

Conflicts over Religious Pluralism

It is certainly the pope's sentiment that if indulgences, which are a very insignificant thing, are celebrated with one bell, one procession, and one ceremony, then the gospel, which is the very greatest thing, should be preached with a hundred bells, a hundred processions, a hundred ceremonies.

—Martin Luther, 95 Theses, 1517

Essential Question: How did religious pluralism challenge the concept of a unified Europe?

One early reason for Martin Luther's demands for religious reform stemmed from concerns over the Catholic Church's policy of selling **indulgences**, a practice that had come to mean the buying of forgiveness for sin. However, over time, many reformers called into question other Catholic practices and doctrines, such as papal infallibility—the belief that the word of the pope is supreme on matters of faith. Such concerns fractured the unity of Christianity in Central and Western Europe, bringing the emergence of differing and often competing sects of Christianity in the 16th century, a religious revolution known as the **Reformation**.

Reforms in the Christian Church

The growing Renaissance interest in **secular**, or nonreligious, matters strongly affected the Roman Catholic Church in Europe. The desire for fine art and material wealth caused the Church to be a patron for painters such as Michelangelo and to build grand cathedrals. Thus, in the view of the reformers, many Church officials, especially the high clergy, had turned away from their true religious responsibilities. In response to this and other practices, **Christian Humanists** called for religious reform.

Christian Humanists Seek Religious Reform

While influenced by the Italian Renaissance, Christian Humanists in Northern Europe wanted to use their intellectual achievements and love of the classics to inspire the Christian beliefs. Christian Humanists were critical of the growing secular spirit of the Church and wanted to restore what they considered a

purser Christian dogma. Embracing the motto “*Ad fontes* (back to the source),” Christian Humanists began reading the Bible in Greek and Hebrew as well as studying writings of early Christian leaders.

Erasmus Pleads for Reform One of the best representatives of Christian Humanism was the Dutch scholar **Desiderius Erasmus**. He acquired a traditional scholastic education as well as a new liberal arts education at the University of Paris. Erasmus called for the reading of the New Testament in Greek, Latin, and Hebrew in order to understand its original meaning. With a deep understanding of Roman Catholic teachings, Erasmus began writing extensively about the need for reform. Particularly important was his book *In Praise of Folly* (1509), in which he addressed Church abuses such as the lack of knowledge among much of the clergy and the focus of the papacy on material rather than spiritual concerns.

While Erasmus called for reform, he feared splintering the Roman Catholic Church. Although Erasmus agreed with concerns raised by Martin Luther, he felt Luther’s manner was too harsh and his action too defiant.

Thomas More Calls for a Utopia An English Christian Humanist and close friend of Erasmus’s, **Thomas More** had studied at the University of Oxford. This helped him gain government positions such as a member of Parliament and adviser to **Henry VIII**, king of England. In 1516, More wrote the book *Utopia* about an imaginary land that possessed a perfect, orderly society. Calling for the creation of a more just society, More argued in favor of education for women and abolition of private property.

Martin Luther Establishes New Doctrine

As Christian Humanists called for Church reform, one of them, **Martin Luther**, demanded change so strongly he threatened Christian unity. Growing up, Luther had attended a school run by the Brethren of the Common Life, a group that taught Christian Humanism. He later attended the University of Erfurt, receiving a strong liberal arts education and embracing the religious slogan “Back to the source.” Studying the book of Romans in the Bible, Luther was struck by the emphasis on God’s grace—an emphasis he believed the Catholic Church had lost. After earning a master’s degree, Luther entered an Augustinian monastery, where he continued his studies and arrived at his belief in *sola fide*, that people gained eternal salvation “by faith alone.”

Salvation, Luther believed, came from God’s grace rather than from actions people performed. Luther agreed that attending church and helping the poor were good works but believed that they did not in themselves bring salvation. To Luther, faith alone brought salvation. Good works were the result of faith, not steps on a path to eternal life.

Luther Presents Religious Grievances Luther argued that any religious practices encouraging the belief that good works led to salvation were misleading. For example, he strongly disagreed with the practice of seeking salvation through the buying and selling of indulgences. Luther presented

his document known as the **95 Theses** after Pope Leo X proclaimed a Jubilee Indulgence to raise money for the restoration of St. Peter's Basilica. The most famous indulgence preacher was Johann Tetzel. He was hired to sell indulgences in the German states of the Holy Roman Empire. According to legend, Tetzel said, "As soon as the gold in the casket rings, the rescued soul to heaven springs."

In response, according to legend, an angry Luther nailed his theses to the door of the Wittenberg church, denouncing indulgences and other Church practices. More likely, according to the custom of the time, Luther simply wanted to prompt his archbishop and other scholars to discuss possible reforms within the Catholic Church. But as a result of the printing press, within months his document was circulating throughout Europe. Luther, an unknown monk, quickly became the key figure of a rapidly growing protest movement. In addition to indulgences, Luther and other reformers objected to

- *simony*: the buying and selling of Church appointments and offices
- *pluralism*: the holding of multiple Church positions at the same time
- *nepotism*: the appointment of family and friends to Church positions
- *immorality*: the decline in moral standards of clergy and monks

The Catholic Church Responds Catholic officials responded forcefully, accusing Luther of heresy. In 1518, after being allowed to defend his position in a debate in the imperial city of Augsburg, the Church ordered Luther to recant his protests. (An imperial city was one that was subject only to the authority of the emperor.) Luther refused and returned to Wittenberg.

