

# An Overview of Church History

## MOPC Adult Sunday School

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## Part 4

### *The Reformation*

## Forerunners of the Reformation... Peter Waldo

- Around 1170, Peter Waldo employs priest to translate Gospels into French; realizes Scriptures are to be basis of faith, that there is but one Mediator, and only two sacraments
- In 1177, Waldo organizes society (members known as Waldenses) to go out two by two like the seventy to preach the truth and attack false doctrine; penetrated southern France, Switzerland and northern Italy and gathered many followers
- Council of Valencia (1229) places Waldenses under ban, forbids anyone other than a priest to read the Bible, and places Bible under "Index of Forbidden Books"
- Inquisition, under the Dominicans, used to slay and torture many Waldenses, including mothers & children (400 killed while hiding in a cave)
- Survivors fled to the Alps, where their descendants became Protestants after the Reformation and still survive as a distinct group today

## Forerunners of the Reformation... John Wycliff

- Attends Oxford at 16 years old and remained a university Fellow for life
- 1366-1374, defends king's decision to end annual tribute payments to Rome
- Criticizes monks for their laziness & begging; calls worship of images and relics foolish; denounces sales of indulgences, masses for the dead, and pilgrimages; denounces the pope as the Antichrist, a worldly priest and most accursed robber
- Wycliff summoned before England's clergy in 1377, was attacked, but protected by the king's son; pope issues 5 decrees and 19 charges against him
- In 1381, he attacks the doctrine of transubstantiation and the priestly claim to perform this miracle; now the king begins to withdraw support, as well as Oxford fellows, but popularity with common people prevent them taking action; summoned to appear before pope, but refuses
- Wycliff translates Bible into English (later condemned by church), organizes Order of Poor Priests to spread his teachings
- Dies in 1384; body dug up by order of church in 1415, burned and ashes scattered in the River Swift... the "Morning Star of the Reformation"

## Forerunners of the Reformation... John Huss

- Born from peasant stock in 1369 in Bohemia; educated by gift of a nobleman; appointed Rector of Prague University in 1403
- Read and influenced by Wycliff's writings and two cartoons: one representing Jesus with crown of thorns and the pope with crown of gold; the other with Jesus forgiving the woman to whom he said, "Thy sins are forgiven thee", contrasted with the pope selling indulgences
- Preached to the common people in their own language
- Archbishop of Prague denounces his and Wycliff's books & burns them
- When asked whether he would obey the pope's commands, responded "Yes, so far as they agree with the doctrine of Christ, but when I see the contrary I will not obey them, even though you burn my body."
- Pope excommunicates him; is summoned to appear, under protection, before a special counsel in 1414, but is arrested and imprisoned; shouted down when he tried to defend himself; sentenced to be burned
- Bohemian followers became known as Hussites, and later the Moravian Bretheran

## Forerunners of the Reformation...

- **Gerhard Groote** founded Brethern of the Common Life around 1350, whose purpose was to reform the church through Christian education; John of Wessel, Erasmus, and Thomas a' Kempis were pupils
- **John of Wessel** attacked indulgences and taught doctrine of justification by faith and salvation by grace alone at University of Erfurt, where Luther earned a Masters degree 49 years later
- **Erasmus of Rotterdam** (1466-1536), exposed abuses and moral corruption in the church; denounces ignorance, idleness, and dissoluteness of the monks; writes book, "In Praise of Folly" describing the false hope of salvation for those counting on deeds; edits first printed Greek New Testament in 1516; "Erasmus laid the egg, but Luther hatched it"
- **Thomas a' Kempis** wrote "The Imitation of Christ", a devotional book advising one to read the Bible and flee worldly vanities

## "It Seems Darkest Just Before Dawn..."

- Hollow worship in an unknown language (Latin)
- Worldly and immoral priesthood
- Pomp and outward show of abundance via cathedrals, priestly adornments, and riches
- Doctrinal errors taught as truth
  - Seven sacraments, not two
  - Purgatory and infant limbo
  - Homage and prayers to saints, not God
  - Salvation through baptism, attending mass, indulgences, and good works
  - Belief in magical powers of sacred relics
  - Pilgrimages to shrines of martyrs, etc.
- Illiteracy and ignorance prevailed

