes all those who come to Christ.

While good Christian people might prefer different forms of Church government, and desire different modes of baptism, the cardinal doctrines, which are essential to salvation, must be embraced, lest there be a falling away from the truth into error, false teaching, heresy, and eternal judgment. The historic creeds of Christendom summarize the biblical boundaries, beyond which orthodox Christians dare not go. Unfortunately, within the Church, professing Christians[14]have come in to break through biblical boundaries. When one generation begins by challenging Christianity's historic beliefs, then later generations will go further by denying them.

Changing the Faith

One person that changed the historic beliefs of many within the Protestant Church, was James (Jacobus) Arminius. Arminius was born in the Netherlandsat Oudewater, near Utrecht (1560). His father died around the time of his birth. Then, in the early years of childhood, the Spaniards came and destroyed his hometown. His family perished. Kind Dutch neighbors took Arminius into their home and provided for his needs.

Recognized as a capable student, Arminius was enrolled as the twelfth student at the new University of Leyden(1576). Here, for the first time on public record, he used his Latinized name, Jacobus Arminius, instead of his given name at birth, Jacob Harmenszoon. As expected, Arminius enjoyed academic excellence.

After completing his studies at Leyden, Arminius continued his education at the Geneva Academy(1582), which was headed by Theodore Beza, the successor to John Calvin. In 1588, Arminius was ordained a minister of the Gospel. He became a pastor of the Reformed Church in Amsterdam. In 1590 Arminius married a prosperous merchant's daughter, which gave him contact with the prominent members of society. As a minister, Jacobus was eloquent, educated, and enlightened. His sermons attracted large audiences, not only for their clear content, but for the controversy they created.

According to Arminius, the orthodox Reformation faith (commonly now termed Calvinism) was wrong. (1) God did not extend His saving grace only to those whom He predestines to salvation, but to all men. (2) Nor is the will of man so bound in sin that he has no ability to act for good, but rather he is able to take a step toward God out of a spark of good within. (3) Nor does God sovereignly choose (elect) some men for salvation, out of all who receive the just condemnation for their sin, but rather God has elected those whom He has foreseen will believe. (4) Nor is man totally disabled by sin to merit favor with God; (5) nor is he fully depraved.

By 1592 Arminius had been formally accused of Pelagianism(a fifth century controversy which emphasized the freedom of man's will), and departure from the two reformed creeds: theBelgic Confessionand theHeidelberg Catechism. Accusations of departing from the faith would continue to follow him until his death in 1609.

During his life, Arminius had asked for a Church council to be called to discuss afresh the concepts of predestination, election, and reprobation. Nine years after his death, such a council was finally held.

The Synod of Dort

When the Synod of Dortmet, from November 13, 1618 to May 9, 1619, delegates from the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands, England, Germany, and Switzerland attended. The teachings of Arminius were considered, but they were unanimously rejected and condemned. The established Calvinistic Reformed doctrines were affirmed in theCanons of Dort.[15]

Those who defend Jacobus Arminiusfrom the condemnation of the Synod of Dort, make a distinction between the man and the message his followers manifested. It is a valid point. The views of Arminius were never systematically set

forth until the year following his death, when his followers issued a declaration called *The Remonstrance* (1610).

It is doubtful that Arminius himself would have openly endorsed the positions that have become associated with his name. His thinking was more subtle. His language was more cautious. The writings of Arminius himself are so carefully worded that Moses Stuart (1831) found it possible to argue that Arminius was not an Arminian (i.e., that Arminius would not hold to the modern views associated with his name). However, in the end, the charge is valid that Arminius had an indirect role in denying accepted Protestant biblical truths, such as the depravity of man, the bondage of the will to sin, and the election of some souls unto salvation from the judgment all deserve.

If Arminius was by nature a gentle man in presenting his views and cautious in his comments, then at least it is true that the implications of his thinking inflamed, with combative religious zeal, the young ministers whom he had trained for the ministry. Forty-five of them signed *The Remonstrance*, which systematically set forth five points that came to be called *Arminianism*. And the whole church was soon caught up with theological controversy. Arminius is not without historical accountability. He did plant the seed that has proven to be a great challenge to the Church for the souls of men.

Those who continued to interpret the Scriptures according to the historic teachings of the Reformation, formulated a response to each of the five points—and these have come to be known as the five points of *Calvinism*. A brief summary of the direct conflict between the historic Reformation teaching and Arminianism may be stated as follows.

Calvinism	Arminianism
1. Election is unconditional	1. Election and condemnation are conditioned upon the foreseen faith or unbelief of man, not upon the sovereign choice of Almighty God.
2. The atonement is limited the to the elect. A definite redemption was made.	2. The atonement was made to the elect. A definite for all, but only believers redemption was made. enjoy its benefits.
3. Man is depraved as far as any ability to have a part in his salvation, or to merit the merits of Christ.	3. Man, unaided by the Holy Spirit, is unable to come to God. However, the will of man is involved in salvation.
4. Grace is irresistible.	4. Grace can be resisted.
5. The saints will persevere in the faith, being kept by the power of God. Their salvation is certain.	5. The Doctrine of the final perseverance of all the converted is still open to discussion. At least, Christians can "backslide" into not only occasional sin, but even lifestyles of habitual sin- and still be saved on the basis of their "decision to receive Christ."

Though Arminian theology was officially condemned at the Synod of Dort, its influence did not go away. It was accepted by multitudes in the Anglican Church, and by many in the dissenting denominations, including the Baptists and the Methodists. Arminian theology continues to be widely accepted in much of Christendom.

“Something” in the Soul

While the Church reconsidered its fundamental beliefs, a man by the name of George Fox (1624-1691) introduced new behavior for Christians to practice. Fox was the son of a weaver. He himself became a shoemaker.

A deeply religious man, Fox was hungry for sincerity in religion and a spiritual visitation from God. When he was nineteen years old, Fox was invited by Church members to a party. What he saw sickened him. Those who professed to be Christians could not be distinguished from the world.

As Fox meditated on the spiritual state of society and the Church, new ideas began to formulate in his mind. Fox came to believe that all men possessed something he called the “Inner Light.” According to Fox, the Bible, which guides conduct, is a closed Book unless the mind is illuminated by the Spirit. The good news is that the Spirit has something to work with, because within each person is something that tells him what is right and what is wrong. That something in the soul will draw the heart from the false to the true, from the low to the high, and from the impure to the pure. That something is “Christ’s Light” or divine illumination. Christ’s Light gives illumination to the mind and heart. It also gives life and power, peace and joy. Here is the “Seed of God.”

While disregarding all existing churches, creeds, and doctrine, while showing little appreciation for formal theological training or professional ministers, and while rejecting all outward sacraments, George Fox presented his views to the Christian community. He found a following. In 1654 there were sixty Quakers. Four years later there were thirty-thousand Quakers. Many people were attracted to a simple way of worshipping. Others welcomed meditation instead of formal study. Still others, who had lost respect for professional ministers, believed that their own opinions really were equally valid on religious matters.

Those who followed Fox were called *Quakers*. The origin of this term is uncertain. It may be that the term arose on an

occasion in court at Derby in 1650. Fox had been convicted for blasphemy. When the judge spoke a word of ridicule, Fox responded by exhorting the magistrate to “tremble at the Word of the Lord.” Another possibility is that the term “Quaker” was a name of derision. The opponents of Fox discovered that he and his followers “quaked” with emotion in their plain meetinghouses when they thought they had been visited by God. Whatever the origin of the word, it was resented. Fox and his followers wanted to be called “Friends,” for Jesus said, “I have called you friends” (Joh 15:15).

When the Society of Friends met, they sat down and waited in silence for the Spirit of the Living God to come. There was no pulpit. There were no musical instruments; there was only silence. If the Spirit did not lead some man or woman to speak, everyone left after a determined length of time.

Doctrinally, the Friends stressed the “priesthood of all believers.” They did not believe in taking oaths, going to war, or retaliating when persecuted. They believed that kindness will produce kindness. They believed that the same Inner Spirit which guided them in the meeting-house would guide them in their daily lives. The Friends believed that all people have dignity. Despite persecution, the Society of Friends survived the perils of their day to grow numerically as an organization.

Part Four: The Church in the Modern Age

AD 1648 - 1900s

Chapter 13

The Continued Growth of Mysticism

Gnosticism Again!

As the seventeenth century progressed, cold orthodoxy continued to give way to mysticism. As noted, a large segment of European society was attracted to the Quakers, who stressed the work of the Holy Spirit. It was exciting for them to be told that the revelation of the "Inner Light" was superior to the Holy Scriptures, though not contrary to it. It was thrilling for some to hear that the Holy Spirit speaks to all–so that special scriptural training and ordained ministers of the Gospel were not necessary to personal growth or spiritual understanding of the Bible. It was revolutionary to consider the concept that formal worship might be an abomination to the Lord. It was daring to reject the sacraments, and renounce oaths, while refusing to serve in the military. The Quakerspromoted mysticism, as did the Swedish scientist Emmanuel Swedenborg(1688-1772), whose followers founded the New Jerusalem Church.

As a man of science, Swedenborg was recognized as one of the leading thinkers of his day. Many wonderful inventions resulted from his research–including the designs for a submarine and a machine that could fly. Though brilliant in physics, music, astronomy, and natural history, Swedenborg is best remembered for his interest in religion. In 1743, Swedenborg insisted that he was able to communicate with the souls of the departed spirits and with the angelic hosts. He claimed that he had been shown the secrets of the universe. Such alleged superior knowledge led him to spiritualize the Bible (1Co 8:1). The things he then taught had similarities to Gnosticism, an early heresy in the Church (see Part 1, chapter 3).

The basic teaching of Gnosticism (Greek,gnosis, knowledge) was that matter is essentially evil and spirit is essentially good. The Gnostics would argue that since God is spirit, He would not touch anything that is material. Therefore God did not create the world. What God did do, according to the Gnostics, was to put forth a series of emanations of concentric circles. Think of a child throwing a small pebble into a pond of water: concentric circles are formed in small waves. The Gnostics declared that each divine emanation of God moved further and further from Him until one of these emanations at last touched matter. And that emanation was the Creator of the world. Cerinthus, one of the leaders of the Gnostics, said that "the world was created, not by God, but by a certain power far separate from Him, and far distant from that Power who is over the universe, and ignorant of the God who is over all." By the time John wrote His Gospel, some of the Gnostics were teaching that Jesus Christ was one of the emanations from God. They said that Jesus was not truly God.

Other Gnostics held that Jesus had no real body. They said that he was a phantom without real flesh and blood. They would never have said, "The Word was made flesh" (Joh 1:14). Saint Augustinetells how he read a great deal in the writings of the philosophers of his day. But he said, "'The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us,' I did not read there."

John who had known Jesus, John who had touched Him, John who had leaned upon His breast and heard the thumping of the heart of heaven, was grieved with those who taught that Jesus only appeared to be human. He declared that anyone who denied that Jesus was come in the flesh was moved by the spirit of Anti-Christ(1Jo 4:3). Emmanuel Swedenborg denied that Jesus was truly God in the flesh.

He was hostile not only to the doctrine of the Trinity, but also to the doctrine of salvation by grace through faith alone. Swedenborg believed that God imputed righteousness to individuals according to His own sovereign choice, including those who have never repented of their sins. Armed with such mystical musings, the followers of Emmanuel Swedenborg were able to establish churches in Sweden, England, Germany, and America.

Reaction to Rationalization of Roman Theology

Inside the Church of Romethere was also a reaction to the sterile rationalization of the Christian life. A mystical movement arose known as Quietism, which taught that God will visit with any person whose soul is fully surrendered to Him. If the heart is passive, there will be an imputation of the divine light from God. When the heavenly visitation comes, the soul will enjoy an intimate communion with God. Three leading writers of Quietismwere Michael Molinos(1640-1697), a Spanish theologian; Madame Guyon(1648-1717) of France; and Francis Fenelon(1651-1715), a French minister and archbishop.

Elsewhere, a Dutch theologian, Cornelius Otto Jansen(1585-1638), founder of Jansenism, reacted to Catholic dogma

being made lifeless. This bishop of Ypres in the Southern Netherlands(today Belgium) turned the eyes of the Church of Romeback to the basic teachings of Augustine, in order to emphasize holiness of life and the necessity of divine grace for regeneration. Many who were serious about their souls, and concerned about proper Christian conduct and character, were attracted to Jansenism. The center of the movement was established at a nunnery in Port Royalnear Paris.

Catholic Rejection of Reform

Fearful of losing their own sphere of influence, the Jesuitsvigorously opposed the Jansenists. In 1710 the buildings of Port Royalwere torched and destroyed. Alarmed with such militant behavior, in 1773 Clement XIV(pope, 1769-1774) disbanded the Order of Jesuits. However, when Pius VII(pope, 1800-1823) restored the order in 1814, the Jesuits were able to grow again in stature by influencing Catholic dogma and enhancing the power of the papal throne. During the Vatican Councilof 1870, it was the Jesuits who encouraged the doctrine of the infallibilityof the pope to be proclaimed. This teaching states that in matters of religion, when the pope speaks in an official capacity (ex cathedra), he cannot err. Prior to this the Catholic Church theologians had always insisted that general councils are supreme over the popes.

The strengthening of the papal power was needed because of such novel teaching as the one introduced in 1854 by Pius IX(pope, 1846-1878). Pius proclaimed the dogma of the Immaculate Conceptionof the Virgin Mary. The belief that Mary was free of original sin(cp. Rom 3:10, 23; 6:23) did not originate with Pius. However, he used this pronouncement, also inspired by the Jesuits, to challenge the nineteenth century spirit of skepticism.

In November, 1950, the power to speakex cathedra(Latin, “from the chair”) was again put to use when Pius XII(pope, 1939-1958) proclaimed the Assumption of Maryto be a true Catholic doctrine. Devout followers of the Catholic faith would be taught to believe that Mary did not die. Rather, her body and soul were taken up to heaven in the same manner as that of Jesus Christ (Act 1:9). No scriptural evidence can be offered for this teaching.

Lutheran Pietism

Mysticism came to the Lutheran Churchin the seventeenth century in the form of Pietism. It would not remain only in the Lutheran Church, but would cross cultural, language, and political boundaries to influence many facets of Christendom including the Puritans. Cotton Mather, for example, carried on correspondence from America with Pietist leaders in Europe.

Pietism emphasized the need for a personal work of regeneration, followed by a life of consistent Christian living, manifested with the love of God. Good works were to be considered a sign of salvation. Private study of the Bible was unimportant. Formal titles were avoided. Common nouns such as “brother,” “sister,” and “pastor” were introduced as nouns of address.

The Pietists considered themselves to be a continuation of the Reformation within the churches of the Reformation. They encouraged the concept of the creation of conventicles, or cell groups, thereby forming little churches within the Church. Visual aides were important; biblical themes were painted in beautiful and detailed works of art. Religious books contained symbolic pictures with words of moral exhortation.

The father of Pietism was the German born Philipp Jacob Spener(1635-1705). He believed that there was more to the Christian life than what the Lutheran Churchhad come to expect, which was not much. The Church seemed to be satisfied if the people could remember any portion of their catechism, attended the stated services, and received the sacraments. Nothing was ever said about personal regeneration or an inner work of divine grace. Many of the ministers did not appear to be converted. Open drunkenness and immoralitywas not censured in the assembly of the saints. After reading a copy ofTrue Christianityby the German mystic Johann Arndt, Spener knew that there had to be a better way to live out the ethics of the kingdom of heaven.

August Francke(1663-1727) agreed. After being truly converted to Christ in 1687, at the age of twenty-four, Francke joined the Pietist movement. Interested in education, he founded a university at Halle (Germany) as a center of Pietism. A man of enormous energy and with great organizational skills, Francke established a school for poor children (1695). He also raised up a home for orphans. All of this and more was done without personal wealth. Francke believed that his heavenly Father could supply all of his needs through the power of prayer. Francke was right. In miraculous ways, God opened the windows of heaven and poured out a blessing. Money came from every part of Germany when Francke and others prayed.

The Unity of the Brethren

While new religious movements continued to emerge, old ones managed to find new spiritual life—illustrated in the Hussites. Despite severe persecution, the followers of John Huss(d. 1415) of Bohemia (today the Slovak Republic) survived. In 1457 they had embraced the nameUnitas Fratrum(“Unity of the Brethren”). During the early days of the Reformation led by Martin Luther, the “Bohemian Brethren,” as they were commonly called, enjoyed a membership of

200,000 and met to worship in over four-hundred churches. However, during the Counter Reformation period of the Catholic Church and the Thirty Years' War(1618-1648), this facet of the Christian faith was almost destroyed. Comenius(1592-1670) called those who remained the "Hidden Seed."

In the providence of the Lord, a young Lutheran count named Nikolaus Ludwig Von Zinzendorfemerged to help revitalize theUnitas Fratrum. Born in Dresden, Germany, in 1700, Zinzendorf enjoyed a life of luxury. His devout father was a high court official. At an early age, Nikolaus was drawn to the Savior. One day he came upon a picture of Christ suffering at Calvary. The words beneath the portrait burned their way into his heart, "This I did for you. What do you do for me?" Zinzendorf wanted to do something for Christ. He wanted to win souls to the Savior. But first he must honor his parents (Exo 20:12). He must study law at Wittenburg University(1716-1719) and become a civil servant of the government of Saxony. While Zinzendorf honored his parents, he longed for a way to be of better use for the Master. Finally the opportunity came in 1720, when he received a portion of his inheritance. Zinzendorf purchased from his grandmother a large estate located seventy miles east of Dresden, and called it Berthelsdorf.

At the urging of a humble Pietist carpenter named Christian David, Count Zinzendorf permitted the Hidden Seed to gather on his Berthelsdorf estate. Two families arrived in 1722. Five years later, several hundred Brethren had gathered to live in a community which they called Herrnhut, the "Lord's Lodge."

Caught up in the religious excitement which he witnessed on his own property, Zinzendorf resigned all civil duties to live in the midst of the Brethren. Taking advantage of his legal training, Zinzendorf was able to guide the emerging community in establishing spiritual rules of conduct without violating any of the civil laws of Saxony. The Lord blessed and the community of saints grew larger. When people arrived from the province of Moravia, located next to Bohemia, a new name was given to the community, the Moravians. Officially, the Moravian Church was formally organized on August 13, 1727, following a communion service at Herrnhut. The power of the Holy Spirit was present in a special way.

As a guiding influence in the assembly of the Brethren, Zinzendorf manifested both spiritual strength and weakness. His love for Christ gave way at times to very sentimental thoughts of the Lord. But Zinzendorf taught believers to be faithful soldiers of the Cross. Christians were to go forth and conquer the nations of the world by making disciples (Mat 28:19-20). Missionaries were sent to Africa, Asia, Greenland, Lapland, and North America. One faithful servant in North America was David Zeisberger. For sixty-three years he ministered to the American Indians. Such dedication is precious. And so it was that the Moravians, under the spiritual guidance of the Pietist Count Nikolaus Ludwig Von Zinzendorf, fanned the flames of Protestant missionary work.

A Concise Catechism on Conversion

Extracted fromA Body of Divinity
by Rev. Thomas Watson (1620-1686)
with editorial observations by Stanford E. Murrell

1.Question. What is sin?

Answer. Sin is any want16of conformity to the Law of God, or transgression of it. "Sin is a transgression of the law" (1Jo 3:4).

Commentary. Of sin in general: (1) Sin is a violation or transgression. The Latin word,transgredior, to transgress, signifies to go beyond one's bounds. The moral law is to keep us within the bounds of duty. Sin is going beyond our bounds. (2) Sin is evil. It is a defiling thing. Sin is not only a defection, but a pollution. It is to the soul as rust is to gold, as a stain to beauty. It makes the soul red with guilt, and black with filth (note Isa 30:22; 1Ki 8:38; Zec 3:3). (3) Sin is grieving God's Spirit. "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God" (Eph 4:30). (4) Sin is a disease. "The whole head is sick" (Isa 1:5). Some are sick with pride, others with lust, others with envy.

Editorial Observation. The Bible teaches that "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Rom 3:23). "As it is written, there is none righteous, no not one" (Rom 3:10; Psa 14:1-3). As a result of sin, each person has received the penalty of sin, which is physical death in time and spiritual death in eternity. "For the wages of sin is death" (Rom 6:23; cp. Rev 20:6). That is the bad news. The "good news," the Gospel, is that there is hope. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Joh 3:16). Paul teaches that "God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom 5:8). So there is a way of salvation. It has been graciously provided in the Person and work of Jesus Christ at Calvary. Individuals can be saved from the power and the pollution of sin. Those who are guilty can yet be declared righteous in the eyes of the Law. Individuals can still be justified in the sight of God by faith.

2.Question. What is justifying faith?

Answer. True justifying faith consists in three things:

(1) Self-renunciation. Faith is going out of one's self, being taken off from our own merits, and seeing we have no righteousness of our own. "Not having mine own righteousness" (Phi 3:9).

(2) Reliance. The soul casts itself upon Jesus Christ; faith rests on Christ's person. Faith believes the promise; but that which faith rests upon in the promise is the Person of Christ: therefore the spouse is said to "lean upon her Beloved" (Song 8:5). Faith is described to be "believing on the name of the Son of God" (1Jo 3:23), that is, on His person. Faith

rests on Christ's person, "as he was crucified." It glories in the cross of Christ (Gal 6:14).

(3) Appropriation, or applying Christ to ourselves. A medicine, though it be ever so effectual, if not applied, will do no good; though the plaster be made of Christ's own blood, it will not heal unless applied by faith; the blood of God, without faith in God, will not save. This applying of Christ is called receiving Him (Joh 1:12). The hand receiving the gold, enriches; so the hand of faith, receiving Christ's golden merits with salvation, enriches us.

Editorial Observation. At this point, it is possible for a conscientious seeking sinner to despair upon hearing the Gospel. If justifying faith involves self-renunciation, reliance upon the person of Christ, and the appropriation of Christ, there is concern—for the honest heart realizes that it has no innate ability to perform this spiritual good work. What can be done?

3.Question. How is faith wrought [produced]?