The pope issued a decree demanding that Luther recant or be excommunicated—exiled from the Catholic Church. In April 1521, Luther appeared before a diet, or assembly of leaders, that convened in the city of Worms with the choice to either recant or affirm his beliefs. Luther's case was so important that presiding over the **Diet of Worms** was the newly chosen emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, **Charles V**. According to legend, when confronted with his writings, Luther refused to back down, declaring, "Here I stand. I can do no other." His actual words were less dramatic, but the message was the same: He refused to recant. The Catholic Church excommunicated Luther, and Charles V declared him an "outlaw of the empire."

Protestant Doctrines and Practices In an age when religious dissent could mean death, Luther's strong stand took courage. However, he was supported by many German rulers. Some cared little about theology, but hoped the religious controversy would help them reduce Rome's political power. Luther's prince, Frederick III of Saxony, protected him in the prince's castle known as the Wartburg. There, Luther began to work out his ideas more fully. For example, he believed that the Bible was the sole authority for Christians. To make the New Testament easier for people to read, Luther translated it into common German.

While many of Luther's religious ideas were radical for his time, his ideas on politics and economics were not. He called for harsh treatment of people who wanted to reform society, and he expressed strongly anti-Semitic views.

Luther Versus the Catholic Church		
Issue	Luther's Beliefs	Catholic Teachings
How God Judges People for Salvation	Faith alone, although faith leads to good works	Faith and good works
Source of Religious Authority	The Bible alone	The Bible, the pope, and centuries of religious interpretation
Organization of the Clergy	Pastors are independent	Strict hierarchy
Role of Mary, Mother of Jesus	Honored, but not considered holy	Revered
Church Art and Architecture	Simplicity, so people will focus on God	Beauty, to glorify God

Zwingli and Calvin Bring New Interpretations

Even before Luther challenged the Catholic Church, the group of states known as the Swiss Confederation sought independence from the leaders of the Catholic Church and the Holy Roman Empire. In 1499, the Swiss Confederation won enough autonomy to allow Swiss merchants and crafts workers to flourish economically and politically.

In 1519, Huldrych Zwingli, a pastor of the People's Church in Zurich, Switzerland, began criticizing the Catholic Church and its abuse of power after reading Erasmus's texts. Following in Luther's footsteps, Zwingli criticized the papal authority and clerical celibacy, or abstaining from marriage and sexual relations. In addition, Zwingli demanded a simplified service based on the principle of "faith alone."

Zwingli Challenges Luther and the Catholic Church Zwingli challenged both Luther and the Catholic Church on the necessity of the sacraments (rites such as communion, believed to be a way to attain divine grace). For example, both Luther and traditional Catholics believed in the presence of Christ in the communion. Luther believed that the communion's bread and wine were both bread and wine *and* the body and blood of Christ (consubstantiation). In the traditional Catholic belief, the bread and wine of communion actually *became* the body and blood of Christ (transubstantiation). Zwingli rejected both beliefs, insisting that the ritual of communion was symbolic.

The Protestant leader Philip of Hesse, in hope of uniting Protestants, invited Luther and Zwingli to meet to discuss their disputes. In what became known as the Marburg Colloquy, the two vehemently disagreed, permanently dividing Protestants. Zwingli rejected Luther's reforms and insisted on abolishing the spiritual necessity of ritual sacraments, such as baptism, confirmation, and penance. Luther and Zwingli had never merged their movements by the time of Zwingli's death in 1531.

Calvinism Takes Root in Switzerland In 1536, French-born theologian **John Calvin** published his book *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, calling

for religious and political reform. Calvin had studied the ideas of Luther and other dissidents, and he agreed with many of their criticisms of the Catholic Church. However, Calvin developed two unique ideas: **predestination** and his concept of **the elect**. In predestination, Calvin believed that an omnipotent (all-knowing) God already knew who would be saved and that, even at birth, a person's eternal fate was set. From this belief, Calvin later developed his concept of the elect—those chosen by God to be saved—in order to ensure people would live according to God's law. Their pious behavior would be an outward sign that such people were part of the elect, and their accumulation of wealth would be another sign of God's favor.

The year Calvin published *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, the leaders in the Swiss city of **Geneva** invited him there to live and preach. In Geneva, Calvin's doctrines transformed not only the practice of Christianity but also the role of the government. The Bible served as the highest law in Geneva, and sinning was a civil offense. The city required residents to denounce the Catholic faith and to attend church services five times a week. People could be punished for missing church, playing cards, or dancing. People who failed to follow the religious laws could be forced to leave the city. While laws enforced religious practices, they also required churches to provide social services for the city's poor and sick.

Anabaptists Reject the Secular World In 1525, another strand of Protestantism emerged in Zurich. Unlike Catholics, Lutherans, and Calvinists, **Anabaptists** rejected baptism of infants. They stressed that only adults could make the decision to believe, and they thus required all adults to be rebaptized. Anabaptists also excluded themselves from society because they believed that sin existed everywhere. This seclusion placed them in direct conflict with many governments because Anabaptists refused to serve in the government or the military. Because of the Anabaptists' unique doctrine and solitary lifestyle, both Catholics and Protestants targeted them. When Anabaptists established an old-world theocracy (a government based on religious law) at Münster, an army of both Catholics and Protestants captured the city, torturing and killing the leaders.

Division Among European Christians

The Reformation caused the Catholic Church to reflect on its doctrines and policies. While the Church mostly reinforced its established belief system, it also made some changes. This period of change is known as the **Counter Reformation** or the Catholic Reformation.

The Counter Reformation Cements Division During the Middle Ages, the Catholic Church had established several institutions, known together as the Inquisition, to defend its official doctrines. The Inquisition searched for and punished heretics, Christians who denied important Church doctrines. In 1542, the pope introduced the **Roman Inquisition** to stop Catholics from converting to Protestantism.