## Setting the Stage for the Reformation... Two External Events

- 1) God uses an external movement, the Renaissance, the rebirth of learning, to help prepare minds to throw off the yoke of illiteracy and question falsehood
  - Books of classic Greek & Roman writings reintroduced humanism, paganism, and fed the wickedness of some, including the papacy, within the church, while books of the writings of early church fathers (Jerome, Cyprian, Origen, Athanasius, Augustine, etc.) brought truth and conviction to true believers... drawing a clear line of distinction
  - Popes became patrons of the arts, build the Vatican, Sistine Chapel, & St Peter's Cathedral, taxing the people to do so, and creating disenchantment
- 2) God uses a technology advance, the printing press, invented in 1454, that makes the Scriptures and the truth available to the masses

## Setting the Stage for the Reformation... External Events

- The Black Plague (1347-1351)- 75 million people died (1/3-2/3's of the population); caused increased religious fervor; Roman Catholic Church blames Jews, Muslims, lepers, beggars; persecution of Jews triggered migration to eastern Europe & Russia; also aided humanism, nominalism... living for the moment, since death could come quickly

## Martin Luther (1483-1546)

- Born in 1483; obtains Masters degree in 1505; becomes a priest in 1507 and teacher of theology at Erfurt University at 26 years in 1509
- Sent to Rome and visited all of the famous shrines; climbed the "Scala Santa" on his knees; seen by Pope Julius II; shocked by the immorality of Rome
- Returned from Rome and became a Doctor of Theology and taught at Wittenburg University from 1512-1517
- Deeply religious and aligned with teachings of the church, he felt that to gain salvation he had to flee the world, observe strict asceticism, fasting and self chastening; his sense of utter sinfulness and lost condition cast him into deepest despair- no matter how hard he tried, he hadn't done enough to earn salvation
- In 1512, he read "The righteous will live by faith" from Romans 1:17, pondered those words and felt unspeakable joy in his heart and relieved burden; he learned man is saved not by works, but by faith

## Martin Luther (continued)

- In 1517, at age 34, as Tetzel was hawking indulgences at Wittenburg, he writes his 95 theses (statements) against indulgences and nails them to the door of the Castle Church at Wittenburg (not an uncommon practice, an invitation to debate a matter)
- Next day was All Saints' Day, and people came out to view the relics put on display by the church, and read the theses posted on the church door
- The news spread like wildfire and the theses were translated into many languages, printed, and carried to every country in Europe within 4 weeks, where they were widely read; the sale of indulgences almost stopped
- The Archbishop of Mainz, who received a share of the indulgences money, sends a copy of the 95 theses to the pope (Leo X), who orders that Luther be advised to keep quiet
- Mazzolini, a Dominican inquisitor from Rome, and John Eck answer Luther in pamphlets, which Luther answers with a pamphlet of his own, along with a book titled "Resolutions" which he carefully wrote and sent to the pope
- By challenging the church's control of the people's salvation (through penance & indulgences), Luther had attacked its foundation, its power and its purse
- Remember, Luther was a vicar over 11 other monasteries, a well known teacher who taught from the original Hebrew and Greek in the German language, was also well known to secular leaders; he was no obscure monk, nor was his initial mission to bring down the church

## Reformation Events

- Luther is summoned to Rome in 1518, where he likely would have been tried as a heretic and burned to death
- Frederick used his influence to cancel the summons
- Pope empowers Cajetan to order Luther to appear before him in Augsburg, where he was to be bound and sent to Rome if he didn't recant
- Again, Frederick obtains a safety guarantee from Emperor Maximilian and Luther has three interviews with Cajetan in 1518 before leaving secretly at night
- Without mentioning Luther by name, the Pope declares anti-indulgence statements as heretical
- In 1519, Pope Leo sends Charles von Miltitz to meet with Luther; Luther promises not to speak about indulgences anymore, if opponents agree to do the same; Luther sends submissive letter to pope and pope sends friendly letter back, offering to pay Luther's expenses to come to Rome and make his confession
- Also in 1519, fellow Wittenberg professor Andreas Carlstadt generated a series of theses against Eck's anti-Luther pamphlet; Eck responds with counter theses which advance the extreme view of papal supremacy