Answer. By the blessed Spirit; who is called the "Spirit of grace," because He is the spring of all grace(Zec 12:10). Faith is the chief work which the Spirit of God works in a man's heart. In making the world God did but speak a word, but in working faith He puts forth His arm (Luk 1:51). The Spirit's working faith is called the "exceeding greatness" of God's power (Eph 1:19). What a power was put forth in raising Christ from the grave, when such a tombstone lay upon Him as "the sins of all the world"—yet He was raised up by the Spirit! The same power is put forth by the Spirit of God in working faith. The Spirit irradiates the mind, and subdues the will. The will is like a garrison that holds out against God; the Spirit with sweet violence conquers, or rather changes it, making the sinner willing to have Christ upon any terms—to be ruled by Him as well as saved by Him.

Editorial Observation. While many talk about the free willof man, the Bible teaches about thefreedwill of man. The natural man is born with his will enslaved to sin. He is "dead in trespasses and sins" (Eph 2:1). The will of the natural man is enslaved to "the lusts of the flesh" (Eph 2:3). Jesus Christ must come and set the captive free in a sovereign way (Mat 1:21; Luk 4:18), so that it can be said for all eternity that the soul is born again (Joh 23:3), "not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (Joh 1:13). While some may boast of free will, the heart of the redeemed glories in the free graceof a free Gospel of our great God and our Savior, Jesus Christ (2Pe 1:1), who hasfreedthe wicked heart from the power and pollution of sin.

It is imperative that each person examine themselves to see if they are within the sphere of true saving faith (2Co 13:5). It is possible to be religious, but not regenerated. It is possible to be baptized, without ever having truly believed on the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation and the forgiveness of sin (Act 16:31; cp. Act 8:35-38). It is possible for a person to grow up in the Church without being converted (Joh 3:10). Therefore, "give diligence to make your calling and election sure" (2Pe 1:10). If you have never made your own calling and election sure, why not do that right now? "The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; [so] that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed" (Rom 10:8-10).

If God grants you faith to believe and converts you, please write to the publisher and share what God has done in this hour of grace (Luk 15:10). And "the Lord shall count, when he writeth up the people, that this man was born there" (Psa 87:6).

Chapter 14

The Boundaries of Acceptable Beliefs

The Sin of Socinianism

The Quakers, Quietist, Pietists, and Moravianschallenged the boundaries of orthodox beliefs and behavior. But other religious groups emerged that made no pretension to preserving the faith of the church. Among these new bodies, none was more bold than theSocinians(2Pe 2:1). Two Italian Roman Catholics, Laelius Socinus and his nephew Faustus Socinus (1539-1604), were responsible for promoting doctrinal error that destroyed cardinal truths held by that Church. The weapon of destruction was political discretion. Laelius Socinus did not openly defy the Catholic Church. Rather, he raised clever questions that were difficult to answer, much like Lucifer questioned Eve (Gen 3:1).

The most private manuscripts containing the true thoughts of Laelius were passed on to his nephew Faustus, who was studying theology at Basel, Switzerland. More bold than his uncle, Faustus went to Polandand, in 1579, began to publish heretical views on the Trinity. In 1605, theRacovian Catechismwas published in Rakow, Poland. In this document, the deity of Christ was denied. Jesus was declared to be a good man, but only a man. His death at Calvary could not, and did not, atone for the sins of anyone. Nor is man enslaved to sin and unable to do good. The disciples of Faustus Socinus were so filled with spiritual defiance against the Lord Jesus Christ that they inscribed on their leader's tomb a taunt: "Lofty Babylon lies prostrate. Luther destroyed its roof, Calvin its walls, but Socinus its foundations." The meaning was clear. The Catholic Church in particular and Christianity in general had found a formidable enemy of the Cross (Phi 3:18).

The Ugliness of Unitarianism

Those in England who decided to embrace Socinianism were known as Unitarians. As faithless followers of Christ were to be found in the Catholic Church (Jude 1:4), so such men were found in the Episcopal Church of England. Theophilus Lindseycleverly argued with Anglican Churchofficials that subscription to the doctrinal statement, theThirty-nine Articles, should not be mandatory for ministers. He piously pretended that fidelity to the Bible should be the only criteria of doctrinal purity. In this way, ministers who secretly embraced Socinian theology, could keep their livelihood while not affirming the deity of Christ—for the Scriptures were open to interpretation.

When Parliament was asked to consider the concerns of Lindsey, his petition was rejected. This forced Lindsey to withdraw from the Episcopal Church in 1774 to establish a Unitarian Church in London. However, in 1779 Parliament reversed itself. TheToleration Actswere amended so that all who denied the Trinity could remain in the established Church of England!

The Spiritual Madness of Modernism

English Unitarianism became the forerunner of Modernismin the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The Modernists emerged to deny the supernatural. They did not believe in biblical miracles, the virgin birth of Christ, His deity, or His substitutionary work at Calvary. The Modernists exalted reason to the point that they denied the Lord's resurrection and ascension into heaven. They had no hope of a Second Advent (Heb 9:28). The inerrancy(i.e., without error) of the Bible was rejected. The sad reality is that many, if not most, Protestant Churches today are influenced by Modernism. A lesson is learned. The evil that some men do, does not die with them—it lives on. But there will be a payday, someday, for men like Laelius and Faustus Socinus, and Theophilus Lindsey—who helped to destroy in many the Gospel of redeeming grace (2Co 5:10).

The Message of Two Methodists

"The best of all, God is with us"
—John Wesley

While the Enemy sowed tares in the Lord's vineyard (Mat 13:24-25), the Gospel continued to triumph—though not always in a predictable manner. The great orthodox doctrines of gracewere not valued by all within the Church. Arminian theology emerged to exert a mighty influence over nations, especially in England and America. Two great

champions of this theology were John and Charles Wesley. John Wesleywas the fifteenth child born to Samuel Wesleyand his remarkable wife Susanna Annesley. Charles, next to last, was the eighteenth to be born.

Reared in a godly home, John (b. 1703) had a sense of destiny fostered by a fire in 1709. Late one night, his father's parsonage at Epworthbegan to burn. John was literally snatched from the blazing inferno by a neighbor, who stood on the shoulders of another man to rescue the seven year old child. John's mother told him often that he was a "brand plucked" from the burning (Zec 3:2). He had been spared to serve the Savior.

For John, coming to know Christ in a personal way would not prove easy. Despite an excellent education and diligent involvement with the Holy Club, which he and Charles started at Oxford, John did not know anything about true saving faith. He who had mastered seven languages did not know the language of heaven. He who read the Scriptures daily and longed for practical holiness, knew nothing of positional sanctification. He who went to the American colony of Georgiawith Governor Oglethorpe to preach the Gospel (1735) to the heathen, had the heart of the same, by his own honest testimony!

In 1737, filled with spiritual desperation, John sought counsel from Peter Boehler, a Moravian. Unusual advice was given. John was to preach the Gospel until he received faith, and then he was to preach the Gospel because he had faith. So John continued to study and preach and dwell on the meaning of salvation. His search was not in vain (Joh 7:17). According to God's wonderful, matchless grace, on May 24, 1738, John Wesley, already ordained as a minister of the Anglican Church, was converted to Christ. His "heart was strangely warmed" as he listened to the reading of Martin Luther's commentaryon the book of Romans. John Wesley received faith. Now he would preach faith because he had it.

Wesley preached until his dying day in 1791. The Lord blessed with unusual physical strength, and the salvation of many souls. By the time of his death, Wesley had ridden more than 250,000 miles on horseback. He had preached more than 40,000 sermons to tens of thousands in the open air. He had published 5,000 works, and established a religious following numbering 79,000 in England and 40,000 in America. Though small in stature, five feet three inches tall and one hundred twenty-eight pounds, Wesley was strong in the Spirit of the Lord. He once said, "I look upon all the world as my parish." With his brilliant organizational skills, the "Father of the Methodists" gave the world the enduring message of redeeming love, as did his brother Charles.

Charles Wesley(1707-1788) used music to illuminate the divine message John preached so well. Of the 6,500 hymns that he composed, the Church still sings many of them—such asO for a Thousand Tongues:

"O for a thousand tongues to sing My great Redeemer's praise;
The glories of my God and King, The triumphs of His grace."

Charles turned down a worldly fortune to gain the greater glory and crown of eternal life. He is rightly remembered as the "Poet of the Evangelical Revival."

Selected Dates in the Life of John Wesley

1703 Birth of John Wesley(Charles 1707)
1709 Rescued from a fire at Epworth Rectory
1720 Admitted to Oxford
1727 Is assistant pastor of Wroote, Lincs
1729 Returns to Oxford, assumes leadership of the Holy Club
1735 His father, Samuel, dies. John and Charles leave for America
1737 An unsuccessful romance with Sophie Hopkey; leaves America
1738 John Wesley is converted on Wednesday, May 23, at sea
1739 Preaches in the open air for the first time
1740 Separates from the Moravians
1741 Preaches in South Wales for the first time
1742 Preaches in the north of England for the first time with Charles. An orphanage and Sunday School are established
1744 First Methodist Conference is held
1747 Makes the first of forty-two trips to preach in Ireland
1751 John is married to Mrs. Vazeille. Makes the first of twenty-two trips to preach in Scotland
1755 John separates from his wife
1768 A Methodist Chapel is opened in New York. Founding of Lady Huntington's College of Trevecca
1776 John Wesley publishesA Calm Address to Our American Colonies, advocating loyalty to England
1784 John Wesley formally ordains Thomas Coke and others for ministry in America, leads to a final separation with the Anglican Church, whose position is that "ordination is separation"
1791 On March 2, John Wesley dies (Charles, 1788)

John Wesley's Rule for Christian Living

"Do all the good you can, By all the means you can,
In all the ways you can, In all the places you can,
At all the times you can, To all the people you can,
As long as ever you can!"

The Very Interesting Edward Irving

While the Anglican Church struggled with its response to the Methodists, independent movements continued to multiple with dramatic distinctives among themselves. One of the more interesting groups was led by Edward Irving, a former Presbyterian minister.

Irving was born on August 4, 1792, in Annan, Scotland. Blessed with natural intelligence, Irving entered EdinburghUniversity when he was thirteen years old. He received a Master of Arts degree in April, 1809, at age sixteen, and was licensed as a Presbyterian minister at age twenty-three. After serving four years as assistant pastor in Glasgow, in 1822 and thirty years old, Irving became pastor of the Caledonian (Presbyterian) Chapel at Hatton Garden in London. His fame as a great orator spread throughout the entire region.

While enjoying a popular public ministry, Irving was aware that there was a revival of interest inpre-millennialism. This system of belief teaches that Jesus Christ will one day return to earth to set up a kingdom in Jerusalem, which will last a thousand years (a millennium). From a rebuilt Temple, Christ will sit on the ancient throne of David and rule the nations of the world.

His own interest in pre-millennialism led Irving to the discovery of Manuel de Lacunza's book,The Coming of Messiah in Glory and Majesty(1812), written under the pen name Juan Josafat Ben-Ezra. Lacunza believed that the coming Anti-Christwould not be a person but a corrupted Roman Catholic priesthood. By 1826 Irving had translated this Spanish work into English.

In addition to prophecy, Irving also came to believe, as early as 1828, that the spiritual gifts of the apostles, used in Acts, belonged to the Church of all ages. If the gifts of speaking in tongues, prophesying, and healing the sick were not being used, it was because of lack of faith. Combining these two major thoughts–millenarianismand miracles–Irving began to write in a prolific manner that the coming of Christ was imminent, and that the Lord's coming would be proceeded by an outpouring of the apostolic gifts.

Irving, who has been called "the Father of Modern Pentecostalism," was not surprised to learn that a charismatic revivalhad broken out in some small towns in western Scotland. A delegation from his congregation was sent to investigate. The glowing report of spiritual renewal that was brought back to the local church created great excitement. Throughout the autumn of 1830, prayer vigils began to be held in London to seek an outpouring of the Spirit–to be manifested by the ability to speak in tongues.

One such meeting was held in the home of J. B. Cardale, the leader of the delegation to Scotland. There was a measure of success as the first known case of speaking in tonguesin London was recorded. The person who spoke in tongues on April 20, 1831, was Cardale's wife. According to the interpretation given, this is what she said: "The Lord will speak to His people; the Lord hasteneth His Coming; the Lord cometh." Excitement of the imminent coming of Christ was enhanced. There is no record that the "spirit" by which Mrs. Cardale spoke and prophesied was ever tested (cp. 1Jo 4:1, 1Co 14:34).

In places where the teaching of Irving was embraced, speaking in tongues and prophesying became regular features. Tongues were spoken in the Regent Square Church until concerned Trustees of the Church filed a formal complaint against Irving with the Presbytery of London. A trial was deemed necessary. On April 26, 1832, the first ecclesiastical trial of Edward Irving began. Irving was found guilty of violating the order of services allowed by the Presbyterian structure, and was removed from his church.

On Sunday morning, May 6, 1832, the Trustees locked Irving and a large part of the congregation out of the building. Undaunted, Irving and his people began to meet in a building in Gray's Inn Road, thereby creating The Catholic Apostolic Church. After some time, twelve members of his "church" were formally recognized as "apostles." These were believed to be instruments of the Holy Spirit with all the authority of the Twelve ordained by Christ. The last of these latter day apostles died in 1901.

Although Irving himself never prophesied nor spoke in tongues, he was deposed from the ministry altogether by his hometown presbyteryof Annan. The reason was his teaching that when Christ became incarnate, He fully assumed sinful nature, so that His sinless life depended on the power of the Holy Spirit, not on an innately sinless human nature. This heretical teaching denying theimpeccability of Christ, was exposed during a second ecclesiastical trial, which took place March 13, 1833. On December 7, 1834, Edward Irving died and was buried in a crypt in Glasgow Cathedral. He was forty two-years old.

The Pentecostal Movementsaw no real further progress until 1901, in Kansas City, Kansas USA. Then and there the modern day charismatic movementhad its beginnings. In October of 1900, a former Methodist minister named Charles F. Parhamhad opened a Bible college in Topeka, Kansas. He believed that sanctification was a second work of grace, whereby all inbred sin was destroyed. Just before Christmas, Parham asked his students to study the Bible and learn what the evidence was for being baptized with the Holy Spirit. He would come back for their answers in three days. Upon his return, he was astonished to discover that all forty students had come to the same conclusion: speaking with other tongues was the indisputable proof that the blessing of Pentecost had come. This, of course, was in spite of the fact that Augustine, Luther, Calvin, Whitefield, Wesley, Spurgeon, and the host of others had not in 1900

years reached any such conclusion! The young people began actively to seek a “baptism” with the Holy Spirit manifested by speaking in tongues.

On January 1, 1901, the group found what it was seeking; something happened. Miss Agnes Ozmanbegan to speak in tongues, after Parham had laid hands on her. Soon, other students began to speak in tongues also, and Parham joined them. The modern Pentecostal revivalhad begun; and from this beginning has circled the globe! However, we must ask the question: Is it of God? If it were to be real, its practice would have to match the Scriptures. But a careful study of Acts 2, 8, 10, 11, 19, and 1 Corinthians 12-14 will find no parallel between that which prevails in the modern movement and the Word of Truth. Moreover, the Word points to a diminishing of emphasis of tongues throughout Acts, where it was a manifestation of the Spirit for that period only while the New TestamentScriptures were being compiled. Any who are involved with the movement are earnestly entreated:pleasecarefully study the Scriptures mentioned above. Seek Christ in humility, and the Spirit will teach the heart and mind through His Word.17

The Impeccability of Christ

1. In the year AD 451 the Council of Chalcedonmet and formulated the faith of the Church respecting the person of Christ, and declared Him “to be acknowledged in two natures, inconfusedly, unchangeable, indivisible, inseparably; the distinction of the natures being in no wise taken away by the union, but rather the property of each nature being preserved, and concurring in one Person and one Subsistence, not parted or divided into two persons.”

2. The great truth enunciated is that the eternal Son of God took upon Himself our humanity, and not that the man Jesus acquired divinity.

3. Fierce controversy has raged around the subject. Did the Lord’s deity render sin impossible, and consequently make His temptations unreal? The following argument is set forth: “If sin was impossible to Christ, then His temptation by Satan was a meaningless display, and His victory a mere delusion, and His coronation a shadow (Phi 2:6).”

4. One charitable answer to this theological problem is that, “We may say it was impossible Jesus would sin. We dare not say it was impossible He could not sin.”

5. While this response would please many, for others it does not due justice to either the Scriptures or to the person of Christ. It is a matter of record that once the concept is embraced that Jesus could sin, the temptation comes to teach and believe that He did sin.

6. Historically, the church has argued that Jesus was free both from hereditary depravity and from actual sin. This is shown:

a. by His never offering a sacrifice.

b. by His never praying for forgiveness. Jesus frequently went up to the Temple, but He never offered a sacrifice. He prayed “Father, forgive them” (Luk 23:34); but He never prayed “Father, forgive Me.”

c. by His teaching that all but He needed the new birth. Jesus said “Ye must be born again” (Joh 3:7); but the words indicated that He personally had no such need. Jesus not only yielded to God’s will when made known to Him, but He sought it: “I seek not mine own will, but the will of him that sent me” (Joh 5:30). It was not personal experience of sin, but perfect resistance to it that made Jesus fit to deliver us from sin.

d. by His challenging all to convict Him of a single sin. “Therefore also thatholything which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God” (Luk 1:35). “Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?” (Joh 8:46). “Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me” (Joh 14:30). There was not the slightest evil inclination upon which His temptations could lay hold.

7. But if in Christ there was no sin, or tendency to sin, how could He be tempted? The answer is that Jesus was tempted in the same way that Adam was tempted—which is susceptibility to all the forms of innocent desire. To these desires temptations may appeal. Sin consists not in these desires, but in the gratification of them out of God’s order, and contrary to God’s will (Jam 1:13-15). So Satan appealed to our Lord’s desire for food, for applause, and for power (Mat 4:1-11). All temptation must be addressed either to desire or fear; so Christ “was in all points tempted like as we are” (Heb 4:15). The first temptation, in the wilderness, was addressed to desire; the second, in the garden, was addressed to fear. Satan, after the first, “departed from him for a season” (Luk 4:13); but he returned in Gethsemane —“the prince of the world cometh: and he hath nothing in me” (Joh 14:30)—if possible to deter Jesus from His work, by rousing within Him vast and agonizing fear with which His holy soul was moved, yet He was “without sin” (Heb 4:15).

8. To press the point of the impeccability of Christ more closely, we ascribe to Christ not only natural integrity, but also moral integrity, or moral perfection, that is,sinlessness. This means not merely that Christ could avoid sinning, and did actually avoid it, but also that it was impossible for Him to sin because of the essential bond between the human and the divine natures.

9. The sinlessness of Christ is clearly testified to in the following passages:

Luke 1:35 “And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also thatholything which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.”

John 8:46 “Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?”

John 14:30 “Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, andhath nothing in me.”

2 Corinthians 5:21 “For he hath made him to be sin for us,who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”

Hebrews 4:15 “For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are,yet without sin.”

Hebrews 9:14 “How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himselfwithout spotto God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?”

1 Peter 2:22 “Whodid no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth.”

1 John 3:5 “And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in himis no sin.”

10. While Christ was made to be sin judicially, yet ethically He was free from both hereditary depravity and actual sin.

11. Part of the problem for those who do not embrace the impeccability of Christ is the tendency to believe that Jesus is but a man; yet at the same time they feel the constraint to ascribe to Him the value of God, or to claim divinity for Him in virtue of the immanence of God in Him, or of the indwelling Holy Spirit. Again, this does not do justice to the truth of the two natures in Christ: He is both divine and human in one Person forever. Amen!

Chapter 15

"This Is the Gospel!"

"I have put my soul, as a blank, into the hands of Jesus Christ my Redeemer, and desired him to write upon it what he pleases. I know it will be His own image."

–George Whitefield

Wesley and Whitefield

While John Wesleylabored to advance the cause of Christ in England, the Lord raised up George Whitefield(pronounced WIT-field) to fan the flames of revival fire in England and in America. In many ways Wesley and Whitefield were similar. Both were graduates of Oxford. Both had belonged to the Holy Club. Both were ministers in the Anglican Church. Both engaged in open air preaching despite the opposition of the Anglican clergy. Both went into the by-ways to compel men to be saved (Luk 14:23). Both suffered bodily attacks for the cause of Christ. Once Whitefield was stoned until nearly dead; Wesley had rotten fruit thrown upon him. Both were dynamic preachers. Both had a zeal for the salvation of souls. Whitefield, in particular, was very intense and impassioned in his preaching. One observer wrote, "I could hardly bear such unreserved use of tears." Whitefield defended the tears by saying, "You blame me for weeping, but how can I help it when you will not weep for yourselves, though your immortal souls are on the verge of destruction?"

Despite the similarities, Wesleyand Whitefield were radically different in theology. Wesley was anArminian, while Whitefield embraced PuritanCalvinism, considered by most the orthodox faith of the Reformation up until that time. In March, 1739, Wesley decided to attack the Calvinistic position of grace. He first preached and then published a sermon entitled "Free Grace." Wesley justified his actions as being the will of God on the basis of having cast lots (cp. Act 1:26; Pro 16:33), a practice which he later renounced. In December 1740, George Whitefield graciously but firmly responded to John Wesley in a thirty-one page pamphlet.[18]

While the theological debatecontinued, so did the parallel work of winning souls to Christ. Wesley's "United Societies" brought many people into the kingdom of heaven, as did Whitefield's "Calvinistic Methodist" societies. By 1755 the two brothers in Christ had reached "an agreement to differ."

Within his lifetime (1714-1770), Whitefieldpreached an estimated 18,000 times, and addressed as many as 10,000,000 people face to face. His American friend, Benjamin Franklin, once estimated that Whitefield, without any artificial means of amplification, was heard by more than 30,000 people in a single gathering. It was a privileged generation that heard George Whitefield preach the Gospel of redeeming grace. He reminded people of the life and death of Jesus Christ. "Behold, what man could not do, Jesus Christ, the Son of His Father's love, undertakes to do for him." Thus, "The Lord Jesus Christ is our righteousness...This, this is Gospel, this is the only way of finding acceptance with God!"