Calvinist churches were often very plain so they would not distract people from worshipping God.

Credit: Getty Images



Roman Catholic churches were often very ornate so that the beauty would inspire people to worship God.

Credit: Getty Images

Seventeen years later, the pope took another step to stop the spread of Protestantism, establishing the ***Index of Prohibited Books***, a list of books that Catholic printers were not to print and Catholics were not to read. Together, the Inquisition and the *Index* cemented the growing religious divide in Europe.

The Counter Reformation Revives the Church The Catholic response to the Reformation included establishment of new religious orders. Each order had its own focus. For example, in 1540, Ignatius Loyola established the **Jesuits**, an order that emphasized obedience to authority, prayer, and communal living. The Jesuits provided soldiers to fight Protestants and missionaries to spread Christianity in the Americas and East Asia. They became famous for their rigorous scholarship. Many of the most prestigious universities in Europe were founded by Jesuits. This commitment to research and learning would later

bring them into conflict with Roman Catholics who disliked their willingness to question traditional teachings.

Another influential order, the Ursuline Sisters, was established in 1544. It focused on educating girls.

To promote the unity of the Catholic faith, Pope Paul III convened the **Council of Trent**. Meeting three times between 1543 and 1563, the council was responsible for reaffirming traditional Catholic doctrine while addressing issues such as clerical pluralism and simony. Church officials discussed the official beliefs of the Catholic Church and the criticisms of Protestant reformers. The Council of Trent mostly reaffirmed established Catholic doctrine by:

- emphasizing the need for the seven sacraments (baptism, confirmation, communion, penance, anointing the sick, matrimony, and holy orders)
- stressing the role of both faith and good works
- affirming Latin as the language of the Church
- continuing clerical celibacy
- maintaining the art in churches
- upholding the power of the papacy

The Council of Trent did make some minor reforms related to pluralism, celibacy, and education of the priesthood. The actions of the Catholic Reformation revived Catholicism, particularly in Southern and Central Europe, in what are today the countries of Spain, Italy, and Austria. Many regions that had been Protestant reverted back to Catholicism.

State Power and Religion

In some places, leaders and religious groups used the religious changes of the Reformation to promote political unity. In others, such changes led to partisan turmoil and challenges to a leader's authority.

Top Down Religious Reform in England

Unlike Central Europe, where religious reforms started with a variety of monks and preachers and spread to the upper reaches of society, in England, reform started at the top. The king of England changed the religious practice of his subjects by edicts and laws.

Henry VIII Defends Catholicism In 1509, Henry VIII assumed the throne of England. During his thirty-eight-year reign, he would become one of England's most influential monarchs. When Martin Luther began criticizing the Catholic Church, Henry VIII quickly came to the support of Pope Leo X. Henry VIII, with the help of his trusted advisor Thomas More, argued in favor of the supremacy of the pope and the importance of the sacraments. For this loyalty, the pope gave Henry VIII the title of "Defender of the Faith."

Henry VIII Breaks with the Pope However, Henry VIII soon had his own criticism of the papacy. In 1527, after more than twenty years of

marriage, Henry VIII desired to end his marriage to Katherine of Aragon, the youngest daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain and the aunt of Holy Roman Emperor Charles V. During their marriage, Katherine gave birth to six children, but five died and the only one who survived to adulthood was female, Mary Tudor. Without a clear male heir, Henry VIII feared for the stability of the Tudor Dynasty after his death, especially since he was only the second Tudor king. He asked Pope Clement VII for an annulment, or cancellation, of his marriage on the grounds that it should never have been allowed. Katherine had been married to Henry's brother before he died, and Henry argued that his marriage to her was improper. The pope, pressured by Charles V and unwilling to offend Spain's Catholics, refused to grant the annulment.



Henry VIII of England was known for his strong will and self-confidence.

Credit: Getty Images

In 1533, Anne Boleyn, the mistress of Henry VIII, became pregnant. Henry VIII divorced Katherine—knowing the pope would object—so he could marry Anne Boleyn, who gave birth to Elizabeth, another female. Pope Clement VII declared Henry and Anne's marriage illegal. Henry VIII responded by denouncing the authority of the pope. In November 1534, the English Parliament passed the **Act of Supremacy**, making the king of England the head of the Church of England. England was no longer officially a Catholic country. Under Henry, Anne Boleyn was executed for adultery. He later married Jane Seymour, who finally presented Henry with a son, Edward. Seymour died shortly after giving birth, and Henry married three more times but had no more children.

While the Church of England was no longer officially part of the Roman Catholic Church, many people in England remained loyal Catholics. To enforce his power, Henry VIII enacted additional religious reforms. One of these was

the Treason Act, which made refusing to recognize the Church of England as the state religion an act of treason. Violating this act was punishable by death.

While Henry broke away from the control of the pope, he continued to support most of the doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church. In 1539, the government reaffirmed core Catholic doctrines on the celibacy of clergy, importance of confession, and transubstantiation in communion—doctrines that divided Catholics and Protestants.

The Church of England became known as the Anglican Church. Anglicans did not all agree with how closely they should keep to Catholic traditions and doctrine. Those who wanted to remain close to the Catholics were known as “High Church,” while those who were more influenced by Protestant doctrines and practices were known as “Low Church.”

Two Brief Reigns Following Henry’s death, his young son Edward became king. He reigned for only six years (1547–1553) before dying at 15. During these years, the government became more Low Church.

However, his successor, Mary Tudor (reigned 1553–1558), took the country in the opposite direction. She tried to restore Catholicism to England. Those in England who had never supported the break with Rome supported her, as did her powerful husband, the Spanish king Philip II. Mary’s persecution of some Anglican bishops earned her the nickname “Bloody Mary.”

