

Baptist Distinctives- Protestant Reformation

Key Figures

- 1) John Wycliffe
- 2) Pope Leo X
- 3) Martin Luther
- 4) John Calvin
- 5) John Smyth

Key Dates

- 1) 1343- Roman Catholic church codified the sale of indulgences
- 2) 1382- John Wycliffe translated the Latin Vulgate into English
- 3) 1384- John Wycliffe burned at the stake
- 4) 1517- Martin Luther nailed his 95 theses to the door of the church in Wittenberg, Germany
- 5) 1530- John Calvin broke from the Roman Catholic Church
- 6) 1609- The first Baptist church was formed with John Smyth as pastor

Key Terms

- 1) Catholic- Universal, Global, Collective
- 2) Roman Catholic- Universal church based in Rome
- 3) Indulgences- A way to lessen or rid a person of their guilt of sin by the way of money

Key Passages

- 1) Romans 1:17
- 2) Galatians 3:11
- 3) Matthew 16:18

Key Doctrine

- 1) Justification by faith alone

John Wycliffe

- The Morning Star of the Reformation
- Was the first to translate the Bible into English for the common man
- Condemned as heretic and burned at the stake in 1384

Martin Luther

- Born in Eisleben, Germany in 1483
- Attended law school with the intention of being a lawyer
- Left law school to become an Augustinian monk
- Tortured by the holiness of God found in Scripture and the depravity found within himself
- He could not find solace within the teachings of the Roman Catholic church
- Would spend hours in confession hoping to reach penance and peace with God
- His study of the Book of Galatians stirred him to question the practice of selling indulgences
- He nailed his 95 theses to the door of the church in Wittenberg, Germany in 1517 in attempt to reform the Roman Catholic church
- College students disseminated it with the help of the new moveable type printing press
- Before anyone knew what it was the Reformation was underway
- Was called into a tribunal at Worms, Germany in 1521 where he refused to recant
- Excommunicated from the Roman Catholic church by Pope Leo X
- Kidnapped by friends and taken to Wartburg Castle where he would translate the Scriptures into German

John Calvin

- Born in France in 1509
- Trained as a humanist lawyer
- Broke from the Roman Catholic church in 1536
- Most of his ministry and writings was done in Geneva, Switzerland
- Took the Protestant Reformation to new heights as the divide from Rome grew larger
- Certain denominations began to form based on the work of John Calvin
- Referred to as the most important Protestant theologian of all time
- Authored the “Institutes of the Christian Religion”

John Smyth

- Born in 1554 in England
- Was a Puritan in his views
- Broke with the Church of England in 1607
- Authored "The Differences of the Churches" in 1608
- Pastored the first known Baptist church in Holland in 1609 which drew much of its theology from the Anabaptist movement that was started in 1527
- The ordinances differentiated it from the other groups (Believer's baptism and the Lord's Supper)

Summary

Every modern Christian is a part of the Catholic church. This term simply means that we are a part of the global church that Christ instituted. The Roman Catholic church is based in Rome, Italy and they had gone off the rails theologically. They had become so powerful that the Pope rivaled or exceeded many of those who were actually royalty of nations. Before the Protestant Reformation there were no denominations or independent churches. The church believed that based on Matthew 16:18 that the Roman Catholic church, more specifically the Papacy, was the one true church. Martin Luther and the Reformers did not intend to break away from the Roman Catholic church but sought to reform it back to the doctrine of justification by faith alone. Their efforts ultimately were denied by the RCC thereby kicking off the most influential movement in Western world history.