## Reformation Events (continued)

- Luther responds with twelve theses declaring that the claim of papal supremacy rested only on weak papal decrees over the last four centuries, but that in prior 1100 years, no such supremacy existed
- Eck challenges Luther to a debate in Leipzig and they argue the matter of papal supremacy to a draw; Eck, however, maneuvers Luther into saying that some of Huss's teachings had been unjustly condemned by the Council of Constance; doing so, Luther openly took the side of a man condemned as a heretic
- While rejecting papal authority and the infallibility of church councils, Luther wins many new supporters; however, the debate made it clear that Luther could no longer be reconciled to the Roman Catholic Church
- Eck returns to Rome to report to the pope and get a bull (decree) of excommunication for Luther
- Luther publishes pamphlet "On Good Works" where he shared his conviction that a person is saved by faith alone
- Luther reads one of the works of Huss sent to him after Leipzig and was encouraged to discover they shared the same beliefs; he also reads a book by Lorenzo Valla, who proved the "Donation of Constantine", the basis of papal authority, was a forgery
- In 1520, the pope writes a letter of excommunication, forbidding Luther to preach, ordered him arrested, if found, and that his writings were to be burned; Eck has a hard time getting it printed/published in Germany and many Luther supporters seize and destroy copies
- Luther responds with a tract "Against the Execrable Bull of Antichrist", "To the Christian Nobility of Germany" (a call to do away with the abuses of Rome), "The Babylonian Captivity of the Church" (exposing the false teaching that salvation was through the priests and sacraments), and "The Liberty of a Christian man" (summarizing the Christian life) and burns the bull of excommunication and books of canon law

## Reformation Events... Diet of Worms

- Pope Leo convinces the new emperor, Charles V, to summon Luther to a council ("Diet") of German rulers in Worms in 1521; getting the emperor to do the pope's dirty work would accomplish what he couldn't do (silence Luther) and again essentially position the papacy above the emperor
- Although guaranteed safety, Luther believes he is going to his death; so did many along the way who were eager to see the man who stood against Rome and who was going to die for his beliefs
- Luther, now 37, appears with his books before Charles, who was 21; Charles asks, "Are these your writings; and do you wish to retract them, or do you adhere to them and continue to assert them?"
- Luther answers "yes" to the first question and asks for time to consider the second; was given 24 hrs to contemplate

## Reformation Events... Diet of Worms (continued)

- Luther's request to "think it over" was a pivotal request; it was a test of who was supreme, the pope or the emperor
  - If the pope was supreme, the emperor (and Diet participants) would not grant Luther's request, as the matter would already have been decided by the pope; they would merely execute the pope's intent
  - -If the emperor/Diet granted the delay, then they would assume the upper hand in deciding Luther's fate
  - -Nationalistic sentiment of the German participants against an Italian pope rallied sympathy, if not support, for Luther, so his request was granted
- Next day, near dusk, Luther returns to a packed hall and speaks at length; the emperor asks for a plain answer
- Luther responds, "If the emperor desires a plain answer, I will give it to him. It is impossible for me to recant unless I am proved wrong by the testimony of Scripture. My conscience is bound to the Word of God. It is neither safe nor honest to act against one's conscience. Here I stand. God help me. I cannot do otherwise."