The Danger of Deism

One personal friend of George Whitefield, who did not accept the Gospel, was Benjamin Franklin. Like many men of his day, Franklin was a deist.Deism(Latindeus, god) emerged from the writings of Lord Herbert Cherburyas an important rationalistic movement in England, before being embraced in the American colonies as well. Deismargued for a belief in one God, as divine creator of the universe. However, "God" was detached from the world and made no revelations to it. Neither His personal presence nor His revelations were needed, because God had so ordained the universe that it operated according to established natural laws.

Deism argued that, like a well organized time clock, the universe is a mechanism that functions on its own. God had "wound it up" and left it to run by itself. Therefore, logically, miracles are to be denied and theological concepts, like the atoning work of Christ and the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit, are to be rejected. The Bibleis not unique and the supernatural is silly superstition. All that is needed is for thelumen naturae, the light of nature, to function. The light of nature is reason. Man must rely solely upon his own reason!

Lord Herbert of Cherbury(1583-1648), "the father of Deism," found other influential men to advance the basic tenets of Deism. One was Matthew Tindal, author ofChristianity as Old as the Creation; or the Gospel a Republication of the Religion of Nature(1730). This work has often been called "the Deist's Bible." The word soon spread; a receptive

audience was found in France, Germany, the Netherlands, and America.

With Deism, the hearts of people who wanted to reject the Lord and His anointed (Psa 2:1-4), could still maintain the semblance of being religious—for Deism taught its own version of ethical behavior. The morality of Deism is one that is practical, not spiritual. For example, Benjamin Franklinsaid that "Honesty is the best policy." By this Franklin meant that people should be honest because it is practical—and itpaysto be honest. This type of thinking is far different from the concept that people should be honest because the Creator has instructed His creation to live in an honest manner (Exo 20:1-17; Rom 12:17; 1Ti 2:2; Heb 13:18).

The Rise of the Age of Reason

In trying to determine the causes for the rise of rationalism, the following factors should be considered.

1.The emphasis on emotionalismby many mystical movements. An imbalance was created when this happened. A doctrinal basis of faith and action was neglected. One result was the failure of the Church to meet the intellectual needs of many thinking people in society with legitimate questions (cp. Isa 1:18). Theology was no longer considered to be the "Queen of Sciences."

2.Theology began to be divorced from philosophyin the universities of Europe. During the Middle Ages philosophy and theology had been united in a system known as Scholasticism. A dramatic distinction between the two allowed the development of natural reason unguided by divine illumination.

3.Scientific discoveries,wrongly interpreted, seemed to support the mechanical view of the universe embraced by Deism. When Copernicus(1473-1543) revealed that the earth revolved around the sun, the true center of the galaxy, the faith of multitudes was undermined. Christians had been taught for centuries that the earth (and therefore man) was the center of the universe. If the Church could be wrong on this important point, perhaps it was wrong on other things as well. The Church would have been wiser to teach that God is the center of the universe (Act 17:28).

Esteem for Deism was enhanced when Galileo(1546-1642) turned his telescope on the heavens and supported the view of Copernicusregarding the solar system. Then, Descartes(1596-1650) and Isaac Newton(1642-1727) advanced the theory of a universe governed by natural law. Francis Bacon(1561-1626) developed the so called "scientific method"—demanding facts not faith, observation and repetition, not subjective religion.

The irony in the discovery of many of the major scientific facts is that they came because of historic Christian beliefs. Isaac Newtonwas a devout Christian. He began his scientific investigations because he believed that the God of the Universe was logical and could be known. What the deists dared to do was to take Christian discoveries of truth and reinterpret them so that the creature, not the Creator, was glorified. When carnal knowledge dismissed God, and then united itself to what the senses could determine and discern, the result was a rationalistic, naturalistic, materialistic understanding of life. Divine revelation was made subordinate to human reason (cp. Col 2:8).

4.The emergence of a new social philosophy.According to John Locke(1632-1704), just as there are natural laws to govern the universe, so there are certain natural rights that should guide society. Voltaire(1694-1778) and Rousseau(1712-1778) agreed with the basic pre-suppositional thinking of Locke. They began to write, sometimes seriously but more often with wit and satire, in order to make the thoughts of Locke palatable to the general public. With multitudes of others, Thomas Jeffersonread their writings and was impressed. When the opportunity came, Jefferson incorporated the social theories of Locke into many of his own writings, including the USA'sDeclaration of Independence(1776). It says in part, "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness."

Since the "rights" of man could be discovered and applied to reconstruct society, men (not the Bible) could also construct what is proper conduct for people. In order for this to happen, the "rubbish" of the past had to be disregarded. The Church in particular had to be challenged, changed, or if necessary destroyed, if society was to progress. Such was the thinking of the Deists. In this way, the eighteenth century Age of Reasoncame to challenge the seventeenth century Age of Orthodoxy. A great spiritual battle took place for the souls of men and the fate of nations.

Three Parties of Anglicans(Mid-1700s - Mid-1800s)

In the midst of the conflict (Eph 6:12), the Church of Jesus Christ was not united. The assembly of the saints was not prepared for the tidal wave of spiritual destruction that swept over it in the form of Deism. The fragmentationof the Christian community is reflected in part by the threefold division discovered in the Anglican Church(cp. 1Co 1:10-13).

1. One part of this Church wanted to maintain the principles and practices which had been produced by the Reformation. There was a genuine love for and appreciation of the Calvinistic doctrines of sovereign grace. Those who embraced these beliefs wanted to remain in the Anglican Church and form the "Low Church"orEvangelicalparty.

2. When it appeared that the influence of the Evangelical partywas gaining too much ground, a number of church leaders became concerned. It was felt that a way had to be found to preserve a more traditional religious heritage (stemming from the rituals of Catholicism), and so the"High Church"party emerged.

However, things did not go according to plan. Instead of remaining a natural bridge between the Protestants and the Catholics, the High Church partywithin the Anglican structure found many members wanting to return to Catholicism. People were being carried away by the rhetoric of such men as John Keble, who preached a memorable sermon in Oxford called "The National Apostasy." A new movement, the Oxford Movement, was born, and grew on the strength of religious tracts.

Initially, the tracts were to be written to justify the doctrines and practices of the High Church party, while opposing the changes desired by the Low Church party. But the result was that the tracts, written mainly by John Henry Newman, began to sound more Catholic in tone. Finally, the bishop of Oxford ordered their distribution to be stopped. For many it was too late. On October 9, 1845, John Henry Newmanformally joined the Catholic Church. His example led thousands of others back to the Catholic fold. And even those who did not return to Rome, but remained Anglican, did so with strong Catholic overtones in both doctrine and practice.

3. In addition to the zeal of the Low Church party, and the confusion caused by the High Church partyas to the true nature and beliefs of the Anglican Church, there emerged also theBroad Churchparty. This party believed that the Anglican Church should be a State Church. For this to happen, there must be a broad view taken so that no creed would be held with binding force. Everyone should be able to believe as they pleased.

Attack on "Saving Faith"

In this atmosphere, John Glasbegan to redefine the orthodox idea about saving faith. He was a minister of the Church of Scotlandnear Dundee in the 1720s, and a Calvinist. But he became uneasy about requiring ministers to accept documents such asThe Westminster Confession. He believed it was sufficient for a man to say that he "believed" the Scriptures, but not to submit to the "words of men." And he began to redefine "saving faith" in terms of the intellect only: to "believe" with the mind.[19]For these teachings, he was deposed by the Church of Scotlandin 1733. He then formed an Independent church of his own.

His son-in-law was Robert Sandeman, who much more aggressively promoted these new views. He reacted to Wesley and Whitefield's emphasis on repentance, will, and the corresponding emotions. He disdained Isaac Watts, Philip Doddridge, Thomas Boston, and Ralph Erskine—notable Puritansof the time. He regarded John Wesleyas "the most dangerous man that had ever appeared in the Church!" By the 1780s in both Scotland and England, there were many churches teaching this view, which had come to be calledSandemanianism. Archibald Maclean, a former member of Glas' church, had spread it among the Baptist churches in Wales also.

Sandemanianismcaused great trouble in the regions where it was taught, but was adequately dealt with at the time by Daniel Rowland, William Williams, Andrew Fuller, and Thomas Scot. However, it is important today for its significant influence on a very large part of the evangelical Church, because, as many have come to favor Arminianismover Calvinism, so they have also embraced Sandemanianism—although often unaware of its deviation from historical orthodoxy.

Exactly why have many called Sandemanianisma heresy?—because it fundamentally redefines the nature of saving faith! In Sandeman's own words: "the whole benefit of this event [Christ's death and resurrection] is conveyed to men only by the Apostolic report concerning it...Everyone who understands this report to be true, or is persuaded that the event actually happened...is justified." Principle Macleod responded that it was "in a way, a return to the Roman Catholic teaching, which is that all you have to do is to believe and accept the teaching of the Church. You accept that with your mind, and that is all that is necessary." Andrew Fuller said of Sandeman: "they will not have even a 'hearty persuasion,' but emphasize only a notional belief."

The historical view of "saving faith," on the other hand, was "repent [from sin] and believe" (Mar 1:15)—all as an unmerited gift of God by grace, all bound up in great love and great humility. Sandeman equated grief over and repentance from sin as a "work" not to be added to "naked" belief of the intellect, and he frowned on all emotions. He used Romans 4:5 and John 5:1 as proof texts, but chose to redefine "heart" in Romans 10:9-10 as "mind only," whereas in fact the Scripture uses "heart" to refer to the center of personality—the mind, will, and emotions—as in Acts 8:37. And the Scriptures repeatedly point to a submitting of man's will to God, as in John 5:38-40, Matthew 6:10 and 7:21, 1 Peter 4:2, and 1 John 2:17. Finally, William Williams summarized it well: "Love is the greatest thing in religion, and if that is forgotten, nothing can take place."[20]

The Plymouth Brethren

Another group to emerge during this time of reaction against the sterility in the Anglican ChurchwasThe Brethren. The Brethrenenjoyed a natural leader in the person of John Nelson Darby, who had been a minister near Plymouth, England.

John Darby was born on November 18, 1800, in London England. He entered Trinity College (Dublin, Ireland) in 1815 when he was fourteen. Four years later Darby was graduated with a law degree. Turning to religion, Darby became a deacon in the Anglican church (1825). In 1826 he was ordained a priest and served in that capacity in County Wicklow,

located south of Dublin. Concerned with the formality of the official services he was called upon to conduct, Darby began to hold informal home worship services. Out of these gatherings came the Brethren movement. Faith in Christ and love to the brethren was declared to be the only holy bond of spiritual union.

While that claim was made, there were other things which certainly helped to solidify the new movement. The Brethrencame to believe that since every believer is a priest before God, there should be no ordained ministers. All creeds were to be opposed. Since the Holy Spirit guides all believers, and unites them in a common faith, worship should be conducted according to the apostolic example. Finally, formal religious structures and denominations must be rejected. The Brethren teachings found fertile soil in the souls of many. In Ireland and western England organized assemblies were established. Brethren churches could be found in Switzerland, France, Germany, Canada, and the United States.

As Brethren churches grew, so did their doctrinal distinctives. Of particular interest were the prophetic teachings. Like Edward Irving, John Darby introduced the Christian community to concepts that had never before been considered by the Church in eighteen hundred years of existence. His views cannot be found in any of the historic creeds of Christendom.

Darby's new thoughts began to be taught after he had a terrible accident in 1827. A horse threw him against a door post. During a long convalescence, Darby enjoyed plenty of time to meditate upon the Bible. The result was that he formulated new views in the area ofeschatology(end-time events). Darby came to believe that the "rapture" of the Church (taken from 1Th 4:16) was to be a separate phase of the Second Coming of the Lord, preceding Christ's actual return. In fact, it was to be another coming of Christ.

In opposition to this, one should consider the Scriptural statements: Jesus Christ returns the second time forallwho believe (Heb 9:28), and Christians will be caught up to meet (greet) the Lord in the air. Such a greeting of the coming Christ is only proper. The word for "meet" isapantesisand means a friendly encounter. This word is used in Matthew 25:1:6 and Acts 28:14-16. In both places the concept is that people went out to "meet" someone in order to escort that person to the very place they were coming to. Christians will one day rise to meet the coming King of kings as He returns the second time for all who believe.

Darby's view of a "rapture" of the Church has been integrated with thepre-millennialinterpretation of the end-times: Christ returns to establish a literal earthly kingdom, where He rules for a literal thousand years. This is an alternative interpretation to the one second coming in judgment embodied in the two historic views: 1)post-millenialwhere Christ establishes and rules the kingdoms of the earth through His presence in the hearts of leaders who are Christians, then He returns in judgment at the end, and 2)amillennial, or better, realized or fulfilled millenial according to promise: Christ's kingdom is in the hearts of men, and He returns in judgment at the end.

For Darby, the solution to the dilemma between a new system of belief and the historic interpretations of the Scriptures was very simple. The collective teaching of the Church had been wrong on its view of the second coming of Christ for almost two thousand years! He alone had the answer. The truth, according to Darby, is that when the Lord is greeted by His Bride, He will turn around in mid-air and go back to heaven (the "rapture"). Then later, the Lord will come again to the earth (after what has come to be called a seven year tribulation period). What John Nelson Darbybegan to teach was a third coming of Christ interposed between the other two: First Advent, Rapture, then (several years later) the Second Advent!

As this notion was expounded upon, more and more prophetic details were added to his overall view. For many orthodox Christians, the new teachings of John Darby were a movement away from the simplicity of the established biblical boundaries: that Jesus Christ will one day return in like manner as He went away (Act 1:11).

Preaching the Gospel to Every Creature

While the Protestant Church struggled for personal purity and doctrinal faithfulness in Europe, efforts to spread "faith" around the globe were not neglected by either the Protestant or the Catholic communities. The Catholic Church found men of inspiration to carry their faith to new cultures, reflected in the dedication of Francis Xavier(1506-1552). Xavier ministered in Goa, India(1542-1549) before going to Japan, where his work gained many converts for Catholicism. In 1552, while seeking entrance into mainland China, Xavier died.

More converts flowed into the Catholic Church through Spanish missionaries working in the Philippines, South and Central America, and Mexico. In Canada, French speaking Jesuit priests established a Catholic Church in the province of Quebec before moving into the region of the Great Lakes. From there, missionswere established along the Mississippi River all the way down to Louisiana. Then, spreading East and West, the Catholic Church founded missions in Florida, and along the coastline of California.

Undergirding the missionary activity of the Catholic Church was a fundamental desire to keep as much of Christendom as possible under the authority of the bishop of Rome, and thus under a centralized papal control. To that end, new missionary efforts took place in Ceylon, Japan, India, China, Korea, Cuba, Africa, Mongolia, Australia, the islands of the Pacific, and in North America.

The Protestants also went forth into all the world, and with the Gospel. Led by individuals such as the German Pietist August Francke(1663-1727), those who had a heart for the souls of men went forth into the fields that are white unto harvest (Joh 4:35). Christian Schwartzlabored for Christ in India from 1750 until his death in 1798. The Baptists found a missionary champion with world vision in William Carey(1761-1834). Ministering for twenty years in India, Carey and his family faced years of poverty. Carey was challenged by frequent bouts of malaria and dysentery, the death of three children, and mental illness in loved ones.

Through all the sorrows and sufferings, William Carey never wavered. His passion for souls led to the conception of an idea of holding a world missionary conference. Carey wanted the meeting to be held at the Cape of Good Hope in 1810. Unfortunately, the proposal was considered ridiculous by the leading religious figures of his day. This idea was 100 years ahead of its time. But the seed was planted, and in 1910 it bore fruit–a World Missionary Conference was held in Edinburgh, Scotland.

Often referred to as "The Father of Modern Missions," William Careyinspired thousands of men and women to surrender all, in order to win others to Christ by having faith in God. In one of his sermons he cried, "Expect great things! Attempt great things!" Indeed, William Carey expected great things from God, and he attempted great things for God. One of his greatest achievements was the translation of the Bible into some twenty-six languages of India. Another achievement that can be directly attributed to his efforts was the founding of the Baptist Missionary Societyat Kettering, England (1792).

The full impact of the life of William Carey and the wonderful things he did can only be revealed in eternity. When his journey on earth was drawing to an end, Carey felt he had done so little for the cause of Christ. Inscribed on the stone slab of his tomb is this simple epitaph: "A wretched, poor, and helpless worm; on Thy kind arms I fall."The Lord is always pleased with such faith and humility (Heb 10:38; 11:1; Luk 7:9; Mat 9:29).

The Work Continues

William Careywas followed in India by the Anglican Henry Martynand Alexander Dufffrom the Church of Scotland. Elsewhere, Samuel Marsden(1764-1838) labored for more than forty years in a pioneer work in Australia, New Zealand, and the islands in the Pacific. The London Missionary Societysent Robert Morrison(1782-1834) to open the doors in China. Robert and Mary Moffat(1795-1883; 1795-1871) and David Livingstone(1813-1873) ministered to souls in darkest Africa, and caused others to want to do the same in life and in death. When Peter Cameron Scott, founder of the Africa Inland Mission, read the inscription on Livingstone's tomb in Westminster Abbey, he was inspired to return to the work. On the tomb were the words of Jesus, "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring" (Joh 10:16).

Morrison labored to produce a Chinese dictionary and translation of the Scriptures. The work of later missionaries was made much easier because of his successes. Moffat translated the Bible into the major tribal languages of the natives of South Africa, while Livingstone opened up Central Africa. In 1865 James Hudson Taylor(1832-1905) founded the China Inland Missionto promote faith missionsin a co-operative effort among the different denominations. He refused to make personal needs known, relying instead on God alone to meet all his needs. Then there was Adoniram Judson(1788-1850),[21]whose self-sacrifice in taking the Gospel to Burma is noteworthy in all of Christendom. Enduring great hardship, he made a Burmese dictionary and translated the Bible, while serving the people. The Burmese emperor said of him: "We care nothing for his Bible, nothing for his Christ; but his scars are irresistible!"

Joining England and Scotland in sending out missionaries during the nineteenth century were the BaselEvangelical Missionary Society, and the Danish Missionary Society(founded, 1821). In 1824, both the Berlin Missionary Societyand the Paris Missionary Societywere established to proclaim the glorious Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Chapter 16

Christianity Comes To the New World

Christ in the Colonies

On May 4, 1493, a remarkable event took place. Alexander VI(pope, 1492-1503) decided to settle a political dispute between two Catholic nations: Spain and Portugal. The issue concerned territorial possessions. When Columbus returned from his first voyage across the ocean, Portugalbelieved its own commercial ambitions would be limited to only Africa and the Far East. To prevent open conflict between two Catholic monarchies, guided by Solomon-like wisdom, Alexander issued apapal bull(official binding proclamation of the pope), which was to put an end to the area of concerns. Spheres of domination were agreed upon when a Demarcation Linewas drawn. This line ran due north and south (about 300 miles) west of the Azores and Cape Verde Islands. All new lands lying east of this Demarcation Line were to be considered the possession of Portugal; all those to the west would belong to Spain. Because the Portuguese were not happy with this decision, in 1494 theTreaty of Tordesillaswas signed with a new line of demarcation, sanctioned by Julius IIin 1506 (pope, 1503-1513). The new line was about 1,110 miles west of the Cape Verde Islands. In this way Brazil became a Portuguese possession.

With renewed vigor these strongly Catholic nations set out to manifest their presence in new domains. They met with tremendous success. Prior to the founding of any other European colonies, the Spaniards established settlements in Mexico, the West Indies, Central America, and South America. Before the end of the century, two major universities were flourishing. The University of Mexico was founded in 1551 and the University of Lima in 1557. At Santo Domingo, in 1512, a bishopric was established, with another one in Cuba in 1522.

In 1565 the Spaniards founded St. Augustine, Florida, USA, after first driving out some French Protestants who had come there for religious freedom. The admiral of the French fleet, De Coligny, and 141 others were massacred. On each person's body, the Spanish commander attached a placard explaining why they were hung: "Not as Frenchmen but as heretics."

The Protestant Presence

While the Catholic Church solidified its presence in the New World, the Protestant Church also came to North America. In 1607 English settlers brought with them the traditions of the Episcopal (Anglican) Church. Some colonies during the colonial period recognized the Episcopal Church officially as the Established or State Church. The Anglican Churchwas established in South Carolina in 1706, Georgia in 1758, and North Carolina in 1765.

Joining the Protestant community in America were the Non-conformists. King James I of England had once promised to "harry them out of the land." Fleeing political persecution and seeking a place to worship freely, a small band of "Pilgrims" sailed from Plymouth in England on the Mayflower. They believed they were traveling towards a new Promised Land.

Drifting off course, the Mayflowerlanded along the desolate coast of Cape Cod, Massachusetts, November 11, 1620. Small search parties were sent out to explore the area. Finally, December 21, 1620, the Pilgrimsstepped on shore. They put their foot on a solid rock, and they prayed. Heads were bowed as hearts were lifted in gratitude to God for the safe journey. Divine guidance was asked for the days to come. The Pilgrimsrealized that they had to face a harsh future. Still, they would stay. And they would survive the starving winter without losing faith. On Sunday, January 21, 1621, led by William Brewster, the Pilgrims conducted their first public worship in a crude structure at New Plymouth. But it would not be the last public service, for in the years to come many more people would arrive in the New World. Up and down the eastern coastline of North America, permanent settlements would be founded.

In 1628 English Puritansestablished the Massachusetts Bay Colonyat Salem, Massachusetts. By 1640 almost 20,000 colonists were living in the vicinity. In the area of religion, most of them wanted to maintain the traditions of the Church of England. However, the Bay colonists were willing to accept the guidance and influence of the Plymouth colonists as to Church governmentin the New World. As a result, the congregational form of self-government was adopted. Within ten years, 33 assemblies existed in Massachusetts alone.

