

10—Reforming the Church

“The Story of the Church”

Pastor Mike Cooke

1. John Wycliffe (1328-1384) England

- A. Served as mediator between the Pope and King of England
- B. Advocated for translation of the Bible into English (Oxford)
- C. Attacked by Oxford colleagues, defended by the royal family
- D. Harshly attacked the Pope and the Catholic Church excesses
 - 1) Argued against transubstantiation, contradicts natural order
 - 2) The primary role of the minister was to preach the gospel
 - 3) Advocated local election of priests
 - 4) Advocated the supreme authority of scripture over even the Pope
 - 5) Affirmed infallibility, self-interpretation, and Holy Spirit’s illumination
 - 6) Condemned penances and human efforts in salvation

2. Gutenberg Press (1440)

- A. Produced 3,600 pages per day (as opposed to 40)
- B. Allowed for mass copies of the Bible and theological works.
- C. Took the monopoly of knowledge away from kings and popes.
 - 1) In 1500, 4% of people could read
 - 2) By 1550, 10 million volumes
 - 3) Everyone could read the Bible for themselves

3. Desiderius Erasmus (1466-1536) Holland

- A. Transitional figure between Catholicism and Luther
 - 1) Free thinker, neither Catholic nor Reformed
 - 2) Used satyr and humor to poke fun at medieval superstitions
- B. 1514 version of the Greek New Testament
 - 1) Luther used it to translate the New Testament
- C. Believed strongly in freedom of will, and debated Luther on it
 - 1) Erasmus wrote, “On the Freedom of the Will” (1524)
 - 2) Luther wrote, “On the Bondage of the Will” (1525)
 - 3) Argued for grace being the dominant force, but man’s free will playing a part
- D. Disappointed at his inability to bring reform without division
 - 1) Defied all attempts to be locked down to either side
 - 2) Quietly supported Luther, but did not like the radical division
 - 3) Tried to get both sides to tone it down
 - 4) Erasmus was a reformer; Luther was a revolutionary

4. **Martin Luther**

- A. Augustinian monk, wracked with fear and guilt
- B. Opposed to the selling of indulgences for church building
- C. 1517 Martin Luther nails the 95 Theses to the Wittenberg Door
 - 1) Thesis 86—*“Why does the pope, whose wealth today is greater than the wealth of the richest Crassus, build the basilica of St. Peter with the money of poor believers rather than with his own money?”*
 - 2) Pope had no power over purgatory
 - 3) Translated into German and printed throughout the country
- D. 1520 he is excommunicated by Pope Leo X
- E. 1521 he is condemned by the Diet of Worms
 - 1) "Here I stand. I can do no other."
 - 2) Prince Fredrick III hides him away at Warburg Castle
 - 3) Translates the New Testament into German
 - 4) Marries a nun and has six children
- F. 1525 Does not support Münster's Rebellion or Peasant's Revolt
- G. 1530 Augsburg Confession establishes the Lutheran article
 - 1) Original sin, justification by faith, real presence in sacraments, infant baptism, confession to laity, marriage of clergy
- H. 1543 Writes *“On the Jews and Their Lies”*
 - 1) Relied too heavily on the political books of his time
 - 2) Contributed heavily to anti-Semitism in Germany
 - 3) Writings displayed under glass at the Nuremberg rallies
 - 4) 2009 the Missouri Synod disassociated itself from Luther's views

5. **Three points common to the Reformation:**

- A. *Sola gratia et fides* (salvation by grace alone through faith)
- B. *Sola scriptura* (Scripture above all other authorities)
- C. The priesthood of all believers