## Reformation Events... Lutheran Church

- Luther could no longer be reconciled to the Catholic Church
- Luther is ordered to leave Worms and return to Wittenberg; he is forbidden to preach; it was planned to seize and kill him after the safe-conduct expired
- On the way to Wittenberg, Luther is taken by masked riders to the Wartburg Castle, under orders of Frederick the Wise
- Luther stays in Wartburg for ten months while the storm quieted, writing most of the time
- Luther translates the Bible into German language, writes his Shorter Catechism, and writes many hymns
- In 1530, Luther's followers draw up the Augsburg Confession, the first creed to be formulated since the creeds of the early church councils
- The Protestant church in Germany is established

## Fundamental Elements of the Reformation

- Simple character of the church, with emphasis on preaching, vs adorned status
- Priesthood of all believers; clergy do not stand between believers and God, they access the throne of grace directly
- Church was the community of believers, not the hierarchy of officials
- Bible is ultimate authority and needed to be in the hands (and language) of all believers
- Sola Scriptura- Scriptures alone have authority
- Sola Fida- faith alone for salvation
- Sola Gratia- salvation by grace, not works
- Sola Christos- Christ's work alone gained salvation
- Solo Deo Gloria- to God be the glory

## Reformation Resistance in Germany

- Charles V's desire to squash the Reformation movement stymied by various political problems and unrest in his realm; wars with France and Turkey underway
- In 1526, organizes council that offers religious liberty to all who are willing to re-establish unity; Reformers rejoice, Catholics are chagrined
- In 1529, organizes another council that reverses previous leniency and requires all to submit to the Pope; those who protest this ruling were thereafter known as Protestants
- In 1530, calls for another assembly at Augsburg in hope of restoring peace; Luther, still banned in the Empire, works with Phillip Melanchthon to write articles crystallizing the Protestant position (a.k.a. Augsburg Confession)
- Upon hearing the Confession, the assembly was visibly moved, and even Luther's opponents realized that the Scripture was the basis of the Protestant's beliefs, while the Catholic Church's defense relied on quotes from the "Church Fathers" (current and past Popes, Archbishops, etc.). "The Lutherans are firmly entrenched in the Scriptures, and we are entrenched outside of them."
- Charles gives one last chance for Protestants to reconsider, but many princes refused to yield and formed an alliance; Charles chooses not to engage them in war so long as the Turks and French are engaging his armies; chooses rather to help form an alliance of Catholic princes in Germany
- After Luther's death in 1546, Charles, now freed from war with France, uses force against the German Protestants
- In 1555, the Peace at Augsburg is concluded; details of agreement... "to whom the rule, of him the religion" (i.e. each regional prince would determine the religion of the people)



## Council of Trent (1545-1563): Catholic Response to the Reformation

The main objects...

- 1) To condemn the principles and doctrines of Protestantism and to define the doctrines of the Catholic Church on all disputed points.
- 2) To effect a reformation in discipline or administration, a secondary cause of the Reformation. The council abolished some of the most notorious abuses regarding the sale of indulgences, the morals of convents, the education of the clergy, the non-residence of bishops, and the careless issuing of censures and forbade dueling.
- 3) The church's interpretation of the Bible was final. Any Christian who substituted their own interpretation was a heretic. Also, the Bible and Church Tradition were equally authoritative.
- 4) The relationship of faith and works in salvation was defined, following controversy over Martin Luther's doctrine of "justification by faith alone".
- Other Catholic practices that drew the ire of reformers within the Church, such as indulgences, pilgrimages, the veneration of saints and relics, and the veneration of the Virgin Mary were strongly reaffirmed.
- Although liberal evangelical sentiments were uttered by some of the members in favor of the supreme authority of the Scriptures and justification by faith, no concession whatever was made to Protestantism.
- Counter- Reformation begins; Loyola & Xavier form Jesuits to win back Catholics in 1534; their chief aim being the extermination of Protestantism (their motto was "the end justifies the means")
- New Inquisition launched

## Reformation Expands- Switzerland

- Ulrich Zwingli (1484-1531)- born in Switzerland; educated in Basel, Bern & Vienna; influenced early by Erasmus, then by Luther; becomes pastor of the church in Zurich in 1519; images, altars, relics discarded; Zwingli died in a battle against Catholic persecutors;
- Zwingli and Luther meet in 1529 over Lord's Supper issues
  - Luther: "This is my body..."
  - Zwingli: "This signifies my body..."
- The Swiss Confession of Faith, known as the Helvetic Confession, was completed in 1566