In other communities, different churches and forms of ecclesiastical government would be preferred:

Jamestown, VA;

Episcopal	Salem and Boston, MA; Charleston, SC; Savannah, GA
Congregational	Plymouth, MA
Catholic	Baltimore and St. Mary, MD; St. Augustine, FL
Dutch Reformed	Albany and New Amsterdam, NY; Camden, NJ
Baptist	Providence, RI
Quaker	Philadelphia, PA
Moravian	Bethlehem, PA
Mennonite	Lancaster and Germantown, PA

Desiring Christ for their children, the colonists established schools of higher education, based soundly on the Bible. In 1636 the foundation was laid for Harvard Collegeat Cambridge, Massachusetts, named after a wealthy Christian benefactor. In 1701, a college was started in Connecticut named Yale, also in honor of a generous donor. The Lord used the business prosperity He had granted to some to benefit all of society.

The Dutch Reformed Church

The English flow of settlers to the New World encouraged other nationalities to come. In 1623 the Dutch were able to establish two trading posts in strategic locations. One was placed on the Upper River in Albany, New York. The other trading post was set up near Camden, on the Delaware River in New Jersey. Peter Minuit(1580-1638) became the first governor of the New Netherlands. In 1664, when Peter Stuyvesant(1592-1672) was governor, the colony was captured by the English and renamed New York.

Despite the territorial and political maneuvering between the British and the Dutch, by 1628 the First Dutch Reformed Churchwas able to be established under the pastoral leadership of Rev. John Michaelius. It is no small measure of God's great mercy that just four years after the Synod of Dortwas held, the doctrines of sovereign grace were being proclaimed in America.

When John Van Mekelenburgarrived in the New Netherlands, his passion for souls led him to learn the language of the Mohawks. He wanted to preach the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ to the Native Americans. Mekelenburg is considered to be the first Protestant missionary to the Indians.

Birth of the Baptists

"It is the will and command of God that…consciences and worship be granted to all men in all nations and countries."
–Roger Williams

The Congregational Churchwas the Established or State Church in the Massachusetts Bay Colony. But a young English minister arrived in Boston in 1631 who thought this was a mistake. Roger Williams(c. 1603-1683) believed in the separation of Church and State. Though ordained by the Church of England(1629), Williams had been influenced by the thinking of the Puritanson this matter. Others also should be convinced of the wisdom of separating the Church and State. Roger Williams would tell his concerns to the congregation in America.

When Williams finally voiced his views from the pulpit as minister of the Congregational Churchin Salem (1634), the opposition was immediate. Called before the General Court (1635), Williams was told to leave the colony within six weeks. After discovering that his health was poor, permission was granted to leave in the spring. But he must not preach on the separation of Church and State! Nor was he to preach against infant baptism, or for baptism of believers by immersion. He was to be silent on those issues that caused controversy. But Roger Williamswas determined to preach his convictions. After resigning as minister of the Salem Church, he began to hold services in his house for those agreed with his position. Angered by his persistency, the General Court ordered Williams to leave the Bay Colony immediately, leaving behind his wife and two children, into the freezing snow-covered forest. He must go; he was too dangerous a man.

For fourteen weeks Roger Williamsmanaged to survive during the dead of winter. In the providence of the Lord, the Narragansett Indiansfound him and took him in. Williams was no stranger to this Indian tribe. Several years before, while a young pastor of the Pilgrim Church at Plymouth, Williams had taken the time to learn the language of the Narragansett. He had also opposed the taking of land from any native Indian population without fair payment. Knowing him to be a good man and champion for their causes, the Indians helped Roger Williams survive.

The following summer (June, 1636), Williams was allowed to purchase from the Indians a section of ground at the mouth of the Mohassuck River. When people from Salem discovered this, they journeyed to be with their beloved but disgraced minister. The town of Providence was founded. Going to England, Roger Williams was able to secure a charter for the Providence Plantation, thereby establishing a new colony called Rhode Island(1643). The charter was

reaffirmed in 1651.

Williams served as president of the colony (1654-1657). Meanwhile, the Bay Colony tried to destroy the seeds of discussion that Roger Williams had sown. Of particular concern was the teaching that believer's should be baptised as adults, following an open confession of an inward work of grace. In 1644 a law was passed that associated his ideas, in a negative way, with the Anabaptist movement of Europe. "For as much as experience has plentifully and often proved that since the first arising of the Ana-Baptists, about a hundred years since, they have been incendiaries of commonwealth and the infectors of persons in main matters, and the troublers of churches in all places where they have been, and that they who have held the baptizing of infants unlawful have usually held other errors or heresies together therewith..." Henceforth, there were to be no more re-baptisms (adult immersions upon public profession of faith)!

While laws were being passed in the Bay Colony to try to reverse the teaching of Roger Williams, in Providence the church was being firmly established. Mr. Holliman, a former member of the Salem congregation, accepted the teaching of professing believer's baptismby immersion as the proper time and mode, and administered this ritual by re-baptizing Roger Williams. Williams in turn re-baptized Holliman and ten others. The first Baptist Churchin America became a reality.

Other Baptist distinctives would also be freely taught and practiced in Rhode Island. These included the separation between Church and State, the elimination of Church membership as a requirement for voting, and allowing liberty of conscience in worship. Rhode Island would host the first Jewish synagogue, and allow one of the first Quaker meeting houses to be established.

As word spread of the work in Province, Rhode Island, Baptist churches appeared within the various colonies and flourished. By 1707 the first Baptist Association in America could be formed as representatives from five Baptist churches met in Philadelphia. By 1742, a Confession of Faith was adopted with special emphasis being placed on the Calvinistic doctrines of sovereign grace. The Baptist Churchin America had grown up spiritually. It now had capable leadership, a distinct organizational structure, definite principles to practice, and a creed to confess. When he died on March 15, 1683, Roger Williamsknew that he had left a great legacy to an emerging new nation. He had bestowed two precious principles to posterity: in America there would be the separation of Church and State, and there would be freedom of worship.

Catholicism in the Colonies

In 1632, King Charles I of England gave two gifts to George Calvert, a recent convert to Catholicism. The first was a title, Lord Baltimore. The second gift to George Calvert and his descendants was the territory around Chesapeake Bay. In gratitude for his generosity, Lord Baltimore named the territory "Maryland" after Mary, the king's wife.

Soon after receiving his gifts, George Calvertdied. He was succeeded by his son Cecil Calvert. Assuming the title left by his father, this second Lord Baltimore initiated the settlement of the territory his family had received. He named the first settlement St. Mary in honor of the mother of Christ.

In the process of settling the colony, Lord Baltimore faced a practical problem. Not many Catholics in England wanted to make the difficult journey to Maryland. Protestants were willing to face the difficulties, provided there would be freedom of religion. As a matter of political expediency, if not personal conviction, Lord Baltimoreagreed to allow freedom of religion. The only exception would be for those who denied the Trinity. If such a person were found in the colony, they would face death and the forfeiture of their property.

In 1649, at the request of Lord Baltimore, the Maryland Assembly passed theAct of Toleration. The document was destined to become important in the development of religious life in the New World. When the Baltimore family lost control of their colony, the territory returned to the control of the Crown in 1692. The Church of Englandwas officially declared to be its established religion. Nevertheless, freedom of religion would continue to be honored. As tolerance had been shown to the Protestants, so tolerance would be shown to the Catholic community.

The Courage of the Quakers

Ten years after George Fox began his ministry in England, Quaker missionaries desired to come to America. The first two Quakers were women, Mary Fisherand Ann Austin. News of their pending arrival in Boston in 1656 preceded them. Time was provided for the Puritan clergy of the city to rally opposition. The women were arrested as they got off the boat and taken to prison for five weeks, where they shared indignities and depredations. At the end of this ordeal the two ladies were put on another boat heading out to sea.

But it was all to no avail. Their ship was not far out of sight when another vessel arrived in Boston harbor with eight other Quakers. There was no stopping their presence, no matter how the colonies tried. Laws were passed in 1661 by the Massachusetts colony preventing Quakersfrom entering. Any Quaker that returned after being banished faced the penalty of death. Still, the Quakers continued to come to America until finally, their quiet, courageous spirit found a resting place in 1681—when Pennsylvania was granted to William Penn. Peace and safety came to those who wanted

all men to be Friends.

Religious Diversity

As William Pennwelcomed Quakersto Pennsylvania, so he welcomed all other religious groups as well–Lutherans, Moravians, and Mennonitesfound a haven of rest in “The Keystone State.” The first German Reformed Churchwas established in 1710 at Germantown, ten miles north of Philadelphia. Germantown itself had been settled in 1683 when thirteen German Mennonite families came to America. Later, a large number of Swiss Mennonitessettled in Lancaster County. When the Swiss Reformed settlers arrived in the area, they were welcomed, as were the German Lutherans.

Then there were the German Baptists, who first appeared in 1719. Partly in humor, the other colonists gave them the name Dunkers, which comes from the German wordtunken, meaning “to dip.” The Dunkers were able to organize a church in 1723. In many ways the Dunkers were like the Quakersand the Mennonites. They dressed in a simple manner and practiced a congregational form of Church government. Like the Mennonites they practiced a threefold immersion in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. One of the most significant Dunkers of the colonial period was Christopher Sower, the first German printer in America. TheSower Bible, published in 1743, was the first Bible printed in America in a European language other than English.

When the Moraviansarrived in 1740, they settled on 5,000 acres along the Delaware River. They wanted to work with the Indians and the poorer German settlers scattered in Pennsylvania. In 1741 Count Zinzendorf visited the colony. On Christmas Eve he named the Moravian settlement Bethlehem (lit. “house of bread”), in token of his “fervent desire and ardent hope that here the true bread of life might be broken for all who hungered.”

The man who enabled Presbyterianism to be firmly established in America was Francis Makemie. In 1683 he came to eastern Maryland to preach in the Scotch Irish communities there, before moving on into Virginia and the Carolinas. In 1710 David Evansarose to preach among the Welsh settlers in Virginia. Because the Spirit of the living God was upon his life, he was used to bring many souls to Christ.

One important event for the Presbyterians in America was the passing of theAdoption Actby the Synod of 1729. This required all Presbyterian ministers in the New World to embrace without reservations theWestminster Confession. Presbyterian beliefs and practices were to influence the development of the country in many important ways.

Because the Methodist movement did not start in earnest in England until 1739, Methodism was a little slow in showing itself in America. The Methodists arrived first in the person of Philip Emburyin 1766. Then came Robert Strawbridgewho ministered in Maryland. In 1771 John Wesleymade the fortunate decision to send Francis Ashbury(1745-1816) over from England to advance the cause of Christ. Before his death, Ashbury was able to see the Methodist Churchin America grow from 15,000 in 1771 to over 200,000. He traveled about 4,000 miles a year on horseback, and preached over 20,000 sermons in his lifetime. Revival fires followed Ashbury and other Methodist ministers.

And so it was that, in a wonderful way, America proved that people of different persuasions could live, work, and worship in the same country, without plunging society into religious civil wars. The established State churches gradually gave way to true religious freedom. At one time, these State churches had included the following:

Anglican	Georgia, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Maryland, New York City and the surrounding counties.
Congregational	Massachusetts, Maine, Connecticut, and New Hampshire.
No state church	New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Rhode Island.

Reasons America Does Not Have a State Church

The absence of an official state church in America may be due to several considerations:

The wide variety of emigrationto the colonies after 1690. There were Huguenots and Quakers. There were 200,000 Germans of Lutheran and Reformed persuasion. There were Pietists, and Presbyterians of Scotch-Irish descent from Northern Ireland. By 1760 there were more than 2,500,000 people in the colonies, a third of which were born outside the American colonies. This great diversity discouraged the establishment of an official state church over all the colonies.

The effect of the proprietary coloniesalso hindered the establishing of a State Church. The desire to make a colony successful demanded co-operation of people from all walks of life and religious persuasions.

The great revivalsin the colonies discouraged the preferring of one state church over another. Denominational lines are always transcended when the love of God and the grace of Christ are manifested.

A spirit of rugged individualism, which the American experience encouraged, does not blend well with the spirit of institutionalism, which an established religion demands. There were many people who did not belong to any church due to the westward movement of the frontier. The number of churches needed could not keep pace with the growing population moving west.

Philosophical societiesaroseto challenge formal religion and hinder the establishing of a state church. John Lockein hisLetters on Toleration(1689-1706) argued persuasively for the separation of church and state, as did men like Thomas Jefferson. When given the opportunity, they wove their religious biases into the fabric of the documents they wrote on behalf of the country.

The Anglican Churchoffended many when the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel agitated for the appointment of a bishop. There was great resentment from the Congregational and Presbyterian churches, who had come to America to escape this very thing in England. If the English Parliament could appoint a bishop, if Parliament could establish a religion in the colonies, then it could also impose excessive taxes and other repressive law–against people who were looking for more freedoms, not more legislation.

One by one, all the colonies, territories, and states passed legislation separating the state from the church. The Congregational Churchwas the last to be separated from the state. This happened in New Hampshire in 1817, in Connecticut in 1818, and in Massachusetts in 1833.

Chapter 17

Religious Revivals

"I did not come to tickle your ears; no, but I came to touch your hearts."

–George Whitefield

"They who come to Christ come to a banqueting-house where they may rest, and where they may feast."

–Jonathan Edwards

A Great Awakening(1741-1744)

The greatest manifestations of divine grace in the history of the Church are those times when the Lord visits His people in a mighty way. When the sins of secular humanism, Deism, and Rationalismtried to steal the hearts of millions, God used the power of His own Word to frustrate the work of the Wicked One (Mat 13:19, 38). Souls were snatched from the jaws of self-destruction by powerful preachers of righteousness. Among those most effective was Theodore Jacob Frelinghuysen(1691-1748), a former minister in the Netherlands. Frelinghuysen arrived in America to pastor a Dutch Reformed Church in New Jersey located along the Raritan River (c. 1720-1747). The need for a personal relationship with the living Lord was emphasized. The truth was proclaimed that a genuine Christian has a converted heart–evidenced by conviction of sin, repentance, and renewal by the Holy Spirit.

Frelinghuysen also insisted that converts show some evidence of salvation prior to receiving Communion. He addressed his congregation in plain words: "Much loved hearers, who have so often been at the Lord's table, do you know that the unconverted may not approach? Have you with the utmost care examined whether you be born again?...Reflect, therefore, upon...and remember, that though morally and outwardly religious, if you still be unregenerate and destitute of spiritual life, you have no warrant for an approach to the table of grace." God honored the faithful proclamation of His Word and the administration of Church discipline. A sense of spiritual renewal began to spread beyond the valley of the Raritan.

As the Lord used Theodore Frelinghuysen, so He poured out His Spirit upon other ministers of the Gospel–such as William Tennent, a minister of a Presbyterian assembly in Neshaminy, Pennsylvania(c. 1727). The father of four sons, Tennent had built a log cabin on his land to be used as a schoolhouse. His objective was to train his sons for the work of the ministry. When other men heard of Tennent's "Log College," as the humble structure became known, they asked to be trained as well. At least fifteen students received instructions in Latin, Greek, Hebrew, logic, theology, and personal work in evangelism. The Lord blessed and a revival broke out. Like a spreading forest fire out of control, spiritual renewal spread among the Presbyterians from Long Island to Virginia.

Jonathan Edwards

God continued to manifest Himself in Massachusetts by preparing a special person named Jonathan Edwardsto be a mighty instrument in His hands. Edwards was born in 1703 in East Windsor, Connecticut, the son of a minister of the Congregational Church. Possessing a brilliant mind, Edwards was graduated from Yale at seventeen. After several more years of study and preparation, he was appointed minister of the Congregational Church in Northampton in central Massachusetts.

In December of 1734, Edwards began to preach on the doctrine of justification. His primary objective was to respond to the rise of Arminianism, which was being accepted in New England. Edwards proclaimed that salvation was of the Lord. Sinners were to flee from the wrath of God. They were to run to Christ and take refuge in His substitutionary death.

The illuminating power of the Holy Spirit fell upon the people who heard the sermons. A tremendous change came over the town and church. A sense of the presence of God prevailed in the community. Hardly a person could be found, regardless of their age, who was not concerned about the way of salvation. Before the year was out, three hundred precious souls professed to be converted.

The revival fires continued to spread in various parts of New England. By 1740, mass conversions were being reported. Between 25,000 and 50,000 new members were added to the churches out of a total population of 300,000.

Physical manifestations of strong emotions often attended the church services. When Edwards preached at Enfield, Connecticut, on July 8, 1741, he had to pause while the people wept and cried out in terror upon hearing about "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God," his most famous sermon.[22]The religious awakening could not be attributed to any

theatrics on the part of Edwards. One observer wrote, “He scarcely gestured or even moved; and he made no attempt by the elegance of his style, or the beauty of his pictures, to gratify the taste and fascinate the imagination.” What Edwards did do was to convince his audience “with overwhelming weight of argument, and with such intensity of feeling.”

George Whitefield

While Edwards was limited in his ability to travel and preach, George Whitefieldwas not. Born in Gloucester, England, December 16, 1714, Whitefield grew up working in the family tavern. Recognized as a capable student, Whitefield was allowed to enroll at Oxford University,where he became a guiding force in the Holy Club. Despite his religious inclination, Whitefield did not consider himself regenerated by the Holy Spirit until 1736. He was ordained a minister in the Church of England.

Being open to the leading of the Lord, Whitefield believed that God would have him minister also in America. From 1738-1770, he made seven preaching tours to America. So powerful was Whitefield’s preaching that the mere mention of his name stirred great excitement. Men would drop their plows in the field to go listen to him speak. Store owners would close their shops. Prayer meetings would spontaneously arise. Thousands would gather in the open field with their faces turned towards heaven. Sometimes Whitefield would speak to as many as 20,000 people in one gathering as souls were swept into the kingdom.

His eloquence was memorable. Once, when preaching on eternity, he invited his listeners to imagine heaven. “Lift up your hearts frequently towards the mansions of eternal bliss, and with an eye of faith, like the great St. Stephen, see the heavens open, and the Son of Man with His glorious retinue of departed saints sitting and solacing themselves in eternal joys, and with unspeakable comfort looking back on their past sufferings and self-denials, as so many glorious means which exalted them to such a crown. Hark! Methinks I hear them chanting their everlasting hallelujahs, and spending an eternal day in echoing forth triumphant songs of joy. And do you not long, my brethren, to join this heavenly choir?” When Whitefield died on September 30, 1770 in Newburyport, Massachusetts, his body was laid to rest under the pulpit of the Old South Presbyterian Church.

Almost as suddenly as it came, the revival fire burned out. Between 1744-1748 Edwards himself lamented that his own church in Northhamptonappeared to be once more spiritually dead. Not a single soul was converted to Christ in all that time. Edwards believed that one cause for the spiritual decline was blatant unbelief among the clergy represented in Boston by the minister Charles Chauncy. Congregational ministers in New England and Reformed ministers in New York argued over the value of the revival. Even the Presbyterians seemed to be confused as to how the sensational revival should be viewed. These “Old Lights,” as the clergymen became known, first grieved and then quenched the Spirit of God (Eph 4:30; 1Th 5:19). It is a biblical truth that God will not stay savingly active where He is not wanted (Eze 10:1-22).

Do It Again, Lord; Do It Again!

By the year 1800, many Christians knew that another spiritual revival was needed in America. Atheistic books likeThe Age of Reason, written by Thomas Paine, had led a generation to boldly dismiss the Christian faith. There were terrible consequences. Timothy Dwight, the grandson of Jonathan Edwardsand president of Yale College, described the condition of New England during the days of the American Revolution. “The profanation of the Sabbath...profaness of language, drunkenness, gambling, and lewdness, were exceedingly increased; and what is less commonly remarked, but is not less mischievous than any of them, a light, vain method of thinking concerning sacred things—a cold, contemptuous indifference toward every moral and religious subject.”

These same vices and more were equally prevalent on the western frontier. Nearly a million people had made their way West by the turn of the century. They had settled in the Blue Ridge in Virginia, in Kentucky, Tennessee, the Northwest, and in Indian Territory. After Thomas Jeffersonmade the Louisiana Purchase, new emphasis was given to the West. A sense of “Manifest Destiny” materialized. Many people were convinced that God had determined that America would be settled from “sea to shining sea.” It was thedestiny of the nation to be big, bold, beautiful, and bounded together by a common culture and language. Of course, the Indians had to be dealt with, as well as the African slaves.

The Shame of Slavery

Slaveryhad always posed a problem for conscientious Christian thinkers and moral reformers in England and America. It is an anomaly that Thomas Jefferson could write “that all men are created equal” while being a slave owner. Though the Founding Fathers of America fought for political and personal freedoms, most managed to avoid setting their own slaves free.

In a spirit of compromise between conflicting ideas, provision had been made at the Constitutional Conventionin

Philadelphia that the slave trade would come to an end, but not before 1808. Georgia and the Carolinas would have it no other way. Those who wanted slavery to end would have to wait. What is shameful is that the enslaving of other humans was prolonged and justified by many professing Christians on biblical grounds. In the words of one Baptist minister, slavery existed "as an institution of God."

Specific arguments were made in defense of this "Peculiar Institution," as it was euphemistically called in the South. Abraham, the "father of faith," owned slaves without being reprimanded by the Lord (Gen 21:9-10). The same was true of other patriarchs. The Ten Commandments mention slavery twice without condemnation (Exo 20:10, 17). Slavery was prevalent in the ancient world, yet Jesus never spoke against it, and other such arguments.

But there is one passage in the New Testamentthat no slave trader could ever preach from in defense of the indefensible. The passage is 1 Timothy 1:10. In this text, "slave traders" (lit. "men-stealers") are specifically condemned. They are listed among those who are not righteous. The word translated "men-stealers" in the Authorized Versionisandrapodistes; it refers to an enslaver, as one who brings men to his feet.

Before slavery was constitutionally prohibited with the passing of the Thirteenth Amendment(February 1, 1865; ratified, December 18, 1865), there would be untold suffering, a bloody Civil War, and a gaping wound made in the body of Christ. Baptists, Presbyterians, and Methodists would debateand divide over this issue. New denominations would be formed. Christians in the South who defended the literal words of the Bible, would increasingly insist on a strict and narrow interpretation of the Scriptures. Those in the North who opposed slavery would increasingly emphasize the spiritual and ethical principles of the Bible—such as love for one's brother, manifested in social concern and action.