Elizabeth Takes Control After Mary Tudor’s death, her half-sister, **Elizabeth I** (reigned 1558–1603), tried to find a middle ground, sometimes called the Elizabethan Settlement, that would end religious turmoil. She returned to Anglicanism, rejecting both Roman Catholicism and strong Calvinism. During her long reign, she avoided harsh persecution of people who practiced their own beliefs quietly.

Legal Support for the Church of England Under Elizabeth I		
Act	Year	Provisions
Act of Supremacy	1558	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reddeclared the King of England the head of the Church of England• Acknowledged Elizabeth as the head of the Church of England
Act of Uniformity	1559	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reestablished the <i>Book of Common Prayer</i>• Noted the need for subjects to attend church services once a week
Thirty-Nine Articles	1571	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reestablished English as the language of the Church of England

Elizabeth was determined to restore the Anglican Church in England and keep England from returning to Catholicism while at the same time she wanted to prevent more radical forms of Protestantism from growing. One such radical group, the **Puritans**, wanted to “purify” the Church of England, demanding the elimination of clerical dress and removal of Catholics from England. To accomplish many of her goals, Elizabeth employed diplomacy and often used marriage proposals to form alliances.

Other Monarchs Initiate Religious Reform and Control

While Henry VIII and Elizabeth I responded to the Reformation by establishing and strengthening a new state religion in England, other rulers made different choices. Some loosened restrictions to allow religious pluralism. Others, such as Philip II of Spain, became strong advocates for Catholicism.

France’s Agreement with the Pope In France in 1516, King Francis I (reigned 1515–1547) signed the **Concordat of Bologna** with Pope Leo X in which the Catholic Church continued to collect income from French churches. In return, the king gained the power to tax the clergy and appoint Catholic bishops in France. Because the king created such a powerful relationship with the Catholic Church, the Reformation initially had a limited impact on France.

The Holy Roman Emperor Implements Peace By the reign of Holy Roman Emperor Charles V (reigned 1506–1556), the Habsburg Dynasty encompassed a large landmass throughout Europe and the Americas. His 1.5-million-square-mile empire included territory in Spain, Italy, the Netherlands, Austria, the Holy Roman Empire, and South America.

Charles had to spend much of his rule confronting the expansion of the Ottoman Empire. He also fought a series of wars with France, as French monarch Francis I threatened his power. These concerns prevented him from dealing more forcefully with Lutheranism, and by the time he tried to do so, it had become too entrenched. In 1555, Charles established the **Peace of Augsburg** in the German states, a legal agreement allowing each German ruler to determine whether residents of that state would be Catholic or Lutheran. The faith of the ruler would become the faith of all. This agreement did not acknowledge Calvinism or Anabaptism as options.

Religious Challenges to Monarchical Power

Martin Luther published the *95 Theses* to prompt religious reform. He had little interest in politics. However, religion and politics were thoroughly intertwined in Europe during his lifetime. His challenges to religious authority created an environment that prompted others to challenge political authority. In the German Peasant Wars of 1525 and 1526, farmers rebelled against the feudal power of the nobles. The peasants were crushed, and around 200,000 were killed. Though they were unsuccessful, the rebellions demonstrated how the Reformation could lead to unrest.

Puritans Challenge the English Crown The same day that England's Queen Elizabeth died in 1603, James I took the throne. The son of Mary Tudor, James was part of the Stuart family and already king of Scotland. Since he had been raised as a Roman Catholic, Puritans feared he would reinvigorate Catholicism in England. As ruler, James was sympathetic to Catholics, but only those who publicly supported the Church of England.

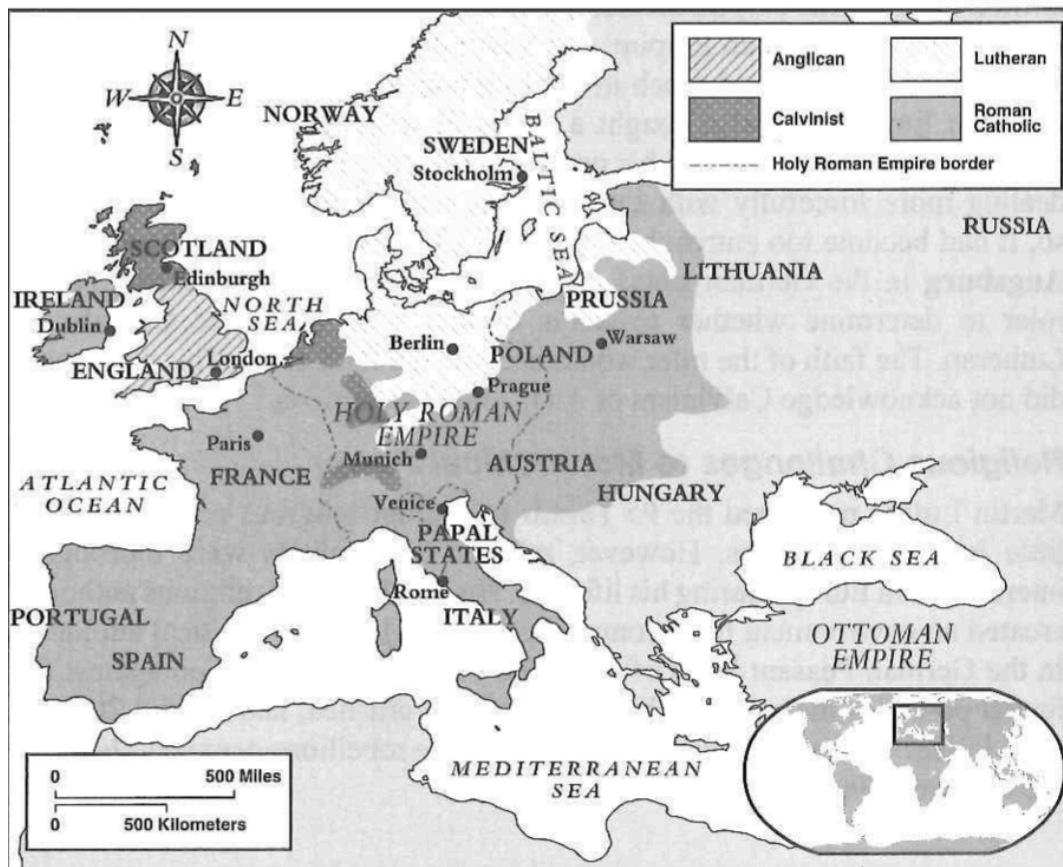
James's successor, Charles I, also worried Puritans. He married a French Catholic, Henrietta Maria, and he did not aid the Protestants in their battle against Catholics known as the Thirty Years' War (see pages 41–42).