## Reformation Expands- France

- John Calvin (1509-1564)- born near Paris; father was a secretary to the bishop of Noyon; educated in Paris at 13 yrs, master of all his studies; influenced by Jacques Lefevre, whose commentary (in 1512) on the epistles of Paul declared that God saves “by grace alone”; run out of town in 1533 due to Protestant teachings; starts writing the “Institutes of the Christian Religion” in 1535, when 26 yrs old; still recognized as one of the ablest expositions of the teachings of Scripture; travels to Geneva in 1536
- Guillaume Farel- French evangelical preacher who converted Waldenses to Protestantism; brought the Reformation to Bern, Neuchatel, & Geneva; leads cleansing of Geneva’s churches, but city in turmoil; turns to Calvin to restore peace and order and establish Reformed teachings more firmly
- Calvin initially declines call to help, but is eventually convinced; then he and Farel are run out of town 18 months later by the city council in opposition to form of worship & creeds
- Settles in Strassburg, where he marries and pastors a church of Protestant refugees; writes Commentary on Romans and expands his Institutes
- Returns to Geneva in 1541; draws up Church Order, church gov’t based on elders; consistory developed rules controlling citizens’ conduct; democratic civil gov’t enforced them; Geneva becomes a “city of God” and place of refuge for persecuted Protestants; first Protestant university established, which trained hundreds who help spread Reformation into Italy, Hungary, Poland, and western Germany
- Calvin takes lead for Reformation; catalyzes Reformed movement in France, Netherlands, Scotland (via Knox), indirectly elsewhere; becomes the “international reformer”

## Reformation Expands- Netherlands

- Netherlands become Calvinistic, embracing the summary of doctrine in the Institutes; Lutheran, Zwinglian, and Anabaptist influence fades
- Conflict between Catholics and Protestants (1570-1609) leads to split of Spanish controlled lowland region into a Catholic Belgium and a Protestant Netherlands; resistance to Catholic persecution was led by William of Orange; defeat of Spanish armada by England & Netherlands
- In 1561, Guido de Bres a.k.a. Guy de Bray (martyred in 1567) writes the Belgic Confession
- In 1563, Dathenus translates the Heidelberg Catechism into Dutch; originally written by Zacharias Ursinus, professor at Heidelberg University, and Caspar Olevianus, a Heidelberg preacher
- Dathenus also translates the Geneva Psalter into Dutch; long used in the Reformed Church of the Netherlands

## Huguenots

- French Protestants heavily influenced by the French “Jean Calvin”
- Gather in 1559 to establish the Gallic Confession; become known as Huguenots
- St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre- In what became known as the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre of August 24– September 17, 1572, Catholics killed thousands of Huguenots in Paris. Similar massacres took place in other towns in the weeks following, with a total death toll estimated as high as 110,000. The subsequent exodus of 300,000 Huguenots from France to England, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Norway, Denmark and Prussia created a kind of brain drain from which France would not fully recover for years.
- In 1598, Cardinal Richelieu waged war against the Huguenots; in 1685, Protestant worship was banned

## Reformation Expands- Scotland

- John Knox- Following Catholic persecution, fled to the castle at St. Andrews, a place of refuge for many Scottish Protestants; resided there in relative peace for several months, until the castle was attacked and captured by pro-Catholic French forces in 1547. Knox and some of the rest of the refugees were taken prisoner, and forced to row in the French galleys for 19 months.
- Upon his release, returned to England and helped write the Forty-Two Articles adopted as the creed of the Church of England
- Studied 4 years under Calvin in Geneva until 1559; helps write English language Geneva Bible written; first “study Bible”
- Powerful preacher, ignited a Reformed movement; Scottish Parliament made Presbyterianism the religion of the country; Christian education emphasized