In 1800 the future of slavery was still in question. What was not in question was that slavery was a contributing factor of moral decline where practiced. There was a need for another work of divine grace.

The Second Great Awakening(c. 1791-1835)

About the year 1799, a revival of religion could be sensed in the country. People began to take a renewed interest in spiritual matters. Something wonderful and mysterious was happening. One Presbyterian minister wrote, "We have heard from different parts the glad tidings of the outpourings of the Spirit, and of times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord...From the east, from the west, and from the south, have these joyful tidings reached our ears." God had not forgotten His people. The work of Edwards, Wesley, and Whitefield was emerging once more. Unlike the First Great Awakening, this second season of spiritual vitality would last longer (c. 1791-1835), and come in distinct phases both West and East.

In the West, great spiritual attention became focused on the camp meetings conducted by the Presbyterian minister James McGready(c. 1762-1817). After years of fearless preaching to rugged pioneer families, the manifestation of God fell like fire from heaven on McGready's preaching (note 2Ch 7:1). It all began in June, 1800. Almost five hundred people had gathered from the three congregations McGready pastored in Muddy River, Red River, and Gasper River in Logan County, Kentucky. The camp meeting was to last for several days. On the final day "a mighty effusion of [God's] Spirit" came upon the people, "and the floor was soon covered with the slain; their screams for mercy pierced the heavens."

Excited by the events, McGready and five ministers who had joined him planned for a camp meeting to be held in July at Gasper River. They were not prepared for what happened next. No one was. As many as 8,000 people showed up. Some had traveled as far as 100 miles to attend. Services were held for three days. McGready recalled what happened. "The power of God seemed to shake the whole assembly. Towards the close of the sermon [by William McGee, a Presbyterian pastor], the cries of the distressed arose almost as loud as his voice...Here awakening and converting work was to be found in every part of the multitude; and even some things strangely and wonderfully new to me."

There were to be more expressions of revival through the activity of Barton W. Stone(1772-1844), pastor of Presbyterian churches at Cane Ridge and Concord, northeast of Lexington, Kentucky. In August, 1801, between 10,000 and 25,000 souls showed up from as far as Ohio and Tennessee. Lexington, the largest town in Kentucky, had less than 1,800 citizens. Only God could have brought His people together in this manner.

In the East, the longing for spiritual renewal found a leader in Timothy Dwight. With great tact and clear biblical arguments, he challenged the students of Yale Collegeto consider becoming true disciples of Christ. Early in the spring of 1802 two students were convicted of their sins and came to faith in Jesus Christ as personal Savior. Soon, other students were gathering for prayer and worship. Out of a total of 160 enrollments, 80 rose up to follow Christ. In succeeding years (1808, 1813, 1815), revivals also came.

A Contrast of Two Christian Evangelists

"Holiness to the Lord seemed to be inscribed on all the exercises of my mind."
—Charles G. Finney

One popular Connecticut minister in the early years of the 1800s was Asahel Nettleton(1783-1844). The Lord honored his work with as many as 30,000 converts. His meetings were characterized by a quiet and solemn dignity, and thus were in great contrast to a more dynamic personality named Charles Grandison Finney(1792-1875), a man whom Nettleton would severely criticize.

Beginning in the town of Western, New York, in October 1825, Finney began one of the most extensive evangelistic campaigns that America had ever seen. Great crowds gathered to hear him preach in Wilmington, Philadelphia, New York City, Rochester, and many other places. A multitude of new professions were made. As the fame of Finney grew, so did the criticism surrounding his "new" methods. The new methods included praying for the salvation of people by name, permitting women to pray and give their personal testimonies, the "altar call" (inviting people to come forward at meetings, even putting emotional pressure upon them to do so), encouraging Church members to invite their friends and neighbors in the community, and holding special services for several days and even weeks.

In addition to different techniques of evangelism, Finney also introduced new theological concepts. Of particular importance was his view that revival was not a miraculous act of God but a simple use of human "techniques." If people did the right things, revival was certain to come. His thoughts were published inLectures on Revival of Religion(1835). Finney also taught the doctrines of entire consecration, sinless perfection in this life, freedom of the will, moral responsibility, and the ability of Christians to fall from grace (i.e., lose their salvation, an integral part of original Arminianism). He encouraged people to become involved in social reform. An English worker named George Williamswas inspired to do just that. After being converted by reading the writings of Finney, in 1844 he started the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA).

Despite the obvious good that Finney accomplished in his lifetime, discerning pastors were alarmed that Finney was changing American religion from a God-centered to a man-centered religion. Nevertheless, as president and professor in the Oberlin School in Ohio, Finney was able to influence future Holiness and Pentecostal movements and leaders. Credited with the conversions of about 500,000 people, Finney found faithful followers who promoted both his methods and his message.

A Third Great Awakening(1857-1859)

By 1840 vital religious life in America was once more ebbing away. Sensational teachings began to replace spiritual stability. One radical group, the Millerites, had widely advertised that Christ would return to earth between March 21, 1843 and March 21, 1844. When the Lord did not appear according to schedule (note Act 1:7), William Miller, the leader of the sect, reset the date for October 22, 1844. Those who trusted him as a student of the Bible were disappointed. Some were outraged. Others who had watched the sad spectacle of date setting, openly mocked (2Pe 3:3-4).

Besides having to deal with the wide dissemination of false prophecies, Americans had other worries. On October 10, 1857, the New York stock market crashed. A financial panic occurred as businesses everywhere shut down. Major money institutions like the Bank of Pennsylvaniain Philadelphia failed. Other banks soon closed. Railroads derailed into bankruptcy. Financial chaos was everywhere; and a civil war seemed imminent over state's rights, slavery, and other questions. Concern for the state of the nation and the sterility of the Church caused an outpouring of prayer by individual Christians. In 1857 Jeremiah Lanphier, a 48-year-old businessman, began to hold noon prayer meetings at North Dutch Church on Fulton Street in New York.

Soon record crowds were gathering to pray. Within six months 10,000 people were gathering daily for prayer throughout the state of New York. The New York Times reported that the popular pastor, Dr. Henry Ward Beecherwas leading 3,000 people in daily devotions at the Burton Theater. As the news traveled, other major cities such as Philadelphia, Albany, Boston, Chicago, began to hold similar noon-day prayer meetings. The rules were simple: 1) a meeting was to begin and end on time, 2) no one should speak or pray for very long, five minutes at the most, 3) no more than two consecutive prayers or exhortations were to be offered, 4) no controversial points were to be discussed.

Those who attended the prayer meetings were impressed that there was no fanaticism, hysteria, or behavior that was unseemly. There was only an impulse to pray. One man noted, "The general impression seemed to be, 'We have had instruction until we are hardened; it is now time for us to pray.'[" There was a great over reaching attitude that God was being called upon and glorified. It has been estimated that there were at least 500,000 conversions to Christ in the United States during this period. In 1859 the influence of the revival spread to the British Isles. It was ignited there in the ministry of Evan Roberts. The glory of God was filling the earth!

For a brief period from 1904 to 1908, God was pleased to use Evan John Roberts (1878-1951) and associated ministers, including Evan Hopkins, to bring spiritual renewal to His people in Wales. It has been estimated that at least 100,000 souls came to Christ during these days of divine visitation. This former blacksmith apprentice knew the power of God upon his life. He opened his heart to the Lord while studying for ministry in the Calvinist Methodist Churchat the Minister's Training College at Newcastle Emlyn. Roberts followed in the footsteps of Christmas Evans(1766-1838), another Welsh preacher that enjoyed a season of dynamic preaching with heavenly power. Christmas Evans was known as the "Welsh Bunyan," for he could make the large audiences roar with laughter and then move them to break

forth into tears of repentance.

The renewed interest in the things of God, which had come during revival, was given a solid foundation in the work of such men as Robert Louis Dabney(1820-1898). Born in Virginia, Dabney was graduated from Union Theological Seminaryin Virginia in 1846. A strong leader in the Presbyterian Church, Dabney fought to preserve conservative doctrinal orthodoxy against the attempts of James Woodrow of Columbia Seminary and others to revise it. Dabney also defended the Southern position in the Civil War. His major works includedDefense of Virginia and the South(1867) andSyllabus and Notes of the Course of Systematic and Polemic Theology(1871).

Chapter 18

Counterfeit Religions to Christian Revivals

The Story of
Ellen Gould White
and Seventh-Day Adventism
"1844 - a New Beginning"

The Non-Advent of Christ

Christianity has always struggled with men and women who depart from the teachings of the Bible to establish their own opinions in the minds of many (note Joh 1:9-10). Because of the adulation invested in these charismatic and clever religious leaders, the structures built up around them are rightly calledcults.23During the 1800s, the central western part of New York state produced two very influential cultic leaders, William Millerand Joseph Smith.

William Miller(1782-1849) was born in Pittsfield, Massachusetts. He was a farmer in New York, and then a captain during the War of 1812. In 1816, he was converted from Deismand started to study the Bible. Of particular interest to Miller were the prophetic passages of Daniel and Revelation. After fourteen years of study, he was convinced that he knew the approximate time and date of the Lord's Second Coming (Advent). To Miller, it was simple: the 2,300 days of Daniel 8:14 were counted as year-days, starting in 457 BC. If properly calculated, the Lord would return within twelve months of March, 1843.

Having been licensed to preach by a Baptist church in 1833, Miller began to share his views in public congregations. When his messages were well received by an excited, if biblically uninformed, listening audience, Miller published (1836) his thoughts under the titleEvidence from Scripture and History of the Second Coming of Christ, about the Year 1843. When the Lord did not return by March, 1844, Miller recalculated his figures—and showed that the Lord would return on October 22, 1844. But there was no Advent on that date either.

Despite being discredited by these failed predictions, William Miller was able to keep followers. He organized them into a "church" in 1845 and served as their first president. Unity lasted only until 1846, when a division took place. One part, led by Mrs. Ellen G. White, began to call themselves the Seventh-Day Adventists. The separation took place over the question of the Jewish Sabbath, as well as the meaning of the sanctuary in Daniel 8. Mrs. White had some very unusual ideas of her own.

A Modern Day Prophetess?

Ellen Gould White was born in 1827 at Gorham, Maine (d. 1915). At age ten, Ellen was accidentally struck by a rock; this put her into a coma for three weeks. Though she survived the ordeal, the next six years were spent in recuperation. In 1840, Ellen went to an evangelistic meeting conducted by William Miller. She was amazed by what she heard, and she believed. When the Lord did not appear as predicted, she and four other women began to hold a prayer meeting. One day, Ellen had a vision of being transported into heaven—where she was told that the Lord's Second Advent could not take place until the whole world had been evangelized according to Matthew 28:19-20. Christians must get busy.

Ellen Gould would do her part. She would marry and spread the Gospel according to the Advent faith, much of which she was about to create from her fertile imagination. On August 30, 1846, Ellen married the Reverend James White. He had been ordained a minister in the Adventist movement in 1843.

In 1846, when a portion of the Adventist movement separated from the main body, Ellen G. White emerged as a modern day prophetess. Of particular concern to ministers of the historic Christian faith were her new teachings in specific areas: the atonement; Satan being a sin-bearer; Christ having a sinful, fallen nature; soul-sleep; and the Sabbath.

In the movement to find a following of her own, Mrs. White began to deny the biblical doctrine of the atoning sacrifice of Christ as the only means of salvation. Said Mrs. White, "The ministration of the priests throughout the year in the first apartment of the sanctuary [Ed.:which is in heaven, not on earth]...represents the work of ministration upon which Christ entered at His ascension...For eighteen centuries this work of ministration continued in the first apartment of the sanctuary. The blood of Christ, pleaded in behalf of penitent believers, secured their pardon and acceptance with the Father, yet their sins still remained upon the books of record."24

Conservative ministers were shocked at such new doctrines. Is it really possible that sins can be pardoned and yet still be on the books (note Rom 5:1-2; 8:1)? Mrs. White was not through denying the finality of the work of Christ on the

Cross—even though Christ had cried out "It is finished!" (Joh 19:30). Again, Mrs. White wrote: "As in typical service [Ed.:i.e., the Old Testament sacrifices] there was a work of atonement at the close of the year, so before Christ's work of redemption of men is completed, there is a work of atonement for the removal of sin from the sanctuary. This is the service which began when the 2,300 days end [Ed.:1844 is in view here]. At that time, as foretold by Daniel the prophet, our high priest entered the most holy to perform the last division of His solemn work to cleanse the sanctuary...In the new covenant the sins of the repentant are by faith placed upon Christ, and transferred, in fact, to the heavenly sanctuary...So the actual cleansing of the heavenly [sanctuary] is to be accomplished by the removal, or blotting out, of the sins which are there recorded. But before this can be accomplished, there must be an examination of the books of record to determine who, through repentance of sin and faith in Christ, are entitled to the benefits of His atonement. The cleansing of the sanctuary therefore involves a work of investigation, a work of judgment. Those who followed in the light of the prophetic word saw that, instead of coming to the earth at the termination of the 2,300 day in 1844, Christ then entered into the most holy place of the heavenly, to perform the closing work of atonement preparatory to His coming."[25]

Mrs. White assumed that there is a sanctuary in heaven, there is sin in heaven, that the sanctuary serves as a kind of "mediator" and bears the sins of many for the present, and this cleansing and investigating to see who is worthy of the benefits of the atonement began in 1844 (cp. Eph 2:8-9; Rom 1:17).

In another area, Mrs. White declared that Satan was a joint sin-bearer, and the vicarious substitute of the sinner. According to Mrs. White, "When Christ, by virtue of His own blood, removes the sins of His people from the heavenly sanctuary at the close of His ministration, He will place them upon Satan, who in the execution of the judgment must bear the final penalty. The scapegoat was sent into a land not inhabited, never to come again into the Congregation of Israel. So will Satan be forever banished from the presence of God and His people and he will be blotted from existence in the final destruction of sin and the sinner" (fromThe Great Controversy). Not only is the doctrine of justificationby faith set aside by this teaching, but Satan's vicarious suffering in bearing away the sins of the people of God into a land of utter annihilation replaces the substitutionary work of Christ at Calvary (see 2Pe 2:1). Any number of Scriptures refute a Satanic work of co-redemption by speaking of the precious blood of Christ and what He accomplished (Lev 17:11; 1Pe 1:19; 2:24; Col 1:20; Eph 2:13; Joh 3:18; Rom 8:1; 3:24; 1Jo 1:7).

A third doctrine that Mrs. White and her followers advocated by departing from the historic Christian faith was that Jesus had a fallen, sinful nature. "The idea that Christ was born of an immaculate or sinless mother [Ed.: this is Roman Catholic doctrine, not an evangelical Protestant doctrine], inherited no tendencies to sin, and for this reason did not sin, removes Him from the realm of a fallen world, and from the very place where help is needed. On His human side, Christ inherited just what every child of Adam inherits—a sinful nature. On the divine side, from His very conception He was begotten and born of the Spirit. And all this was done to place mankind on vantage ground, and to demonstrate that in the same way everyone who is "born of the Spirit" may gain like victories over sin in his own sinful flesh. Thus each one is to overcome as Christ overcame (Rev 3:21). Without this birth there can be no victory over temptation, and no salvation from sin (cp. Joh 3:3-7).[26]

In contrast to this teaching of Mrs. White, the Bible says that Christians are partakers of God's holiness (Heb 12:10), and that Christ and God are one (Joh 10:30). Jesus could not be both "holy" and "undefiled" and at the same time a partaker of a fallen nature, inheriting what sinners inherit, and be without sin (Heb 7:26; 4:15). Jesus said, "The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me" (Joh 14:30). The Bible says that "In him [Christ] is no sin" (1Jo 3:5).

A fourth teaching of Mrs. White was that the saints do not go to be with the Lord upon death. Rather, there is a soul-sleep. "Upon the fundamental error of natural immortality rests the doctrine of consciousness in death, a doctrine like eternal torment, opposed to the teachings of the Scriptures, to the dictates of reason, and to our feelings of humanity. The theory of eternal punishment is one of the false doctrines that constitute the wine of the abominations of Babylon." With this teaching Mrs. White dismissed all the passages in the Bible that teach otherwise. Paul said in 2 Corinthians 5:6, "Being of good cheer, therefore always and knowing that being at home in the body, we are away from home from the Lord" (author's literal translation; see also Luke 16:19-31; 23:43).

Another area of concern is Mrs. White's teaching on the Sabbath. Mrs. White claimed that she had a vision in which she was taken to heaven and shown the sanctuary and its appointments. Jesus Himself raised the cover of the ark, and she beheld the tables of stone on which the Ten Commandments were written. Mrs. White was amazed as she saw the Fourth Commandment in the very center of the ten precepts, with a soft halo of light encircling it. Mrs. White began to teach that Christians, being still under the Law of Moses, are bound to keep the "least of its precepts," and therefore must keep the Sabbath. It was soon argued that in AD 364, at the Council of Laodicea, the Roman Catholic Churchchanged the Sabbath(on the Seventh day) to Sunday (the First day). Neither the Scripturesnor history will bear such assertions out.

Why the Christian Sabbath Is the First Day of the Week

Compiled from the writings of J. Oswald Sanders[27]

1. The Lord's Day of the Christian at once upholds the abiding principles of rest and worship for which the Jewish Sabbath was instituted, and is a remembrance of His resurrection from the dead on the first day of the week.

2. Reasons for observing the First Day (Sunday) for worship. We observe the Lord's Day, the first day of the week, not because we must, but because we may—out of love for Him and not from legal constraint.

a. It was on the first day that Jesus rose from the dead (Joh 20:1).
b. It was foreshadowed in the Feast of Firstfruits (Lev 23:15-16), a festival which typified the resurrection of the Lord, which was followed after fifty days by the Feast of Pentecost, typical of the descent of the Holy Spirit.
c. It was on the first day that Jesus met His people after His resurrection (Luk 24:13-31; Joh 20:19). He met with them again a week later (Joh 20:26). Thus the Lord's day was born.
d. It was on the first day that the Holy Spirit descended to constitute the New Testament Church.
e. It was on the first day that the rite of Christian baptism was first observed (Act 2:41).
f. It was on the first day that the New Testament Church met for worship (Act 20:7; Rev 1:10).
g. It was on the first day believers were exhorted to make their offerings (1Co 16:2).
h. It was on the first day that Christians met to observe the Lord's Supper which had superseded the Passover Feast.

The Story of
Joseph Smith
and Mormonism
"No Man Knows My History"

Joseph Smith and His Book

Ellen G. White was not the only person in America having visions. So was the elusive Mr. Smith. At the young age of 38, Joseph Smith, first president of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, died from the guns of assassins. In his death, Joseph Smith became a martyr for his cause and a man of mystique. In just a few short years he had established one of the most unusual cultsof all.

Smith was born December 23, 1805 in Sharon, Windsor County, Vermont, the fourth of ten children. He was destined to be reared in ignorance and poverty under the guidance of a superstitious father who liked to search for buried treasure. When Joseph was ten the family moved to Palmyra, New York, where pious controversy was present. Later, Smith would testify that the religious arguments greatly troubled him. He wondered which church to join. He claimed that one night, God the Father and God the Son appeared to him offering divine guidance. In 1819 another divine visitation took place. This time Smith was told not to join any of the denominations. More visions would follow.

On September 22, 1823, when Joseph was eighteen, an angel named Moroniled him to some golden tablets buried in a stone box in the "Hill Cumorah" four miles from Palmyra. On these tablets, fastened together with gold rings, was the history of ancient America. The history had been recorded in "reformed-Egyptian characters (sic)" and then buried in AD 420. This ancient "language" was able to be translated because of some special eye glasses that had also been left. The glasses were two crystals set in a silver bow. Using these "Urim and Thummim," as Smith called them, he translated and then publishedThe Book of Mormon(1830).

The actual translation took place behind a curtain. Smith dictated the work to Martin Harris who sat on one side of the drawn drapery. When Harris tired of writing, Smith would let Oliver Cowdery act as the writer. The result of all this labor was a very unusual story of the people of North America. Once the translation was completed, Smith took the golden tablets back to the hill where he had first found them. The angel Moronicame and carried the plates away, along with the special spectacles.

One very remarkable result of the translation by Smith of the "reformed-Egyptian" plates is that large portions give a faithful rendering of the Bible in the King James Version(1611)! The practical problem of course is that the "translation" contains modern phrases and ideas that would not have been known to its alleged author in AD 420.

As entertaining as this notion is, more probable is the fact that the manuscript which Smith, Harris, and Cowdery worked with was really a historical novel written by Solomon Spaulding, a Presbyterian minister who died at Conneaut, Ohio in 1816—before the novel could be published. There is evidence that the novel was discovered by a Sidney Rigdonin the printing office of Patterson and Lamdin of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Rigdon may have wanted to publish it for financial gain. What is more certain is that in Joseph Smith a ready accomplice was found, who had the imagination to add passages of Scripture to the text. Also added were theories from the tales of the Italian mystic, Abbot Joachim of Flora(d. 1202), founder of a religious sect in the thirteenth century called The Order of Flora. From the ancient title of Joachim's main works, printed posthumously asThe Everlasting Gospel(1254), came a new phrase to be applied to the Mormon "revelation."

Following the publication ofThe Book of Mormon, Smith humbly referred to himself as "seer, translator, prophet, apostle of Jesus Christ, and elder of the Church." In this spirit (which hardly reflected Christ's meekness and lowliness), on April 6, 1830, he formally founded the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. Six members were present to bear witness that the Lord's own apostles, Peter, James, and John, had previously conferred upon Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery the Melchizedek priesthood, which priesthood was superior to the one held by Aaron.

As word spread of a latter day Prophet sent from God to restore the true Church, based upon the writing of a new "Bible," curiosity alone caused some to listen to this exceptionally brazen man and his message. Being a charismatic leader and possessing many natural gifts, not the least of which was a vivid imagination, Smith attracted a following who gave generously to his cause.

With new financial resources available, Smith was able to establish a base of operation in Kirtland, Ohio. However, when the Mormon owned Safety Bank in Kirtland failed in 1838, Smith fled to Missouri—where he was soon arrested. Joseph was allowed to escape, after bribing his jailers, provided that he move on to Illinois.