The struggle between the Puritans and the Stuart monarchy came to a head in the English Civil War (1642–1649) when the Puritans supported the Parliamentarians against the Royalists. In 1649, the Parliamentarians successfully overthrew the Stuart monarchy and executed Charles I.

Conflicts Among Religious Groups

The growing religious tension between Catholics, Lutherans, Calvinists, and Anabaptists throughout Europe, combined with political rivalries that often fell along religious lines, brought nearly a century of warfare. Between 1562 and 1648, millions would be slaughtered or would die from hunger and disease related to internal rebellion, civil war, and international conflicts.

DOMINANT FAITHS IN WESTERN EUROPE, 1560



The French Wars of Religion

The Concordat of Bologna signed in 1516 worked for several decades, as long as nearly all French were Catholics. However, by 1562, French Calvinists, known as **Huguenots**, represented 10 percent of the country's population, or about 2 million people. More importantly, an estimated 40 percent of the French nobles identified as French Calvinists and sought to gain more political rights.

Origins of the Religious Conflict The French monarchy persecuted the Huguenots in order to diminish the power of the nobility and protect Catholicism. In 1559 and 1560, France suffered the death of two monarchs, which brought 11-year-old Charles IX to the throne. His mother, Catherine de' Medici, acted as regent and ruler. The ascension of Charles IX caused a power vacuum in which religious and political persecution flourished. With religious and political motivations, the French Wars of Religion continued to escalate leading to nine civil wars from 1562 to 1589.

Religious Violence In 1562, after a massacre of Huguenots at Vassy, French Calvinists took to the streets and looted Catholic Churches, destroying artwork and breaking stained-glass windows.

Tensions between Catholics and Huguenots reached a peak in 1572 at the marriage of Margaret of Valois, the sister of the king of France, to **Henry of Navarre**, a leading Calvinist. Henry Navarre invited many wealthy and influential Huguenots to the wedding in Paris. Catherine de' Medici, in collaboration with the reactionary Catholic Guise family, ordered the massacre of the Huguenots, which pleased the pope and other reactionary Catholics. Starting in Paris and spreading outward, an estimated 10,000 to 20,000 people were killed in an event known as the **St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre**.

Political Rivalry As civil war persisted in France, three men, each named Henry, vied to be king.

- **Henry III** of Valois was a Catholic. He was the fourth son of King Henry II and supported by his mother, Queen Catherine de' Medici, who was Italian. Henry III became king of France in 1574 after the death of Charles IX. Catherine was influential throughout his reign.
- Henry of Navarre, the husband of Margaret of Valois, was a Huguenot with support from Elizabeth I of England. He was heir-presumptive to the throne after Henry III of Valois.
- Henry of Guise was a Catholic with support from Philip II of Spain. He established the Catholic League, which wanted to ensure that only Catholics ruled France.

The War of the Three Henrys was settled by assassinations. In 1588, the bodyguards of Henry III killed Henry of Guise. A year later, a Catholic

monk, on the orders of Henry of Guise's brother Louis, assassinated Henry III, who left no direct male heir to the throne. The Huguenot Henry of Navarre ascended the French throne and took the name Henry IV.

Political Ending Henry IV took power in a French society torn by religious conflict. Raised as a Protestant but ruling a majority-Catholic country, he looked for a compromise that would end religious conflict. In 1593, he took a bold step by converting to Catholicism. This angered his Huguenot supporters, but reassured Catholics. His conversion demonstrated that he was a **Politique**, a French moderate who valued unity and peace more than any particular religious group.

Reacting against four decades of bloodshed over religion, Henry IV took a historic step in 1598 toward religious toleration with the **Edict of Nantes**. Under this policy, the government recognized Catholicism as France's official religion. However, the policy also allowed Huguenots to worship freely in certain provinces. This ended much of the religious violence in France.

However, many people rejected toleration of beliefs they found not just wrong but dangerous. In 1610, Henry IV, like Henry III and Henry of Guise before him, was assassinated. His killer was a Catholic extremist.

Decline of the Habsburgs

Like England and France, the Habsburg Empire faced deadly political and religious tensions in the 16th and 17th centuries. These tensions became worse after 1556, when the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V abdicated his throne.