## Reformation Expands- Hungary

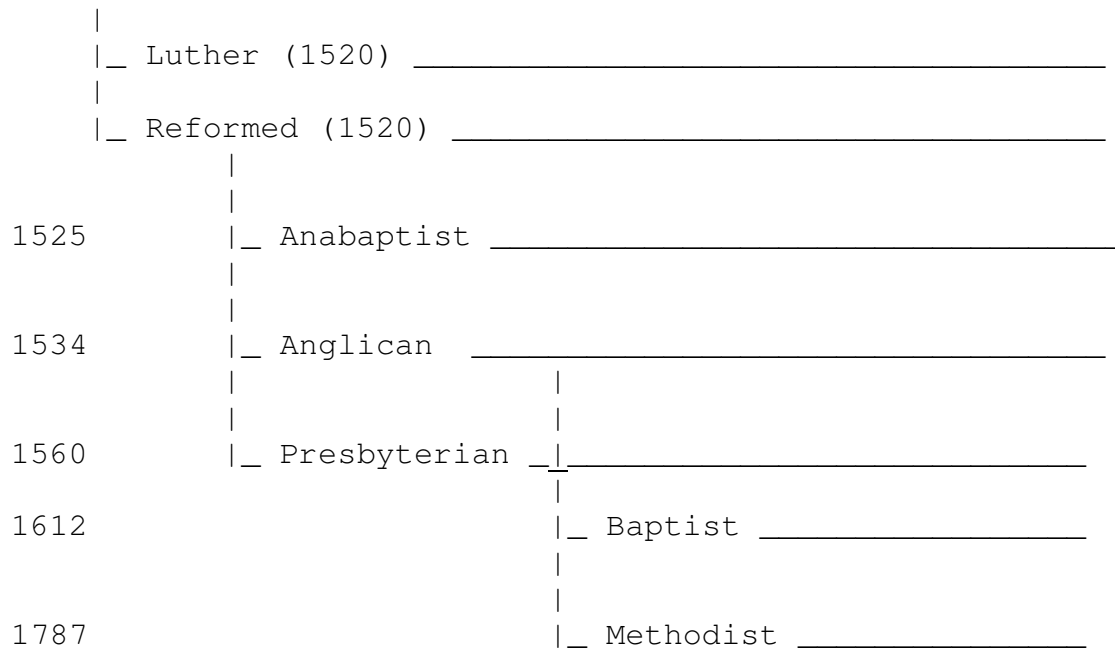
- In the 1540-50's the Reformation made great progress in Hungary, to an extent that 80-90% of the country's clergy and populace professed Protestantism
- Calvinists become the strongest Protestant group, organized in dioceses under superintendents; feature characteristic to Hungarian Calvinism is that the church continued to be administrated by bishops (superintendents); councils of elders, according to the Genevan model, emerged only in the 17th century.
- Gaspar Karolyi published the Hungarian bible translation in 1590.
- Spain- devoutly Catholic; “Spanish Inquisition” Catholic counter-movement to the Reformers

## Reformation Expands- England

- \*England adhered to the Roman Catholic church for nearly a thousand years, before the church separated from Rome in 1534, during the reign of King Henry VIII.  
\*A theological separation had been foreshadowed by various movements within the English church, but the English Reformation gained political support when Henry VIII wanted his marriage to Catherine of Aragon annulled so he could marry Anne Boleyn. Under pressure from Catherine's nephew Emperor Charles V, Holy Roman Emperor, Pope Clement VII refused the annulment and eventually Henry, although theologically a Catholic, decided to become Supreme Head of the Church of England to ensure the annulment of his marriage. Thus the Church of England was born.
- Queen Mary (a.k.a. "Bloody Mary") reunites with Rome in 1555; Hugh Latimer burned at the stake
- Thomas Cranmer, Protestant Archbishop of Canterbury, who worked with Knox to implement reforms, also martyred
- Queen Elisabeth restores Church of England in 1559
- English Bible in every parish; ongoing battle between Anglicans and Reformers