Once established in Illinois, Smith was joined by his followers. Together they settled at Commerce, on the Mississippi River, and changed the name of the town to Nauvoo. Smith appointed himself major, commander of the Nauvoo Legion (a state militia unit whose uniforms he designed personally), and in February, 1844, announced that he would run for president of the United States.

When a group of local residents, joined by dissatisfied Mormons, printed accounts that ridiculed his presidential ambitions, denounced polygamy, and were critical of his leadership, Smith ordered the presses to be destroyed, which was done by militant Mormons. On the charge of destruction of property, Smith was arrested—as were his brother Hyrum and John Taylor. The three men were placed in a jail in Carthage, Illinois. The confinement was neither safe nor secure. On June 27, 1844, a mob broke into the prison and killed both Hyrum and Joseph Smith. John Taylor survived the assassins to become the third president of the Latter-Day Saint's Church.

While Mormons regarded Joseph Smith as a prophet of God who restored the true church, those within the true Christian Church regarded him as a false prophet, who denied or changed the major teachings of Christ, while living a shameful and licentious life based on plural "marriages." Though Smith publicly acknowledged only one wife, Emma Hale(m. 1827), who bore him nine children, his polygamous wives numbered as many as twenty-four. When Emma objected to her husband's immoral behavior, Smith responded by giving her a revelation from God: "And let Mine handmaid, Emma Smith, receive all those that have been given unto My servant Joseph, and who are virtuous and pure before Me" (Doctrines and Covenants, Sect. 132). Emma was not amused, nor did she ever recognize any other woman as being legally married to Joseph Smith.

Three works set forth Mormon beliefs and practices:The Book of Mormon, and two lesser works combined in one volume,Doctrine and CovenantsandThe Pearl of Great Price. To conservative Christians, the numerous teachings of Mormonism are almost too offensive to Christ to mention. A sample will suffice. (These points are extracted in part from among the following sources: "What the Mormons Think of Christ," Missions Office of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, Salt Lake City;The Book of Mormon; andDoctrine and Covenants.)

The Doctrines of Mormonism

Mormonism teaches God is an exalted man, once a man on earth as we are now, ever changing and advancing but never absolutely perfect. "God himself was once as we are now, and is an exalted man, and sits enthroned in yonder heavens: it is the first principle of the gospel to know that he was once a man like us; yea, that God the Father of us all dwelt on an earth, the same as Jesus Christ himself did."

Mormonism once taught that Adam is the Father of all, the Prince of all, and the Ancient of Days. Adam was God (seeBrigham Young's Journal of Discourses, Vol. I, p. 50).

Mormonism teaches that all people live in a pre-mortal estate before they are born into this world; all were born in the pre-mortal existence as the spirit children of the Father, i.e., God the Father, an exalted man, with his heavenly wife (or wives) produces spirit children. What humans provide are bodies for the pre-existing spirits produced by a heavenly sexual union.

Jesus Christ is not the eternal God, very God of very God. Rather, He is the first begotten of the spirit children of the Father (Doctrine and Covenants93:21-23).

Jesus, after His resurrection appeared to people in North America (The Book of Mormon, Ether 3:14, 16; 2 Nephi 11:7-11; Ether 12:39).

Mormonism teaches that through Joseph Smith alone, the perfect knowledge of Jesus Christ was returned to the earth. With the restoration of the Gospel of Christ through the Prophet Smith came the true and holy priesthoodof God—the authority from God to administer the ordinances of salvation.

The Way West

The premature death of Joseph Smith brought forth a capable but ruthless leader in the person of Brigham Young. His ruthlessness would be manifested in the Mountain Meadow Massacre (1857). When a group of immigrants on their way from Arkansas to California would not unite with the Mormons, they were kept from leaving by being slaughtered. In 1877, Mormon John D. Lee was executed for his part in the massacre.

One of the first things Young did following the death of Joseph Smith was to continue to try and convince the public that Smith and theThe Book of Mormonreally were a new work of God. Said Young, "Every Spirit that confesseth that

Joseph is a prophet, and thatThe Book of Mormonis true, is of God, and every Spirit that does not is of Antichrist!" While a powerful personality in his own right, Brigham Young had a lot to gain by continuing the work of Joseph Smith.

Young had first joined the Mormons when the followers of the Prophet had their headquarters in Kirtland, Ohio (1831-1837). Soon after joining the movement, Young became one of the "Twelve Apostles." It was under his leadership that the Mormons would move west for the Valley of the Great Salt Lake. A master organizer and ruthless controller of minds, Brigham Young guided the Mormons until his death in 1877. He left behind an estate worth over a half million dollars, seventeen wives, and fifty-six children.

The Story of
Charles Taze Russell
and Jehovah's Witnesses
"False Prophets and Promises"

Charles Taze Russell

Like Ellen G. White, "Pastor" Charles Taze Russellwas influenced by the teachings of William Miller, one of the originators of the Second Adventist movement. Russell was born in Allegheny, Pennsylvaniaon February 16, 1852. Though religiously inclined, by the age of seventeen Russell was a skeptic. Of particular concern to him was the biblical doctrine of hell. Russell hated the very thought of a place of eternal torment. He wanted nothing to do with a God who would punish souls for all eternity.

In 1870, Russell was exposed to the ministry of Miller. Despite the failure of date setting, Miller was able to give Charles two things he needed: the ability theologically to deny the reality of hell, and a renewed interest in eschatology.

Without being much of an original thinker, Russell managed to build a religious movement by denying the historic doctrines of Christianity. He and his followers of various names (Millennial Dawnists, International Bible Students, Russellites), denied the Trinity, the deity of Christ, His physical resurrection from the dead, the literal second coming, and eternal judgment of the wicked. They taught a second opportunity for all to be saved in the millennium, while insisting on the annihilation of the wicked. The sufficiency of Christ's atonement was ridiculed. Human government was considered to be one of the three allies of Satan. The other two were the teachings of denominational churches, and the suppression of business!

A gifted public speaker, Russell was able to attract large crowds to hear his lectures on the second coming of Christ. By 1872, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Russell was able to organize his ministry. On December 18, 1884, Zion's Watch Tower Tract Societybecame a publishing auxiliary work of the Association.The Millennial Dawnflooded the religious markets in America and in Europe.

By 1886, Russell had crystallized his thinking enough to printThe Divine Plan ofthe Ages, which suggested that in the year 1914 the world would witness Armageddon. This last great battle would precede the dawning of Christ's thousand year rule on a renewed earth. Russell also taught that the "end times" began in 1799, and that Christ had returned "spiritually" in October, 1874. Later these dates changed. It was decided that Christ entered into His kingly office sometime in April, 1878.

When World War I broke out in Europe, it seemed that Russell was a prophet. However, Armageddon did not materialize and Jesus did not come. After a legal separation from his wife in 1906, and the failure of his prophecies in 1914 and again in 1915, Russell died on October 31, 1916.

"Judge" Joseph Rutherford

"Judge" Joseph Franklin Rutherford (1869-1942) emerged as the new leader of the movement. He would revitalize the energy of the movement by making popular the slogan "Millions now living will never die." In 1931 he would rename the ministry Jehovah's Witnesses. Prior to that, Rutherford picked up where Russell left off and began making false predictions. He decided that Armageddon would be in 1918, and then 1925. Hope did not die when both prophecies failed. The Beth Sarim(lit. "house of princes") was purchased in San Diego, California in 1929 to have a place for the coming "princes of the earth" to live. It was believed that the resurrected Old Testament saints would want a nice place to reside, when they arose to take charge of God's new world order. There is no doubt that King David, Samson, and Joseph would have liked the luxury of Beth Sarim.

The predictive impulse did not stop with the death of "Judge" Rutherford. In 1966 Frederick Franz published hisLife Everlasting in the Freedom of the Sons of God. He taught that "the seventh period of a thousand years of human history will begin in the fall of 1975 CE" (Christian Era). The word was spread that Jesus was coming again. In 1974 many Witnesses believed so much that they sold their homes. Once more a false prophecy had disappointed many.

A Time for Terminology

Like all religious organizations, the Jehovah's Witnesseshave specific words with special meanings.

AWAKE!is the name of a Watchtower periodical that is used to introduce the public to the teachings of Jehovah's Witnesses.
GOATSis a reference to everyone who is not part of the Association of Jehovah's Witnesses. The Goats will be judged by the Lord according to Matthew 25:31-46.
SHEEP,also known as theGREAT CROWD,is the name given to the majority of Witnesses who will not live in heaven but will enjoy a paradise on Earth after the Lord returns.
JEHOVAHis the special and only proper name given to the LORD.
KINGDOM HALLis the local assembly hall of Jehovah's Witnesses. Here they meet for worship and training.
LITTLE FLOCK,also called the "144,000" or the "Anointed Class." This elite group of Witnesses will live in heaven with Christ and reign with Him.
MICHAEL,the archangel, is really the man Jesus Christ. He is Jehovah's first creation.
NEW WORLD TRANSLATION,is the official "biblical" translation of the Scriptures (pub. 1961). Its wording is deliberately and incorrectly "translated" in such a way as to support Watchtower theology. Example: John 1:1.
THE WATCHTOWERpublication is designed to be a manual of instruction for its own members.

Jehovah's Witnesses (JW) vs. the Word of God (WOG)

Doctrine of God

JW The doctrine of the Trinity is a doctrine originated by Satan.
WOG Deu 6:4; Phi 2:11 cp. Joh 5:18 and Act 5:3-4, 9.
JW Christ was the first created being of Jehovah God.
WOG Joh 8:58; cp. Rev 1:7-18 with Isa 44:6.
JW Jesus was really the archangel Michael incarnate.
WOG Heb 1:1-14.
JW Christ arose from the dead as a spirit person.
WOG Luk 24:39; Joh 20:20, 25, 27; 20:1-9.
JW The Holy Spirit is not a Person but an active force.
WOG Joh 14:16-17, 26; Act 5:3-4.

The Doctrine of Man

JW The soul cannot be separated from the body. When the body dies, the soul dies.
WOG Luk 16:19-31; 23:39-43; 2Co 5:5-8; Phi 1:19-24.
JW Satan originated the concept of the immortality of the soul.
WOG Ecc 12:7; 2Co 5:1, 6-8.
JW Because there is no existence of the soul after death, all Jehovah's Witnesses can be recreated to inhabit His kingdom.
WOG 1Ki 17:17-24; Luk 7:11-17 cp. Luk 24:36-43;
Phi 3:20-21; 1Co 15:39-54.

The Doctrine of Salvation

JW The death of Christ only purchased the earthly life and blessings which Adam lost.
WOG Eph 1:3-14.
JW The death of Christ did not save anyone. It only provided an opportunity for a person to gain eternal life through good works.
WOG 1Pe 3:18; Eph 2:8-9; 1Jo 5:11-13; Joh 6:39;
Joh 10:28-29.
JW The blood of Christ at the Cross will only be applied to 144,000 special Witnesses.
WOG 1Ti 2:5-6; 1Jo 2:2; 2Co 5:15; Heb 2:9.
JW The way of salvation is through personal Bible study, being a member of the Association, being baptized as a Jehovah's Witness, and doing good works such as preaching and spreading the news of God's coming kingdom.
WOG Act 4:10-12; 10:42-43; Rom 3:21-24.
JW There is no hell.
WOG Rev 20:11-15; Mat 13:41, 49-50; Mar 9:47-48.

The Story of
Mary Baker Eddy
and Christian Science
"No Pain for the People of God"

The Life and Times of Mary Baker: Key Dates

1821 Born in New Hampshire, raised a Congregationalist
1843 Marries George W. Glover; he dies six months later
1853 Marries a dentist, Daniel M. Patterson
1862 Meets Phineas Quimby
1866 Discovers the "divine law of life"
1873 Divorces her husband on grounds of desertion
1875 Forms her first society at Lynn, Massachusetts
1875 Publishes her textbook,Science and Healthwith Key to the Scriptures
1877 Marries Asa G. Eddy

1879 Establishes the Church of Christ, Scientist
1892 Organization is moved to Boston where the "Mother Church" founds the Massachusetts Metaphysical College
1895 Manual of the Mother Church is published
1908 At age 87, establishes theChristian Science Monitor
1910 Mary Baker Eddy dies at the age of 89, teaching that
"Sickness and Death are non-existent."

The Man from Maine

In 1910 Mary BakerGlover Patterson Eddy died. Over 100,000 people around the world mourned her passage, believing her to be a prophetess of God. Mrs. Eddy was an amazing woman. Her journey towards fame and fortune began in 1862 when she heard of a blacksmith in Portland, Maine with unique methods of helping the sick. Mary had been sick for most her life with a spinal weakness. She was tired of the pain. Perhaps Phineas Quimbycould help through his practice of hypnotism. Quimby himself was a follower of the Frenchman Charles Poyen, a noted mesmerist.

As Mary listened to the philosophy of Quimby and watched him practice hypnosis, she became excited. Quimby really could help many who were sick. He was so certain that sickness was basically the result of negative thoughts. It was "scientifically" proven. The ill could be cured by thinking positive thoughts. The work of the man from Maine was summarized into a system of belief called "Christian Science" according to theQuimby Manuscripts.

Mind over Matter

Without giving him proper credit, Mary first adopted and then transformed the beliefs and practices of Phineas Quimby, after claiming she had been shown by supernatural revelation the Divine Law of Life. The dawning of the Divine Law came to her in 1866. Mary would later claim that she was meditating on Matthew 9:2 when she suddenly experienced complete healing from injuries resulting from a fall. Now it was all very simple. "Nothing is real and eternal, nothing is spirit, but God and His ideal; evil has no reality." There is no sickness or sin, sorrow or death. Deny them and they cease to exist.

Shortly after her cure, Mary opened a healing center where she could openly advocate that the "Principle of all harmonies Mind-action" to be God, who is the "Eternal Mind," the source of all being. Mrs. Eddy could also explain that matter does not exist, disease is the product of wrong thoughts or errors of the mortal mind, and spiritual power is found through the teachings of Christian Science.

To guide people through the esoteric maze of nebulous words and phrases she was now articulating, Mrs. Eddypublished a "Bible" calledScience and Healthwith the Key to the Scriptures. Mrs. Eddy was so pleased with her own writings that she decided to elevate her textbook to a divine status. In 1901 she wrote, "I should blush to write ofScience and Health with the Key to the Scriptures, as I have, were it of human origin, and I apart from God, its author; but as I was only a scribe echoing the harmonies of heaven in Divine Metaphysics, I cannot be super-modest of the Christian Sciencetextbook."

IfScience and Healthwere truly of divine origin, it would harmonize with the Bible—for God cannot lie or be confused. However,Science and Healthdenies essential teachings of the Bible. In summary form, it can be said thatScience and Healthdenies a personal God, that God created the world, the Trinity, the deity of Christ, the Lord's true humanity, the substitutionary death of Christ at Calvary for sins, His resurrection, and His second advent.Science and Healthdenies an eternal punishment of the wicked and a day of judgment for the righteous.

WhatScience and Healthaffirms can also be summarized. There are four basic propositions, which may be stated in Mrs. Eddy's own words: "First, God is All in all. Second, God is good. Good is mind. Third, God's Spirit, being all, nothing is matter. Fourth, life, God, omnipotent, good, deny death, evil, sin, disease. Disease, sin, evil, death, deny good, omnipotent, God, life."

The great attraction for Christian Science is that it promised the mind could cure sickness, disease, and even death. Those who believed that mind is over matter, that sickness is an illusion, and that all pain in time and eternity is not real, did not want to be reminded that Mrs. Eddy was addicted to drugs for many years before her death, and that she relied upon dentists to help her with her teeth in her own old age.

Anyone listening to these teachings must be warned. The following story is just one example of what is really offered, in the end, as an alternative to the one true Gospel of God. Many years ago a Christian minister named Ivan Panin was sent for by a major in the Canadian army, who was dangerously ill in the hospital. The major had a friend who claimed to have been healed by Christian Scienceand was encouraging him to try it. The major asked Mr. Panin, "What do you advise?" and was shocked at the answer: "I would advise you to try Christian Science if you are prepared to pay the price." "Price!" the major exclaimed, "what is money in comparison with health, or life itself?" "I did not mean the price in money," replied Mr. Panin, "but you would have to give up the Lord Jesus as your Savior, for 'Science' denies sin, evil, Satan, and sickness as realities—and hence has no atoning blood nor redeeming grace nor assurance of salvation."

"Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ" (Col 2:8).

“And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh” (Jude 1:23).

Chapter 19

A Return to Normalcy

An Antidote for Anti-Christian Teachings

Since the time when the flood gates of false doctrine were fully opened (c. 1830), the world has been inundated with fallacious theories of divine truth, so called. Neither time nor space permits a detailed examination of the multitude of heretical beliefs that have managed to inject themselves into the mainstream of religious life. It is sufficient to say that the Church has been, and is now being, challenged by many religious entities: Agnosticism, Annihilationism, Atheism, Baptismal Regeneration, British-Israelism, Buchmanism, Christadelphianism, Cooneyism, Evolution, Freemasonry, Humanism, Modernism, Spiritism, TheoSophie, Unitarianism, and the Unity School. In addition to these vain imaginations of men, Eastern mysticismhas come with force to capture the souls of the unsuspecting. The Church is confronted with Astrology, Baha'ism, Buddhism, Confucianism, and Rosicrucianism, to say nothing of Islamic Fundamentalism.

Because this is true, a way must be found to protect the truth, as well as one's own heart. And God has shown the way: to stay close to Him (Isa 26:3). Knowledge of the Lord through knowledge of God's Word will protect the soul from an eternal separation from the Holy One (Psa 119:1-176).

As the Scriptures are constantly studied, something else must be done if the heart is to be kept from being led astray. The private life must be kept pure. It can be argued that every false teaching has its origin in moral failure. The basic theology of Joseph Smith, for example, was born of a lustful mind. Polygamy was not an afterthought to this man; it was one of the first thoughts when he realized that people would receive him as a prophet. The true essence of Mormonism, both past and present, cannot be correctly understood apart from the practice of polygamy.

Upon objective examination (Joh 7:24), the moral character of each of the men and women who have founded a cultor sect often reveals an inordinate amount of sexual licentiousness, pride, a pre-occupation with self, greed, and the need to control others about them. Set aside are the Christian virtues of sanctification involving purity of mind and heart, humility, Christ-consciousness, a spirit of giving, and the desire to serve others. The Word of God and a life of holiness, defined by the Scriptures and lived by the power of the Holy Spirit, serve as the best antidote for an anti-Christian message.

A Million Souls for the Savior

"The world has yet to see what God will do with a man fully consecrated to him."
–Henry Varley, British evangelist

Despite the fact that the cultsarose to challenge the Church of the Living Lord, they did not prevail (Mat 16:18). The ministry of building-up the body of Christ continued through missions, personal witnessing, and the work of evangelism. One of the most used of all evangelists was D. L. Moody.

Dwight Lyman Moodywas born February 5, 1837 in East Northfield, Massachusetts. His father died when he was four years old, leaving the family with many financial concerns. Mrs. Moody had seven children to care for; Dwight was number six. One month after the death of Dwight's father, Mrs. Moody gave birth to twins–making nine children to provide for. Times would be hard for the family, but Mrs. Moody was determined that they would all stay together. The older children could help with the younger ones; everyone could do something to help out. As a result of practical necessity, Moody went to work doing odd jobs at an early age, thereby missing out on the better part of a proper formal education.

At seventeen, Moody left home to find work with good wages. He went first to Clinton, Massachusetts, finding a job in a book store. Dissatisfied, he traveled to Boston, where his uncles owned a shoe-store. Perhaps they would give him a job. Moody had determined that someday he would be worth $100,000.

Willing to do whatever was asked without question, and agreeing to go to Church and not gamble or drink, Moody was given work in the shoe store. Upon discovering that he really was a good salesman, Moody turned even more towards being a successful businessman.

One day a humble Sunday School teacher walked into the store. He was from the church Moody was attending, and he had a question. Did Dwight know if he were saved? Was he sure of going to heaven when he died? Moody was not sure. Before Mr. Edward Kimballleft the store that day, he had led Moody to a sure, saving knowledge of Christ (Pro 11:30).

Recently converted, Moody tried to join the Congregational Church(May, 1856). The Elders of the church were happy that Dwight wanted to be a member, but first he had to pass an oral examination on Christian doctrine. When unable to do that, Moody's membership was delayed until further knowledge could be gained. In the meantime, Moody decided he would move to Chicago. There he would engage in business and begin to make his fortune.

Moody did go to Chicago and he did engage in business. But something else happened. Moody began to win souls to the Savior. The revival of 1858 had come to the city and Moody wanted to be part of it. He rented extra pews at Plymouth Church and then he went into the streets of the city and invited the children to go with him to the services. Next, Moody opened a Sunday school in one of the poorest sections of the city in order to tell the little ones about Christ.

The Lord blessed, and soon Moodywanted nothing to do with any business except the business of preaching the Gospel and winning souls to Christ. Accordingly, in 1860, he left the shoe store to work full time with the YMCA. When the Civil War broke out, Moody ministered to the Union soldiers, again meeting with great success. Many hearts were converted or comforted in the hour of conflict. After the war Moody returned to Chicago, where he was able to transform a Sunday School into the independent Illinois Street Church. During this same time, from 1865 to 1869, Moody served as president of the Chicago YMCA.

His field of ministry was enlarged in 1871 when he began conducting revival meetings throughout the country. Until the time of his death in 1899, Moody would take the Gospel to every place the Lord led. He went to England and Scotland many times, always accompanied with his song leader Ira D. Sankey, who led the singing and introduced exciting new hymns to the crowds who came to hear Moody preach.

In his preaching Moody stressed three themes: Ruin, Redemption, and Regeneration.[28]He spoke of how sin had ruined man, how Christ had redeemed him, and how the Holy Spirit regenerates the soul—so that sins are forgiven, and life can be lived with joy and the knowledge of going to heaven. Moody spoke in simple language. His warmth and sincerity caused many people to consider the claims of Christ. And the Holy Spirit was pleased to open many hearts.