Troubles in Eastern Europe Charles V's younger brother, Ferdinand, took control empire's eastern European lands, including Austria. Ferdinand ruled in the middle of a 230-year conflict between Austria and the **Ottoman Empire**. In 1453, Ottoman forces had captured Constantinople, completing their conquest of the Byzantine Empire. The Ottomans then attacked Habsburg lands in central and eastern Europe. In 1683, the Habsburgs successfully defended Vienna against an Ottoman siege, finally stopping the Ottoman's advance. The long conflict used up valuable resources of each empire, weakening both. As a result, Catholics lost some power in Eastern Europe.

Troubles in Western Europe Charles V's son, **Philip II** acquired his German lands and was elected the new emperor. Philip II was was fiercely anti-Protestant, and he devoted his rule to making all of Europe Catholic again.

Philip's first conflict over religion emerged in the Spanish Netherlands. Many members of the Dutch middle class there had converted to Calvinism. They embraced Calvin's emphasis on hard work. Under Philip's father, the Dutch had remained loyal. However, Philip ignored the local customs, demanded strict adherence to Catholicism, and raised taxes to fund exploration in the Americas and Asia.

Then, in 1566, Philip began to persecute Dutch Calvinists as heretics. In response, William of Orange took leadership of the Dutch resistance movement. In 1581, under his leadership, the seven northern provinces of the

Netherlands declared their independence and established a Dutch Republic that was Calvinist rather than Catholic.

England's Protestant queen, Elizabeth I, supported the Protestant rebellion in the Netherlands. Encouraged by the pope, Philip II responded by attacking England. He sent the Spanish Armada, a large fleet of ships, to invade England in 1588. Because of bad weather and the use of English fire ships (ships filled with explosives, set on fire, and floated toward enemy ships), the Armada was defeated. The English victory, like the Dutch rebellion, strengthened the Protestant government. Such victories enabled Protestant groups to gain both religious and political strength in Europe.

The Thirty Years' War

Religious conflicts continued in central Europe in the 17th century because of a weakness in the 1555 Peace of Augsburg. That agreement allowed the German princes the power to determine whether their state would be Catholic or Lutheran. However, it excluded other Protestants, particularly Calvinists, from the same power.

In 1618, a German Calvinist leader, Frederick I, refused to accept the Catholic absolutism of Holy Roman Emperor Ferdinand II. The conflict between Frederick I and Ferdinand II touched off the **Thirty Years' War**. The war had four phases:

- During the Bohemian Phase (1618–1625), armies of Holy Roman Emperor Ferdinand II defeated Frederick I at the Battle of White Mountain, allowing Ferdinand to reimpose Catholicism in many of the empire's German states and the province of Bohemia.
- During the Danish Phase (1625–1630), the Lutheran king of Denmark took up the Protestant cause, but overwhelming victories by the armies of Ferdinand II enabled him to issue the Edict of Restitution, which was designed to force Protestant princes to return to Catholicism or pay huge sums of money for taking control of Catholic lands.
- During the Swedish Phase (1630–1635), King Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden, a brilliant military leader, took control of Protestant forces, funded to a large degree by **Cardinal Richelieu** of France, who was the chief minister to King Louis XIII. Winning several important victories before being mortally wounded at the Battle of Lutzen, Gustavus Adolphus was able to reverse many of the gains made by the Catholic forces in the previous phases.
- During the French Phase (1635–1648) and with the death of Gustavus Adolphus, the French entered the war directly, on the side of the Protestants. The Spanish entered on the side of the Catholics, and this phase saw the French fighting the Spanish primarily in the northern German states, with the French ultimately gaining the upper hand.

The Thirty Years' War ended with the **Peace of Westphalia** in 1648. This was a set of treaties that included the following provisions:

- Officially recognized independence of the Netherlands and the Swiss Confederation
- Strengthened French, Swedish, and German rulers
- Took Italian regions from the Holy Roman Empire, which caused them to focus on their traditional holdings in Central and Eastern Europe
- Confirmed Peace of Augsburg
- Added Calvinism as an officially recognized religion

Political Uses of Religion While the Thirty Years' War was a religious conflict between Protestants and Catholics, it was also a political and economic conflict. Rulers exploited the fight over beliefs in order to strengthen themselves. For example, France was led by a Catholic king, Louis XIII, and his chief minister was Cardinal Richelieu. However, they sided with the German Protestants against the Catholic Habsburgs of Austria. France was more concerned with weakening their political foes the Habsburgs than with rolling back Protestantism.

The Thirty Years' War, which cost between three and six million lives, was the last large religious war in Europe. The Peace of Westphalia was a turning point in European history. France had become the dominant continental power, and Calvinism had joined Catholicism and Lutheranism as a major force.



Carl Wahlbom, The Battle of Lutzen. 1632. National Museum of Sweden.
The turmoil portrayed in this painting captured the chaos of the Thirty Years' War.

Credit: Wikimedia Commons

Emergence of Religious Pluralism

With the 1648 Peace of Westphalia, the religious wars of Europe had come to end. Yet rivalries among different versions of Christianity continued, and many still faced discrimination and persecution for beliefs that dissented from the official religion of their state. However, the large-scale bloodshed had ended. European rulers had accepted that the continent would be home to various types of Christians. These rulers accepted religious pluralism—but not religious freedom.

Further, by 1648, the boundaries of political states and the boundaries of cultural areas were more aligned than before the Reformation had begun. Europe was moving toward becoming a land where most people who shared a culture lived under the same government, and most people who lived under a government shared a culture. The map of Europe was beginning to look like the map of today.

Christians, Jews, and Muslims

Besides conflicts among Christians, Europe also suffered from conflicts between Christians and other faiths. These began before the Reformation had divided Christianity. In Spain, Muslims had ruled since the 8th century. Christian armies had slowly pushed them out, with the last Muslims expelled in 1492. Over a period of 200 years, England, France, and Spain had expelled Jews. Most moved to Central or Eastern Europe or to the Middle East. Jews often faced discriminatory laws and sometimes violent persecution.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES: HOW GERMAN WAS LUTHER?