## Time Line

Reformation



Differences: Luther and Reformed		
	Lutheran	Reformed
Ordo Salutis	Calling, illumination, conversion, regeneration, justification, sanctification, glorification	Election, predestination, union w/ Christ, calling, regeneration, faith, repentance, justification, sanctification, glorification
Saving Grace of God	Grace received through baptism or preaching, enabling one to avoid resisting the regenerating grace of God	Irresistible
Repentance	Leads to Faith	Flows from faith
Baptism	Works regeneration, removing guilt and power of sin	Incorporation into the Covenant of Grace
Lord's Supper	Christ present in the sacrament objectively	Sign & seal of Covenant of Grace to believers; Christ present by faith, spiritually
Church & State	State church to tutor in the faith the rulers who support Protestantism	Holy commonwealth, in which church and state both Christian yet perform separate functions
Regulative Principle	Whatever is not forbidden in Scripture is permissible	Whatever is not commanded in Scripture is forbidden

## Anabaptists

- were Swiss/German Christians of the Radical Reformation who followed the teachings of Conrad Grebel
- The term anabaptist (“re-baptizer”) from their initial practice of baptizing individuals who had been baptized previously, often as infants. Anabaptists did not believe in infant baptism (felt that children below age of accountability were already saved); they supported believer's baptism.
- Started in reaction against close ties of church & state (control, mass “conversions”, nominal Christians, etc.)
- Preferred separate, communal lifestyle- sharing a community of goods, in-home Bible study and worship
- Persecuted by both Catholics and Protestants; tried to establish the New Jerusalem in Munster, killing non-supporters, then being sieged themselves and suffering greatly
- Menno Simons taught a more moderate Anabaptist version in the Netherlands; followers became known as the Mennonites

## Anabaptists (continued)

- Jacob Ammann leads a split of the Swiss Brethren, emphasizing simple/traditional lifestyle and strict church discipline, including the shunning of excommunicated members; followers became known as the Amish
- Descendants of the 16th century European movement are the Amish, Hutterites, Mennonites, Church of the Brethren, and Brethren in Christ.
- Key teachings:
  - Some taught that Jesus did not take the flesh from his mother, but either brought his body from heaven or had one made for him by the Word.
  - They condemned oaths, and also the reference of disputes between believers to law-courts.
  - The believer must not bear arms or offer forcible resistance to wrongdoers, nor wield the sword.
  - Civil government belongs to the world. The believer, who belongs to God's kingdom, must not fill any office, nor hold any rank under government, which is to be passively obeyed.
  - Sinners or unfaithful ones are to be excommunicated, and excluded from the sacraments and from intercourse with believers unless they repent. But no force is to be used towards them.

## Some of the Reformed creeds still commonly in use are:

- French (or Gallic) Confession (1559),
- Scots Confession (1560),
- Three forms of Unity
  - Heidelberg Catechism (1563),
  - Belgic Confession (1566),
  - Canons of Dordrecht (1619),
- Second Helvetic Confession (1566)
- Westminster Standards
  - Westminster Confession of Faith (1646)
  - Westminster Shorter Catechism (1649)
  - Westminster Larger Catechism (1649)
- Baptist
  - London Baptist Confession of Faith (1689)
- The Three forms of Unity are common among continental Reformed churches (especially those in the Netherlands). The Westminster Standards have a similarly common use, among Reformed and Presbyterian churches with origins in the British Isles.

## Canons of the Synod of Dordt (Dordrecht)

- The Canons of Dordt are the judgment of the National Synod held in the Dutch city of Dordrecht (Dordt) in 1618-19 and form one of the confessional standards of many of the Reformed churches around the world. Their continued use as a standard still forms a dividing line between the followers of Arminius and Reformed Churches.
- These canons are in actuality a judicial decision on the doctrinal points in dispute from the Arminian controversy of that day. Following the death of Jacobus Arminius (1560-1609), his followers set forth a Remonstrance (published in 1610) in five articles formulating their points of departure from the stricter Calvinism of the Belgic Confession. The canons are the judgment of the Synod against this Remonstrance. Regardless, Arminian theology has since continued in various forms within Protestantism.
- The Canons were not intended to be a comprehensive explanation of Reformed doctrine, but only an exposition on the five points of doctrine in dispute. These Canons set forth what is often referred to as the Five Points of Calvinism.