In addition to preaching the Gospel, Moody opened Christian boarding schools in Northfield, Massachusetts. In 1879 he founded a school for girls, and in 1881 established the Mount Hermon School for boys. In 1886 a Bible Institute was created to train effective Christian workers less formally than seminary training.

Bible conferences were held at Northfield beginning in 1880. At these meetings evangelismand holiness of life dominated the messages presented from some of the greatest Christian leaders from all parts of the world. These weeks of spiritual emphasis led to the Student Volunteer Movementin 1886. In the years to come a slogan would inspire many to do the work of an evangelist and go to faraway mission fields: "The evangelization of the world in this generation." It has been estimated that Dwight Lyman Moody, an obscure child from a poor fatherless family, grew up to reach 100 million people while leading a million souls to the Master. The world once saw what God will do with a man fully consecrated to Him.

Gospel Progress in the United Kingdom

The world is indebted to the Lord's mighty and continuing work in the British Isles during the 19th and 20th centuries. He has used great men in great movements for His purposes around the globe.

GEORGE MUELLER (1805-1898).An unusual man of great faith, George Muellerwas convinced that all of his material needs could be supplied through believing prayer alone. When he moved to Bristol, England, Mueller gave up his independent life to demonstrate that by faith and prayer alone God would supply for orphans (based upon Psalm 68:5). His simple belief in a prayer-hearing God has encouraged and inspired the establishment of other ministries according to faith principles.

HORATIUS BONAR(1808-1889)was born at Old Broughton, Edinburgh, Scotland, whose brother was Andrew Bonar. Following his education at the University of Edinburgh, Horatius maintained an active and powerful ministry for more than half a century, pastoring churches in that area until his death. Throughout his life, Bonar avoided all sensationalism, and was noted as calm, patient, sincere, solemn—and a steady writer. His tracts and books are finding their way back into print,[29]and he wrote 600 hymns, of which more than 100 are still in use.

ANDREW BONAR (1810-1892).A Scottish minister, Bonar left the Church of Scotlandin 1843 to help form the Free Church. Burdened for the salvation of the Jews, he labored to see them come to Christ. The author of many scholarly works, Bonar has been a source of blessing for his devotional writings. He is best remembered for theMemoir and Remains of Robert Murray McCheyne(1862),and for an edition of theLetters of Samuel Rutherford.[30]

ROBERT MURRAY McCHEYNE (1813-1843).Like Andrew Bonar, McCheyne continued to cultivate the Puritanheart through an exemplary life of self-discipline, fervent prayer, Bible study, and careful preparation for powerful preaching. It was said of this Scottish minister, "He cared for no question unless his Master cared for it; and his main anxiety was to know the mind of Christ."

A. W. PINK(1886-1952)was born in Nottingham, England in 1886, and born again of the Spirit of God in 1908 at the age of 22. He studied at Moody Bible Institutein Chicago, USA, for only six weeks before beginning his pastoral work in Colorado, then in California, Kentucky, and South Carolina, and then to Sydney Australia for a brief period, preaching

and teaching. In 1934, at 48 years old, he returned to his native England. In 1940 he took permanent residence in Lewis, Scotland, remaining there 12 years until his death at 66. Most of his works, including*The Attributes of God*, first appeared as articles in his monthly*Studies in the Scriptures*published without interruption from 1922 through 1953. Pink was virtually unknown and certainly unappreciated in his day. Independent Bible study convinced him that much of modern evangelism was defective. When Puritan and reformed books were thrown out, he advanced the majority of their principles with untiring zeal. The progressive decline of his own nation (Britain) was to him the inevitable consequence of the prevalence of a gospel that could neither wound nor heal. Familiar with the whole range of revelation, Pink was rarely sidetracked from the great themes of Scripture: grace, justification, and sanctification.

DAVID MARTYN LLOYD-JONES(1899-1981).Born in Newcastle Emlyn, Martin was reared as a Calvinistic Methodistand trained in medicine in London. After being converted to Christ, he studied for the ministry and accepted a pastorate at Port Talbot in Wales (1927-1938). During the difficult days of World War II, Dr. Jones served as an associate pastor with G. Campbell Morganat London's Westminster Chapel. When Dr. Morgan retired in 1943, Dr. Jones continued to provide strong pastoral counseling while defending the faith. His many books include*Truth Unchanged, Unchanging*(1951),*From Fear to Faith*(1953),*Studies in the Sermon on the Mount*(two volumes, 1959-1960), and a number of commentaries including*Romans*and*Ephesians*. Dr. Martin Lloyd-Jones was a champion for the cause of Christ in the Church at the end of the twentieth century.

The General Next to God

"Go for souls and go for the worst!"
—William Booth

There was still another movement that arose to challenge the formality of the Anglican Church. William Booth (1829-1912) was a former English Methodist minister who began the Salvation Armyin Wales. Men and women who enlisted for service in the Salvation Army followed a soldier of the Cross of Christ, who was willing to go into the lowest dredges of society to win men and women, boys and girls to Jesus Christ. After conducting a successful revival ministryin Cardiff, Wales, Booth began a similar ministry in London (1878). Out of the work came an organization fashioned after the military—with distinguishing rank and job descriptions.

It was not an easy life. There were long days, jeering crowds, and low pay. The General told one graduating class, "I sentence you all to hard labor for the rest of your natural lives." His wife would tell others, "There comes a crisis, a moment when every human soul which enters the kingdom of God has to make its choice of that kingdom in preference to everything else that it holds and owns."

William Booth was an extraordinary man. During his life he traveled 5,000,000 miles and preached 60,000 sermons. As a vegetarian, he ate "neither fish, flesh, nor fowl." As a minister of the Gospel he was hungry for nothing but the salvation of souls (note Joh 4:32, 34). Booth wanted to save people not only from the penalty of sin, but its pollution as well. He wanted to terminate their hunger, poverty, drunkenness, unemployment and, most of all, their immorality. Booth led the fight against London's open prostitution of teenage girls (ages 13-16). The 393,000 signatures he collected resulted in legislation that brought an end to "white slavery." He did more. He moved to minister to malnourished children—for "salvation from pinching poverty, from rags and misery, must be offered to all." His whole life was given to lifting up those who were cast down. When William Boothdied, 150,000 people filed by the casket. Millions around the globe mourned his passing. More than 40,000 people attended his funeral.

Equally beloved was his faithful wife and companion, Catherine Booth(1865-1950). As a child Catherine Mumford Booth experienced long periods of illness, during which she read many books. Her mind was bright; she read theological and philosophical books far beyond her years. Before the age of 12 she had read the entire Bible. In later years, her wide knowledge and sharp wit would serve her well when applied with humor. During one street meeting, she responded to a man who argued that the Apostle Paul had said that it was a shame for women to speak in the Church. "Oh yes, so he did; but in the first place this is not a church, and in the second place, I am not a Corinthian; besides [she continued while turning to look with sympathy at the man's wife], Paul said in the same epistle that it was good for the unmarried to remain so."

During the most tumultuous days of an often thankless ministry, Catherine remained faithful to serving Christ, though she admitted it was not always easy. "What a deal there is of going to meetings and getting blessed, and then going away and living just the same, until sometimes we, who are constantly engaged in trying to bring people nearer the heart of God, go away so discouraged that our hearts are almost broken." Still, in the end Catherine would be able to say, "The waters are rising, but so am I. I am not going under, but over."

"The Prince of Preachers"

Charles Haddon Spurgeon (1834-1892), remains history's most widely read minister of the Gospel, often called "The Prince of Preachers." Converted as a teenager, Spurgeon began to preach shortly thereafter; by age twenty he had

preached over 600 times. In 1854, the New Park Street Churchin London, England, invited young Spurgeon to be its pastor for the congregation of 232 members. Thirty-eight years later, at the end of his pastorate, the congregation numbered 5,311, making it the largest independent congregation in the world. It has been estimated that Spurgeon preached to over 10,000,000 people during his lifetime. His sermons and books sold into the millions of copies. A pastor's college, an orphanage, and a publishing house were just some of the ministries associated with his endeavors. However, buildings and budgets, numbers and statistics do not tell the story—for Charles Spurgeon's was a life hidden in Christ. Someone once asked Mr. Spurgeon what was the success to his preaching. He replied, "I take every passage of Scripture and make a bee-line for the Cross."

According to his faithful wife Susan, Charles Spurgeondied an early death due to the Down-Grade Controversy(1887-1888). It was a dramatic episode involving the Baptist Unionto which Spurgeon belonged. The controversy began when in March, 1887, Spurgeon published in his monthly magazine,The Sword and the Trowel, an article titled"The Down Grade."Written anonymously by Spurgeon's friend, Robert Shindler, the declaration was made that some ministers were "denying the proper deity of the Son of God, renouncing faith in his atoning death..." These ministers, said Shindler, were on a slippery slope, or down-grade. They were moving away from historical, essential evangelical doctrines.

The obvious question was asked by the leaders of the Baptist Union: "Who were these ministers that dare to deny the doctrines of the Church?" Spurgeon would not name names. His objective was focused and limited. Spurgeon simply wanted to warn against the rise of liberalism. He sincerely believed that three doctrines were being abandoned: the infallibilityof the Bible, the substitutionary atonement of Christ, and the certainty of final judgment for those who died without saving knowledge of the Lord. When the Baptist Unionmet in October of 1887, the "Down Grade" was the main topic of conversation and concern. Rather than create a schism, Spurgeon resigned from the Baptist Union.

Unfortunately, this action was viewed as a public insult to the Union. Instead of dealing with the issue, Baptist leaders tried to recover their reputation as much as possible. On January 13, 1888, the Council of the Baptist Unionpassed a resolution known as the "vote of censure." Since Spurgeon would not give names and supporting evidence, the Council decreed that his charges should not have been made. Spurgeon felt betrayed, but remained resolute on the need to address the main issues. It did not matter that time vindicated Spurgeon's strong words of warning. The damage had been done; a very good man and a very important warning had been unfortunately diminished.

The Keswick Convention

The Keswick Conventionbegan spontaneously in 1875 at a meeting in Keswick, a village in northern England. Since then the five day meeting has continued in much the same format each July. It has its foundations in the books of W. E. Boardman,The Higher Christian Life(1859), Robert Pearsall Smith,Holiness through Faith(1870), and his wife Hanna Whitehall Smith,The Christian's Secret of a Happy Life(1873). In addition, the religious climate in England had a marvelous awakening in the campaigns of D. L. Moody in every major city in 1873 and 1874.

Thus entered the Smiths, the real catalysts. Both were born and bred Quakersin Philadelphia, in 1827 and 1832 respectively, although he was a member of the Presbyterian Churchmost of his life. Eight years after their marriage both were converted, and were tried by an inability to have consistent victory over sin, being told by older Christians that a "sinning and repenting" cycle was the normative Christian experience due to the weakness of the flesh. Justificationby faith was known and accepted, but "sanctification by faith" was a new revelation to them in 1867. This included committing not only one's eternal future to the Lord, but also one's daily life, "taking up one's cross daily," experiencing consistent victory over sin's power (see Romans 6 and 8).

Mr. Smith was a businessman, and both were without theological training, but natural gifts in teaching and writing won them wide audiences. They went to England in 1872 for a rest from too busy schedules. There they were invited to share at a series of breakfast meetings for pastors in London. In this way, 2,400 clergy heard their message. In 1874 and early 1875, several well attended conferences were organized at The Broadlands, Oxford, and Brighton. These clearly set forth the aim not to promote any new doctrine, but to experience real vitality within accepted conservative doctrine. The first Keswick Convention followed in July 1875, organized by the Evangelical diocese pastor at Keswick, Canon T. D. Harford-Battersby. It was entitled "Union Meetings for the Promotion of Practical Holiness," and was attended by all church affiliations. Great criticism began to pour in on the movement, and adherents had to be ready to be put out of some churches.

Over the years, Keswick has become the centerpiece for the movement of "Higher Life" teaching. Its original positions, speaking of a "second act of consecration," were modified over time to the more biblically-based position: that a complete surrender to Christ as Lord at conversion (the work of God in saving faith that includes repentance from sin and selfishness), proceeds to life-long daily commitment in denying self and serving Christ wholeheartedly, experiencing greater victory over sin's power (i.e., no longer slaves to sin). The sequence of teaching at every Keswick Conventionis the same: one day for each of the exceeding sinfulness of sin (and encouragement to its abandonment), God's provision for sin (sin need not be a continual source of defeat), consecration of the Christian (in practical and

scriptural holiness31), fullness of the Holy Spirit, and Christian service (including missionary responsibility). The Convention has received the support and participation of Theodore Monod, Evan Hopkins, George Macgregor, Elder Cumming, Handley C. G. Moule, Andrew Murray, F. B. Meyer, Donald G. Barnhouse, W. Graham Scroggie, and G. Campbell Morgan. Both Hudson Taylor and Amy Carmichael came from the movement as missionaries.

Chapter 20

Challenges in the Twentieth Century and Beyond

New Challenges

The beginning of the twentieth century brought many new challenges to the Church of Jesus Christ. Not all of them would be easy to meet.

The Challenge of Immigration

From 1865 to 1884 more than seven million immigrants came to the United States from Europe. This was good, for the "Land of the Free" wanted to welcome as many people as possible. However, as the immigrants arrived and settled throughout the country, they brought to America different religious concepts that would touch and transform established practices (the same phenomena is continuing in Europe as well).

There was, for example, the matter of worship on Sunday. Since colonial days, America practiced the "Puritan Sabbath" whereby the whole day was given to the Lord and religious activity. In contrast, there was the "Continental Sabbath" of the immigrants (advocated by Calvin)–Sunday morning may be given to church but the rest of the day was for rest and relaxation. Little by little the "Continental Sabbath" came to dominate the way Americans worshipped on Sunday.

There is an on-going pressure for populations to move from under-developed to developed countries for economic gain. Every immigrant brings his own culture and beliefs with him. And society, rather than teaching the new arrivals the great truths of Christianity, attempts to integrate, accommodate, and tolerate. In this we lose our push for evangelism, and the sense of the "absolute truths" of the Bible.

The Challenge of Evangelism in the Cities

With the rapid rise of city populations due to immigration and industrialization, it was inevitable that overcrowding take place in vast tenement districts. How could the Church personally and effectively minister to those who crowded into apartment buildings of the cities? Many of the new immigrants did not even speak the national language. In the USA in 1867, the Baptist Home Mission Society was established to lead the way in addressing this particular problem. Other denominations followed suit. New programs were devised to bring the Gospel to the tenements.

The Challenge of Affluence

The personal prosperity that many began to enjoy as a result of the Industrial Revolutionbrought its own concerns. It is possible for wealth to draw the heart away from the Lord (1Ti 6:10), to cause people to become self-sufficient and think that they do not need God (Jam 5:1-6). It is also possible for much good to be done with money. Many wealthy Christians did want to do good and support the Church out of the blessings of God's grace to them. They helped to do innumerable good works at home and abroad, and to establish seminaries, universities, and colleges too. Some of these were designed to be Christian institutions, such as in the USA the McCormick Seminary, Cornell, Leland Stanford, Vassar, Smith, Wellesley, and Bryn Mawr universities. Unfortunately, the danger with affluenceand the giving flowing from it, is that a business mentality crept into the ministry. Religious institutions were targeted for philanthropic work much like a Board of Directors would consider where to give money for a tax write-off. Successful businessmen were given places on the financial boards of churches, even if they did not met the scriptural qualifications set forth in 1 Timothy 3:1-14 and Titus 1:5-9.

The Challenge of Social Concerns

Because of the social crowding and the problems it brought to society, because of the growing affluence of the middle class, because of an increased wealth coming into the Church, it was inevitable that criticism be focused on that institution which proclaimed to be compassionate and caring for the poor and downtrodden. Horace Bushell, a Congregational minister, reminded the Church to pay closer attention to the training of young people in his work,Christian Nurture.While caring for others, the Church must care for its own as well.

Since man is both body and soul, conscientious Christians insisted that the Church do something to help society in practical ways. It was argued that local church assemblies and main denominations should consider ways to alleviate

slum areas and reduce the cramped, disease infested conditions of the community. The outworking of these concepts led to the "Institutional Church."

A leading voice of the Institutional Churchwas the Episcopalian minister William A. Muhlenberg, great grandson of Henry Melchior Muhlenberg(1711-1787). The latter helped to establish the Lutheran Churchin America during the colonial period. From 1846 to 1858 William Muhlenberg served as rector of the Church of the Holy Communion in New York City. Through his inspirational guidance several social works of lasting endurance were begun, such as the Sisterhood of the Holy Communion and St. Luke's Hospital.

Following his example, Thomas K. Beecher, pastor of the First Congregational Churchof Elmira, New York, encouraged the community to come to his church for aerobics, lectures, and reading. Then there was Russell H. Conwell. In 1891 this pastor of the Baptist Temple in Philadelphia allowed the church facilities to be used for sewing classes, reading rooms, a recreational room, and a place for educational night classes to be held. Temple Universitygrew out of this graciousness. The belief that the Institutional Churchmust do something in the community continued as the new century progressed. In 1908, the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America adopted theSocial Creed of the Churches.

While all this social activity was extremely commendable, it carried a danger. The programs offered were attractive to people, and in many churches have become an end unto themselves, rather than a means to an end. It was possible for the Church of the Lord to forget its main function of winning souls to Christ. It was possible for the Church to forget to preach the Gospel. It was possible for the Scriptures to be set aside in favor of sweet sermons that offended no one, because sinand the need of a Savior had been forgotten. The challenge that the Church faced was how to maintain its spiritual integrity while helping those in obvious need.

This has resulted in a historic drift away from the Scriptures and into liberal theology. We must all "serve one another," but only while carrying forward the teaching of true doctrines. When religious men disavow the necessity of the atonement, they are quite happy to be left with a "social gospel," in which all men will go to heaven. They focus on the love of God, and ignore the hatred of God toward sin and rebellion. This "social gospel" of love and good works, without the power of God unto salvation proclaimed in the Scriptures, has most unfortunately become the norm in many large denominations such as the Methodist Churchand the United Presbyterian Church.

The Challenge of Secular Education

In 1925 a bill was passed in the state of Florida requiring daily Bible reading in all public schools and forbidding the teaching of the theory of evolutionin public classrooms. Similar legislation was passed in the states of Texas and Tennessee. No one suspected that the stage was being set for one of the great trials of the century.

On Friday, June 10, 1925, at 9 AM, in the quiet community of Dayton, Tennessee(pop. 2,000), Court was convened to consider a challenge to the Butler Bill, which the State legislature had passed. The bill stipulated the penalty for any teacher found guilty of the misdemeanor. A fine would be imposed between $100 and $500. John Scopeshad been charged with deliberately violating the new statute. The American Civil Liberties Union(ACLU) did not believe that Mr. Scopes should pay the penalty the bill imposed. The State of Tennessee disagreed. The "Scopes Monkey Trial," as it soon became known, would become the test case as to whether the statute would be upheld.

Coming to the defense of John Scopes at the request of the ACLUwas Clarence Darrow, a liberal lawyer and "a stern foe of fundamentalists" according to one biography. When Darrow heard that William Jennings Bryanwould argue the case for the State of Tennessee, he was delighted, saying, "I would like to meet Bryan in this case. I believe I could down him." He was partially right. On the final day of the trial the jury returned a verdict of guilty. John Scopes was to pay the court $100. However, in the "court of public opinion," Clarence Darrow had made a "monkey" out of William Jennings Bryan. He had led the public to believe that evolution was more "scientific" than biblical creationism.

Soon, the theory of evolutionwould replace the simplicity of the Scriptures in the classroom. The work of Charles Darwinfirst published in 1859,The Origin of the Species,had finally found a resting place in the fertile soil of a foolish society that rushed to embrace a godless philosophy, without fully considering all the evidence for scientific creationism. With all due respect for Mr. Bryan, he was a politician, not a theologian. Had he been better trained in the Bible, he would not have made some basic concessions that undermined his credibility, and gave away his case in the court of public opinion.

The Challenge of Modernism

Following the Scopes Monkey Trial, the relatively easy acceptance by the general public that evolutionary thinking should be allowed into the classroom is understandable. In part, liberal theologians had prepared the way. Thousands of people were being influenced Sunday after Sunday by liberal theology.

One of Modernism's most popular preachers was Harry Emerson Fosdick(1878-1979). During the 1920s he was an ardent champion of liberalism, which included the concept that the Church of Christ in the twentieth century was outdated. In a 1926 essay, "What Christian Liberals Are Driving At," Fosdick argued that, "Not one of its historic statements of faith takes into account any of the masterful ideas that constitute the framework of modern thinking—the

inductive method, the new astronomy, natural law, evolution. All these have come since Protestantism arrived." In other words, the Christian Church was "pre-scientific." Upon hearing things like this, and not knowing any better, many Christian were simply embarrassed and accepted the new ideas.

To stand firm against the attacks of the Modernistsupon the Bible, there arose theFundamentalists.They attempted to reduce the confusion by articulating the very most basic biblical doctrines that must be adhered to in order to remain "Christian." One such was Presbyterian theologian J. Gresham Machen, who was not embarrassed by the charges of Modernism. He was ready and able to challenge Modernism while defending the historic faith of the Church. Machen wisely pointed out that "The liberal attempt at reconciling Christianity with modern science has really relinquished everything distinctive of Christianity, so that what remains is in essentials only that same indefinite type of religious aspiration which was in the world before Christianity came upon the scene." Machen was right. There was no need for the Christian community to concede any truth it had proclaimed for two thousand years. The Church had nothing to apologize for. What it did need to do was think more clearly.

But the Fundamentalists had to do a better job of presenting their position. And this could be done because the problem was relatively simple: Fundamentalism was sending a mixed message to society. It was trying to hold two views at once (cp. James 1:8). One popular message argued that American culture was on the decline and under the judgment of God. Political solutions and human solutions to the problems of the world were only going to make matters worse. There needed to be a readiness to leave this life because the world was soon coming to an end. The Second Advent of the Lord was imminent. That was one message. The other message from the Fundamentalists was that America should be reformed. America was a chosen nation by God who had strayed from the right path. America needed to get back to God on her knees.