Just over 500 years ago, Martin Luther posted his *95 Theses* at the University of Wittenberg, inviting his fellow scholars to a debate. Luther's relationship with German culture and politics has been controversial ever since.

Unintentionally Political Writing a few years after World War II, the British historian, G. R. Elton, portrayed Luther as strongly shaped by his cultural heritage as a German. In *The New Cambridge Modern History*, Vol. II, *The Reformation*, Elton argued that Luther saw a Roman-based church exploiting Germans and rebelled against it. Elton focused on political rather than cultural aspects, pointing out that the Reformation took root only where princes and lords supported it. To Elton, Luther was a benefactor of the German princes seeking to establish modern states independent of Rome's influence. Luther himself may not have been interested in politics, but his ideas provided support for those who were.

A Friend of Germans By the early 21st century, the focus on German pride shifted. Germany had evolved into a solid member of an internationalist, integrated Europe that downplayed particular national

identities. In *Martin Luther: Renegade and Prophet* (2016), another British historian, Lyndal Roper, portrayed Luther as a man neither looking backward toward a German past nor as a tool of political leaders. Roper focused on the personal life of Luther as a man. She saw significance in Luther's friendship with those who were proud to be German. Protestant artist friends such as Albrecht Dürer, Hans Holbein, and Lucas Cranach surrounded him. Luther was part of an intellectual trend to see pride in their identity as Germans as the answer to their problems. In the words of one reviewer, "Luther's campaign to 'restore' Biblical Christianity to 16th-century Germany was a battle for land and national supremacy."

KEY TERMS BY THEME

States

Henry VIII
Act of Supremacy
Elizabeth I
Concordat of Bologna
Charles V
Peace of Augsburg
Edict of Nantes
Politique
Philip II
Ottoman Empire
Henry III
War of the Three Henrys
Thirty Years' War

Peace of Westphalia

Cardinal Richelieu

Society

indulgences
Reformation
secular
Christian Humanists
Desiderius Erasmus
Thomas More
Martin Luther
95 Theses
Diet of Worms
John Calvin
predestination

the elect

Geneva

Counter Reformation

Anabaptists

Roman Inquisition

Index of Prohibited Books

Jesuits

Council of Trent

Puritans

Huguenots

Henry of Navarre

St. Bartholomew's Day
Massacre

MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

Questions 1–3 refer to the passage below.

So it was determined to exterminate all the Protestants and the plan was approved by the queen. They discussed for some time whether they should make an exception of the king of Navarre and the prince of Condé. All agreed that the king of Navarre should be spared by reason of the royal dignity and the new alliance. The duke of Guise, who was put in full command of the enterprise, summoned by night several captains of the Catholic Swiss mercenaries from the five little cantons, and some commanders of French companies, and told them that it was the will of the king that, according to God's will, they should take vengeance on the band of rebels while they had the beasts in the toils. Victory was easy and the booty great and to be obtained without danger. The signal to commence the massacre should be given by the bell of the palace, and the marks by which they should recognize each other in the darkness were a bit of white linen tied around the left arm and a white cross on the hat.

—Jacques de Thou (1553–1617), French historian describing the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre, August 24, 1572

1. What was the “new alliance” made by the king of Navarre that is referred to in the passage?
 - a) A marriage between the Protestant king and a Catholic princess
 - b) A treaty between the French monarch and Swiss mercenaries
 - c) A pledge by the royal family to grant more power to each region
 - d) An agreement between the king and nobles to end religious toleration
2. Which statement best describes the context in the 16th and 17th centuries for the events described in the passage?
 - a) Tension between France's central government and local governments
 - b) An alliance between Roman Catholics in France and Ireland
 - c) Emigration from Europe to North and South America
 - d) Violent conflict between Roman Catholics and Protestants
3. What was the relationship between the events of 1572 described in the passage and the Edict of Nantes issued in 1598?
 - a) Both were examples of deadly religious persecution.
 - b) Both were examples of greater religious toleration.
 - c) Reaction against the events of 1572 led to more persecution in 1598.
 - d) Reaction against the events of 1572 led to more toleration in 1598.

Questions 4–6 refer to the passage below.

The king's Majesty justly and rightfully is and ought to be the supreme head of the Church of England, and so is recognized by the clergy of this realm in their convocations... and to repress and extirpate [eliminate] all errors, heresies, and other enormities and abuses heretofore used in the same, be it enacted, by authority of this present Parliament, that the king, our sovereign lord, his heirs and successors, kings of this realm, shall be taken, accepted, and reputed the only supreme head in earth of the Church of England, called *Anglicana Ecclesia*; and shall have and enjoy, annexed and united to the imperial crown of this realm, as well the title and style thereof, as all honors, dignities, preeminences [signs of superiority], jurisdictions, privileges, authorities, immunities, profits, and commodities to the said dignity of the supreme head of the same Church belonging and appertaining; and that our said sovereign lord, his heirs and successors, kings of this realm, shall have full power and authority from time to time to visit, repress, redress, record, order, correct, restrain, and amend all such errors, heresies, abuses, offenses, contempts and enormities, whatsoever they be.