Many were confused. Either America was a Babylon under divine judgment, or America was a modern day Palestine, chosen by God to be the moral leader of the world. Either the Lord's coming was imminent and would happen at any moment, or it was impending and there was much work to do.

There was more confusion, for many Fundamentalistswere no longer clear as to what constituted the basics of the Christian faith. In 1910 they had been more clear. In that year a series of small volumes was published with the titleThe Fundamentals: A Testimony to the Truth.Five basic doctrines were set forth:

- The Bibleis free from error.
- Christ is Deity and was born of a virgin.
- Christ died a substitutionary death at Calvary to satisfy the wrath of God against sin.
- Christ arose from the dead on the third day.
- He will come again the second time for all who believe.

These were the fundamentals of the faith. But that was in 1910; by the 1920s there were new concerns. The "Roaring Twenties" made some conservative Christians think that perhaps "standards" should be included in the list of fundamentals of the faith. But if so, which standards? Who would be responsible for drawing-up the list of acceptable moral behavior by which one could be assured of salvation? Also, what about evolution? and war? and the holiness movement? The Fundamentalistshad to do a better job of thinking through their own theology.

Realizing this, and weary with the Modernismthat had crept in at Princeton Seminary, in 1929 Professor J. Gresham Machenunited with other Christians to establish Westminster Theological Seminaryin Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The fight against Modernismwould continue, but it would be conducted in the future by even more insightful individuals who had seriously considered the Scriptures.

The Challenge of International and Ecumenical Unity

Prior to World War I, World War II, and the Korean Conflict, the Modernists were sure that society was moving towards Utopia. To paraphrase popular liberal thought of the era, there was a religious belief that "every day and in every way societies were getting better and better." Maybe Communism would bring world harmony. Maybe the United Nations could solve people's problems, as diplomats sat down and talked about their differences. Maybe a World Council of Churches could show mankind the way to live in peace and harmony. One by one each of these secular and religious institutions arose to try. But time is showing once again that there is no substituting the effort or the institutions of men, for the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of men.

The Church Faces the Future

As the Church of Jesus Christ begins the twenty-first century, there are clever foes and formidable challenges that must be faced.

The Charismatic Movement

To issue a general warning about the Charismatic movementmay appear to be unkind, but there is reason for concern among conservative Christians. For an insightful study of the foundation upon which this movement has been built, attention is directed toSigns of the Apostles: Observations on Pentecostalism Old and Newby Walter J. Chantry, published by The Banner of TruthTrust, Carlisle, Pennsylvania, 17013. It is sufficient to say that feelings and experiences can take precedence over Scripture in some Charismatic churches (cp. Joh 15:15 with 2Ti 3:16-17). Many Charismatic brethren are willing to follow after modern day "apostles," exalting men rather than Christ alone. There is a belief that the apostolic gift of being able to perform miracles to create signs and wonders is still valid (study 1Co 12:29-30). Also, it is taught that the manifestation of the filling of the Holy Spirit is demonstrated by speaking in tongues (cp. Luk 1:15; 1:41-42; 1:67-69). Since the extremes of Charismatic theology can redefine many historic Christian concepts and doctrines, careful discernment is required of anyone in this movement (Mat 7:22-23).

In addition, there is also an emphasis today on the "Health/Wealth" movement (or "Word/Faith" or Faith movement).32This is the teaching that our problems stem from a lack of faith, and to receive what we desire we need only "name it and claim it" by faith. But this totally ignores Christ's emphasis onspiritualblessing, and His promise of tribulation for His disciples, in order to keep our pride broken, us growing in faith, and us dependent upon Him alone. The Christian life consists not in getting what we want, but in serving a risen Master. Therein lies the only true joy.

Dispensationalism

The Congregational minister, Cyrus Ingerson Scofield(1843-1921), is widely credited with making popular dispensational teaching33by the publication of theScofield Reference Biblein 1909. This theological system is based upon a seven-era method of "rightly dividing" the Scriptures. It was first proposed by John N. Darbyin 1830 (see chapter 15). The system makes dramatic distinctions between seven dispensations, treating believing Israel and the believing Church as two distinct groups (rather than one body of believers). It also teaches two returns of Christ (cp. Heb 9:28) and two resurrections (cp. Joh 5:28). The key is this: the main Scriptures regarding the end-times can be interpreted two ways—in either the traditional reformed view, or the dispensational view, depending upon which Scriptures are emphasized as primary.

But the dispensational view has quickly led many people into four problems.

1. Because of an impending "rapture," people tend to disregard their biblical responsibilities to impact society for Christ.

2. And, because of the emphasis on this "age of grace," and the separation from the Old Testament Law as an invaluable guide to holy living, Dispensationalismencourages people to believe that they are "not under law, but grace," and therefore can continue to live life for themselves, seeking their own desires and interests, not seeking first the kingdom of God. This is calledanti-nomianism(Greekanti -against,nomia -law).34

3. In addition, most holding the dispensational view have embraced Arminian beliefs emphasizing man's free choice to "receive Christ," without also recognizing God's sovereign choice in electing them unto salvation (see chapter 12), becoming man-centered rather than God-centered.

4. Finally, many who hold to Dispensationalismwill emphasize "just make a decision for Christ"—receiving Christ as Savior becomes merely an intellectual assent to "believe," without a corresponding commitment to Christ as Lord. This is more accurately referred to asSandemanianism, which began as a clear departure from the historical faith in the late 1700s (see chapter 15). It has re-surfaced in our day in the opposition to "Lordship Salvation."35Often within Dispensationalism, "becoming a disciple of Christ as Lord" is offered as an optional part of sanctification, instead of being a clear result of salvation initially. But the Bible associates "turning from sin" with "turning to God"—as a part of one in the same "turning." Historical orthodox Christianity views repentance from sin as an integral part of saving faith, all by the grace of God, submitting our will to Him as Savior and Lord.

Dispensationalismstill remains popular, and thus can be a challenge for the Church when these problems enter in.

Legalism and Other Extremes

At the opposite end of the evangelical spectrum, there are extremes associated with a misunderstanding of "purity." In a mistaken self-inflated zeal for doctrinal purity, some have added many minor doctrines as a requirement for "unity," and proceeded to break off fellowship with other believers who disagree on only minor points, even branding them "heretics." There is today still much spiritual pride in head-knowledge of theology, without humility in application to the heart.

In addition, some have distorted the doctrine of God's free offer of saving grace, by insisting upon a season of "mourning and grieving over sin" before one is able to turn from sin to Christ. While the Holy Spirit may bring some through this, the application of the Gospel is in Christ's command to "Come unto me," without merit or condition (Joh 7:37).36This is the exhortation that must be proclaimed.

Also, in a mistaken zeal for practical purity, some have added long lists of rule-keeping, in order to demonstrate sanctification. But our obedience is always to be motivated by unfeigned love for God in gratitude of heart, as His

servants. Rule-keeping only breeds a judgmental heart and superficiality in love-relationship with Christ.

Finally, in a mistaken interpretation of the sovereignty of God, some have adopted the belief that God will save His chosen (elected) ones, without consideration of the humanmeans. This causes some to refuse to evangelize! But mandoeshave responsibility to serve Christ with his whole heart; and Godwillsovereignly accomplish His purposes, independently of man's obedience. Both are perfectly true in the economy of God. His ways are high above our understanding.

Eastern Mysticism and the New Age

There are strange new religions that the Church of the living God must combat for the souls of men. The Unification Church, Hare Krishna, Zen Buddhism, and Transcendental Meditationwere once religions of the Far East. Now, they are attracting the naive and the sophisticated in every nation in the Western world. Christians need to understand the opposition, and the competition, that the Church faces without being intimidated or overwhelmed. The clear Gospel message must not be surrendered. People still need the Son of Righteousness (Heb 1:1-4), not the "Moon" of Korea. Souls need Christ-consciousness, not the Hindu god of the Krishna-consciousness. The best way to witness is simply to tell others, "Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?" (cp. Joh 4:29 with 3:16). As the claims of Christ and His redemptive work at Calvary are considered, He will be found more precious than silver and gold (1Pe 1:18).

During the last two decades of the twentieth century, the New Age Movementhas come out of the counter-culture into the mainstream of civilization to influence almost every facet of life—medical science, education, government, psychology, and religion. Combining Eastern mysticismwith Western optimism, the New Age offers mankind an alternative to traditional beliefs and values. Its basic tenet is that man is intrinsically good, and that we must tolerate all behaviors as individual choices. It is the basis for the "one world order," and includes holistic health, trans-personal psychology, deified energy in physics, a politically unified world order, and a narcissistic (self-centered) spirituality. It claims that man can be happy without turning from his sin; in fact, its proponents claim that the very concept of sin is "out-dated."

The Church faces the challenge of helping thoughtful people realize that behind the facade, there is only a bankrupt philosophy that will separate the soul from the Creator. Contrary to the teaching of the New Age, people are not magnificent, and do not have great wisdom within themselves. People are sinful and selfish, and are in desperate need of a Savior.

Pragmatism and the Church Growth Movement

An interesting question has arisen for the Church at the end of the twentieth century. The question is this: "Can the local church grow, apart from the power of the Holy Spirit." While the question is not really asked that blatantly, in essence that is exactly what is at issue. And the answer for many is a surprising, "YES!" In hundreds of ways, thousands of ministers have now been told that the congregation can grow without having strong Gospel preaching, prayer, and soul-winning efforts. All that is needed is to bepragmatic, i.e., if a technique works in the world's eyes, then it is good and can be used to attract people. Of course, the techniques that work to attract people in the world, are the techniques of the world: the assembly must identify and target the community it is in, and then "find a need and fill it." With new concepts a flourishing industry has arisen to "build" the church. Today, the Church Growth Movementis well armed with popular music, charts, and "market" surveys; promotions, promises, programs, gimmicks, and gadgets; to woo and win the local community. All of this could also be said about many parts of the modern missionsmovement as well. Man's wisdom and "what works" has taken precedence over prayer and the Holy Spirit.[37]

The problem is this: often these techniques are simply "the world's ways" (and we are told to "love not the world," 1Jo 2:15).[38]People respond to these methods because they are attracted to them in their flesh—it is "fun, food, and fellowship." Moreover, the pastor might tend not to preach sin and the need for salvation, because some might be offended by being called sinful, and might leave the local church. Therefore, the Gospel is changed into a "warm" message of love and kindness, without conviction of sin. In contrast, previous generations of Christians were convinced that "the Lordadded to the church daily such as should be saved" (Act 2:47).

Psychological Seduction

One of the most powerful challenges to the Christian community today is that of psychology, which has fit right into the pragmatism discussed above. When the basic tenets of psychology are assembled, they make a direct assault upon the fundamental doctrines of the Bible. Psychology teaches, in part, that man is inherently good; society, not self, is ultimately to blame for the problems of life; sin is simply low self-esteem; self becomes a god; beliefs, not behavior, should change—even if the behavior involves casual sex or an aberrant lifestyle; values are relative; and there are no absolutes (note Rom 1:18-32; 3:10; 6:23; 2Ti 3:1-7). We are taught to "love ourselves" before we can love others!

But when Jesus said "love others as youlove yourself," He was simply using the natural care we take for our bodies and interests, as the measure to love others, not giving a new command to "love ourselves."[39]We are told many times in Scripture instead that "the first will be last" and to "deny yourself" (Mat 19:30; 20:16; Mar 9:35; 10:31; Luk 13:30; Mat 16:24; Mar 8:34; Luk 9:23). Self-denialin Christ's power, not self-love, is the key to following Christ. The basic problem with psychologyis twofold: 1) it identifies a different problem—others, not personal sin, and 2) it offers a different solution—self-esteem, not Christ. The Church must find a way to disentangle Christianity from the psychological religion, a false religion that has confused many by intertwining itself with the true Gospel message of Christ's redeeming self-sacrificing love.

The Battle for the Bible

Throughout the twentieth century, there has been a relentless attack upon the authority of the Bible itself. If the Bible can be shown to have errors, or to be less than the authoritative Word of God, then man is justified in conforming his life to the commands of the Scriptureonly partially!We see that man will do anything to avoid submitting his life 100% to God's authority. So today we have those that say the Bible can beinterpretedin many ways, so that obedience to biblical instruction in righteousness becomes just a matter of personal interpretation! However, the Word of God is not to be handled so carelessly. There are proper Bible study methods to follow. These include: 1) staying in context (historical and narrative), 2) using the original language word meanings, and 3) following the original language grammar.[40]

We also have those who say the Bible isinfallible(incapable of error in the areas in which it claims authority), but notinerrant(completely without error). By this they mean the Bible is without error in faithand practice, but can have error in science and history. This allows them to disregard the Genesis account of creation, Noah's flood, and miracles such as Jonah and the whale. In fact, it opens the door to re-interpret any aspect of biblical truth. The fact of the matter is, that whenever the Bible and science have seemed to collide, and further scientific investigation has revealed new facts, the Bible has been proven to be correct.[41]

To be very clear in this day of abundant distortions, we must say four words: that we hold to theverbal,plenaryinspirationof theinerrantScriptures. "Verbal" means the written words (in the original languages), not the intended or spiritual meaning (which is a matter of correct interpretation). "Plenary" means every word, not just most. "Inspiration" means God-breathed: the words in the original language were written by men who were guided by the Holy Spirit to write the very words that God intended (yet reflecting their own personalities!).

In the words of C. H. Spurgeon: "However this sacred Book may be treated nowadays, it was not treated...questioningly by the Lord...He continually quoted the Law and the prophets...with intense reverence...How much more should we! [Moreover,] the utmost degree of deference and homage is paid to the Old Testament by the writers of the New. We never find an apostle raising a question about the degree of inspirationin this book or that."[42]

The Sovereignty of God

An emphasis on "man's free will" has caused many believers today to accept a mistaken view of who God is, even without realizing it. Historically, Christians have held that God is both omnipotent (no limit to His power) and sovereign (no limit to His authority), as in Revelation 19:9—"The Lord God Omnipotent Reigneth." This will be our song in heaven; why should it not also be now? But all the influences mentioned in this chapter have caused the common Christian culture of today to become occupied with personal desires, preferences, and plans. We desire to be "in control" (a virtue in the world system), and we get frustrated with bad circumstances, even angry! Many now see God as desiring good, but constantly thwarted by sin, to the point that He is only watching, and it is up to us to strive to make things better, using our own strengths (Deism all over again). People say, "He helps us to do good as we see it." But this view destroys faith, and causes us to look to ourselves.

The Bible, on the other hand, consistently presents God as "in control," completely and with no exceptions. He accomplishes His will on earth, not ours. We are called to submit our will to Him in all things, and serve Him as bond-slaves (2Co 4:10-12; Rom 12:11; 14:18). We live for His will, not our own (Mat 6:10; Heb 12:1; 1Pe 4:2). He useseverything, even the acts of sinful men, for our good (Rom 8:28-29). What a blessing this truth is to the saints—it means we can have peace and joy (Joh 14:27; Rom 15:13) as we "trust His heart even when we cannot trace His hand." Prayer and peace can replace planning, pressure, and power-plays![43]

The Next Chapter

Despite these very real challenges, the Church will yet march on from victory to victory. The "old old story of Jesus and His love" shall always be told, because the Holy Spirit moves in men to avoid the past being forgotten.

One day multitudes will stand to honor and salute individuals who have worked to preserve the past, while maintaining the purity of doctrinal truth. One day the King of Glory will return to earth. He will find faith because

individuals of courage and conviction have been busy about their Father's business.

By remembering the faithfulness of God in the past, the Church can face the future with great confidence—despite the many challenges to its creeds and conduct. True disciples of Christ must rise up and follow Him afresh. Individuals of purity and passion are needed just as much as ever, to lead souls out of spiritual darkness into the glorious light of the kingdom of God.

More than one Bible commentator has noted that the book ofActsends rather abruptly. It seems as if the manuscript were left unfinished. Perhaps there is a reason for this; perhaps the last chapter of the "book of the Acts of the Holy Spirit" has yet to be written. The story of the Churchis not yet finished. If the Lord tarries, the Church today will be the next chapter that future generations will read about. Therefore, let us leave a legacy of lasting glory. Let us with the first century saints both…

"continue steadfastly in the apostles'
doctrine and fellowship"—Acts 2:41

and

"go...into all the world, and preach the
gospel to every creature."—Mark 16:15

Amen!

Soli Deo Gloria
To God Alone Be the Glory

Please also read

"A Glorious Institution: The Church in History, Parts One and Two"

Part One,When the Church Was Young (AD 33-754),focuses on the early growth of the Christian Church, developing from a small assembly of believers in Jerusalem to become a vast spiritual kingdom touching the lives of millions in many lands. Apostolic Fathers and Church councils issued the carefully worded creeds of Christendom. Jews and then Gentiles persecuted the saints, but the Church miraculously became the spiritual force of the Roman Empire and fulfilled the Great Commission for its day. Part One ends with the militant sweep of the Mohammedans conquering much of known Christendom.

Part Two,The Church in the Middle Ages (AD 754-1517),traces the days of Charlemagne to the dawn of the Reformation. During these Middle Ages the Church divided into the Eastern and Western Churches, and despite its great wealth and organization, fell under the control of the civil governments. Popes and emperors maneuvered for power, and the Crusades sought to free the Holy Land from the Turks. New ways of thinking swept in the Renaissance. Pagan culture influenced the popes along with Christian truth, resulting in a mixture of the two and persecution of those who questioned the Church. A cry for reform could be heard. The moment was at hand for a tremendous spiritual renewal in the Church, which would in time transform the entire western world.

Short Biography of Stanford E. Murrell

Stanford E. Murrell, Th.D., is an experienced pastor and Bible teacher in Viera, Florida. A complete overview of Church History is also available as a local seminar taught in your own church assembly. For more information, contact Dr. Murrell directly: stanfordmurrell@yahoo.com and www.stanmurrell.org.

Footnotes

1Vulgate Bible- late 4th-century Latin translation of the Bible. It was largely the work of Jerome, who was commissioned by Pope Damasus I in 382 to make a new revision of older Latin translations. By the 13th century this revision had come to be called theversio vulgata, that is, the "commonly used translation." It ultimately became the official Latin version of the Bible in the Roman Catholic Church.
2mortification- putting to death. See FGB 201,Mortification,
3his theses- the full text of Luther'sNinety-five Thesesis available in the Study Guide.
4diet- national meeting of princes and powerful leaders.
5Documents of the Christian Church, selected and edited by Henry Bettenson, second edition (Oxford University Press, London and New York, 1963).
6SeeThe Invisible Church, in chapter one of Part One.
7wanting- lacking.
8doctrines of grace- a name given to the system of theology usually known as Calvinism, which emphasizes that salvation is all of grace, by the merit of Christ alone, absolutely without any addition from the works of man, either in an unregenerate or regenerate state. SeeThe Doctrines of Grace in the Gospel of John,
9SeeCalvin on Self-denial, Calvin on Prayer,andCalvin on The Mediator, all abstracted from theInstitutesand
10anathematized- cursed.
11Calvinistic in principle- that is, they believed in the sovereign rule of God over all things in the affairs of men, that men are to live a holy life separate from the wickedness of worldly pleasures, and that the Bible is authoritative and literally true.
12London Baptist Confession of 1677- adopted in 1677; first published in 1689.
13London Baptist Confession of Faith of 1689- one of the great historical confessions in continuous worldwide up to the present day
14professing Christians- those who take the name of Christ without having been born again.
15Canons of Dort-
16want- lack.
17For biblical evidence of sign gift cessation, seeSpirit of Truth
18"Whitefield's Letter to Wesley"
19believe- TheConfessionoften makes use of the word "trust" in its full meaning: putting faith into full active dependency upon God.
20This synopsis and all quotations are fromThe Puritansby D. M. Lloyd-Jones, 1987, The Banner of Truth Trust, pp. 170-190.
21SeeAdoniram Judson and the Missionary CallandAnn Judson,
22Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God-
23cults- (Latincultus:care, adoration) groups with devoted followers of unorthodox doctrines or practices.
24Ellen Gould White,The Great Controversy.
25Ibid.
26abstracted fromBible Readings for the Home Circle, 1915 edition.
27John Oswald Sanders (1902-1992) -general director of China Inland Mission and Overseas Missionary Fellowship in the 1950s and 1960s. He authored more than forty books on the Christian life. He became an elder statesman and worldwide conference speaker from his retirement until his death. Born in Invercargill, New Zealand.
28SeeRuin, Redemption, Regeneration, an anonymous tract that captures these three themes.
29
30Letters of Samuel Rutherford- booklet with excerpts of thirty of the best letters
31practical and scriptural holiness- "Holiness as understood by Keswick...is not a withdrawal from the world, nor a subjective pietism, nor striving after a vague mystical oneness with God, but spiritual wholeness and health that will issue in a practical walk in the Spirit and the daily doing of God's will."–Steven Barabas, Wheaton College,So Great Salvation - the History and Message of the Keswick Convention(Fleming H. Revell Co., 1952) p. 108.
32For more on this, seeWhat Is Wrong with the Word Faith Movementby Hank Hanegraff;
33For more on this, seeScofield or the Scriptures?by Paul Sisco (1970) andThe Scofield Bibleby Albertus Pieters (1869-1955)
34Romans 6 demonstrates that "not under law" points to: not under law as a merit system to earn God's favor regarding salvation.
35SeeLetter to a Friend about Lordship Salvationby John Piper
36SeeCome unto Meby Tom Wells
37SeeNo Compromiseby C. H. Spurgeon (1834-1892), andTen Indictments against the ModernChurch by Paul Washer
38SeeFree Grace Broadcaster"Love Not the World" andFleeing Out of Sodomby Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758)
39SeeThe Biblical View of Self-esteemby Jay Adams,
40See the study course available from Mount Zion Bible Institute:Methods of Bible Study.
41SeeIs the Bible Reliable?by John Piper
42Sermon fromMetropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit, vol. 34, no. 2013.
43SeeDoes God Rule Everything?by Arthur Dent (1706) andSelf-denial(Free Grace Broadcaster)

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