—The Act of Supremacy, issued by the English Parliament, 1534

4. How do the ideas in this passage compare to those of Martin Luther?
 - a) This passage focused on the power of a monarch over a church, while Luther focused on theology and doctrine.
 - b) This passage wanted church leaders to eliminate errors in belief, while Luther did not think Christians should criticize each other.
 - c) This passage thought profits and commodities of a church belonged to its leader, an idea that Luther agreed with.
 - d) This passage described a national church for English Christians, and Luther rejected the idea of a single, universal form of Christianity.
5. Which best describes the context in which the passage was issued?
 - a) Economic change threatened the power of English religious leaders.
 - b) Several countries had already established a national church.
 - c) Reformers on the continent were challenging the Catholic Church's power.
 - d) Europeans were becoming more tolerant of religious diversity.
6. Which English monarch did some Protestants perceive as a threat to reverse the action taken in this document?
 - a) Henry VIII (reigned 1509–1547)
 - b) Edward VI (reigned 1547–1553)
 - c) Mary I (reigned 1553–1558)
 - d) Elizabeth I (reigned 1558–1603)

Questions 7–8 refer to the passage below.

Let no one think that this Commandment entirely forbids the arts of painting, engraving, or sculpture. The Scriptures inform us that God Himself commanded to be made images of Cherubim [a category of angel], and also the brazen serpent. The interpretation, therefore, at which we must arrive, is that images are prohibited only inasmuch as they are used as deities to receive adoration, and so to injure the true worship of God. . . .

He [the pastor] will also inform the unlettered . . . of the use of images, that they are intended to instruct in the history of the Old and New Testaments, and to revive from time to time their memory; that thus, moved by the contemplation of heavenly things, we may be the more ardently inflamed to adore and love God Himself. He should, also, point out that the images of the Saints are placed in churches, not only to be honored, but also that they may admonish us by their examples to imitate their lives and virtues.

—*Council of Trent: Catechism for Parish Priests*, 1566

7. Who would most strongly disagree with the passage?
- a) Charles V
 - b) John Calvin
 - c) The pope
 - d) King Henry VIII
8. What was the context in which this passage was written?
- a) Roman Catholics were rejecting earlier positions and adopting the ideas proposed by Protestants.
 - b) Roman Catholics were attempting to find compromises that would persuade Protestants to accept papal authority.
 - c) Roman Catholics were trying to explain that they and Protestants actually agreed on most issues.
 - d) Roman Catholics were defending their views against the challenges posed by Protestants on how to interpret the Bible.

SHORT-ANSWER QUESTIONS

1. Use the passage below to answer all parts of the question that follows.

The repudiation of ordination as a sacrament demolished the caste system of clericalism and provided a sound basis for the priesthood of all believers since, according to Luther, ordination is simply a rite of the Church by which a minister is installed to discharge a particular office. He receives no indelible character, is not exempt from the jurisdiction of the civil courts, and is not empowered by ordination to perform the sacraments. At this point what the priest does any Christian may do, if commissioned by the congregation, because all Christians are priests.

—Roland H. Bainton, *Here I Stand: A Life of Martin Luther*, 1950

- a) Describe ONE way Bainton thought that Luther's view on ordination challenged the structure of the Roman Catholic Church.
- b) Describe ONE specific piece of evidence that supports the view that Luther did not want to challenge the structure of the Roman Catholic Church.
- c) Explain ONE Roman Catholic response to Luther's teachings that challenged traditional doctrines.

2. Answer all parts of the question that follows.

- a) Describe ONE religious cause of the English Reformation.
- b) Describe ONE political cause of the English Reformation.
- c) Explain ONE significant outcome of the English Reformation.

LONG ESSAY QUESTIONS

1. Evaluate the extent to which nation-states or individual rulers differed in their attempts to resolve the conflicts between Protestants and Catholics during the 16th and 17th centuries.
2. Evaluate the extent to which reform movements transformed Christian beliefs or practices during the 16th and 17th centuries.

REFLECT ON THE CHAPTER ESSENTIAL QUESTION

1. In one to three paragraphs, explain how religious pluralism challenged the concept of a unified Europe.

WRITE AS A HISTORIAN: USE EVIDENCE

Evidence is specific information based on facts or reasons, not a generalized or unsupported opinion. The most accurate evidence for an essay uses specific names of people, places, and events.

Which evidence below each question would be most useful in answering it? Explain your choice.

1. How did Protestant Reformation change Christian theology?
 - a. Martin Luther and John Calvin criticized Catholic teachings, leading to new beliefs such as the priesthood of all believers, the primacy of scripture, predestination, and salvation by faith alone.
 - b. Protestant leaders charged that the Catholic Church was corrupt and that its leaders used their positions to gain wealth and power.
2. How did religious reform result in increased state control of religious institutions in England?
 - a. One Reformation idea was to implement a top-down approach to centralize power and bring about religious reform.
 - b. The English monarchs initiated reform that gave them more control over religious life.

Evidence must be relevant. It should focus on the right culture, time period, and topic. For example, if a question asks about religious intolerance in France, facts about the persecution of the Huguenots would be more relevant than facts about the Versailles palace.

For each claim below, evaluate the relevance of the evidence.

3. Conflicts among religious groups overlapped with political and economic competition among states.
 - a. The Thirty Years' War was Europe's most deadly religious war, but it became also a rivalry between France and the Habsburgs for political domination of the European continent.
 - b. Members of the House of Habsburg ruled the Holy Roman Empire for three centuries. During this time, they fought off both foreign challengers and domestic opposition.
4. The principle of religious toleration emerged over time.
 - a. The Peace of Augsburg (1555) allowed princes in the Holy Roman Empire to choose Catholicism or Lutheranism for their subjects, but not Calvinism or Anabaptism.
 - b. Groups like the Huguenots, the Puritans, and the nobles of Poland all challenged the monarchs' control over religious institutions in the regions they lived in.