

The East-West Schism

GEORGE T. DENNIS

Long-standing differences between Western and Eastern Christians finally caused a definitive break, and Roman Catholics and Eastern Orthodox still remain separate.

THE
100
MOST
IMPORTANT
EVENTS
IN CHURCH
HISTORY

On Saturday, July 16, 1054, as afternoon prayers were about to begin, Cardinal Humbert, legate of Pope Leo IX, strode into the Cathedral of Hagia Sophia in Constantinople, right up to the main altar, and placed on it a parchment that declared the Patriarch of Constantinople, Michael Cerularius, to be excommunicated. He then marched out of the church, shook its dust from his feet, and left the city. A week later the patriarch solemnly condemned the cardinal.

Centuries later, this dramatic incident was thought to mark the beginning of the schism between the Latin and the Greek churches, a division that still separates Roman Catholics and Eastern Orthodox (Greek, Russian, and other). Today, however, no serious scholar maintains that the schism began in 1054. The process leading to the definitive break was much more complicated, and no single cause or event can be said to have precipitated it.

Immediate causes of the break

In 1048 a French bishop was elected as Pope Leo IX. He and the clerics who accompanied him to Rome were intent on reforming the papacy and the entire church. Five years earlier in Constantinople, the rigid and ambitious Michael Cerularius was named patriarch.

Problems arose in Southern Italy (then under Byzantine rule) in the 1040s, when Norman warriors conquered the region and replaced Greek [Eastern] bishops with Latin [Western] ones. People were confused, and they argued

about the proper form of the liturgy and other external matters. Differences over clerical marriage, the bread used for the Eucharist, days of fasting, and other usages assumed an unprecedented importance.

When Cerularius heard that the Normans were forbidding Greek customs in Southern Italy, he retaliated, in 1052, by closing the Latin churches in Constantinople. He then induced bishop Leo of Ochrid to compose an attack on the Latin use of unleavened bread and other practices. In response to this provocative treatise, Pope Leo sent his chief adviser, Humbert, a tactless and narrow-minded man with a strong sense of papal authority, to Constantinople to deal with the problem directly.

On arriving in the imperial city in April 1054, Humbert launched into a vicious criticism of Cerularius and his supporters. But the patriarch ignored the papal legate, and an angry Humbert stalked into Hagia Sophia and placed on the altar the bull of excommunication. He returned to Rome convinced he had gained a victory for the Holy See.

Dramatic though they were, the events of 1054 were not recorded by the chroniclers of the time and were quickly forgotten. Negotiations between the pope and the Byzantine emperor continued, especially in the last

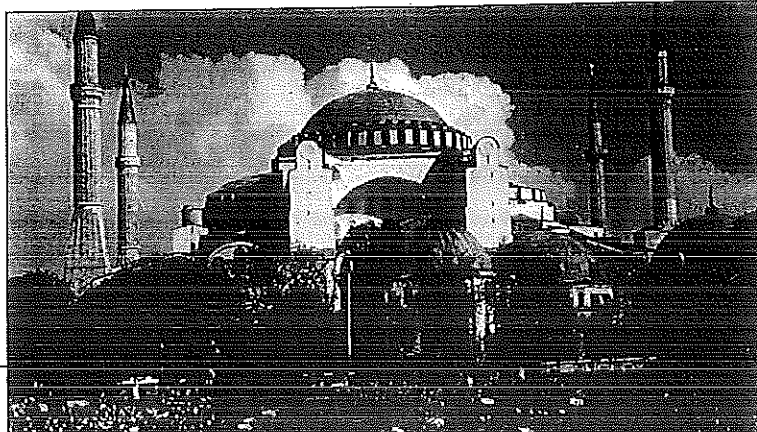
two decades of the century, as the Byzantines sought aid against the invading Turks. In 1095, to provide such help, Pope Urban II proclaimed the Crusades; certainly there was no schism between the churches at that time. Despite episodes of tension and conflict, Eastern and Western Christians lived and worshipped together.

In the latter half of the twelfth century, however, friction between the groups increased, caused not so much by religious differences as by political and cultural ones. Violent anti-Latin riots erupted in Constantinople in 1182, and in 1204 Western knights brutally ravaged Constantinople itself. The tension accelerated, and by 1234, when Greek and Latin churchmen met to discuss their differences, it was obvious they represented different churches.

Underlying causes of the break

What caused the schism? It was not the excommunications of 1054; not differences in theology, discipline, or liturgy; not political or military conflicts. These may have disposed the churches to draw apart, as did prejudice, misunderstanding, arrogance, and plain stupidity. More fundamental, perhaps, was the way each church came to perceive itself.

The eleventh-century reform in the Western Church called for the strengthening of papal authority, which caused



Cathedral of Hagia Sophia in Constantinople, site of the excommunication of 1054. The building—today the St. Sophia Museum in Istanbul—reflects more recent additions of Islamic art and architecture.

Tony Lane

the church to become more autocratic and centralized. Basing his claims on his succession from St. Peter, the pope asserted his direct jurisdiction over the entire church, East as well as West.

The Byzantines, on the other hand, viewed their church in the context of the imperial system; their sources of law and unity were the ecumenical councils and the emperor, whom God had placed over all things, spiritual and temporal. They believed that the Eastern churches had always enjoyed autonomy of governance, and they rejected papal claims to absolute rule. But neither side was really listening to the other.

In addition, since the ninth century, theological controversy had focused on the procession of the Holy Spirit. In the life of the Trinity, does the Spirit proceed from the Father only, or from the Father *and* from the Son (*Filioque* in Latin)? The Western church, concerned about resurgent Arianism, had, almost inadvertently, added the word to the Nicene Creed, claiming that it made more precise a teaching already in the creed. The Greeks objected to the unilateral addition to the creed, and they strongly disagreed with the theological proposition involved, which seemed to them to diminish the individual properties of the three Persons in the Trinity. In 1439 Greek and Latin theologians at the Council of Florence, after debating the issue for over a year, arrived at a compromise that, while reasonable, has not proven fully satisfactory.

After the Byzantine Empire fell in 1453, the Eastern church lived on under Turkish rule and then in various nations. Millions of Orthodox Christians in those lands are still separated from the millions of Christians adhering to Rome. Today greater efforts are made to address the issues, but neither side seems willing to make the necessary concessions. As a result, Christians who share a common belief and accept Jesus as head of the church, feel that they cannot share his Eucharist. □

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North Wind Picture Archives



Pope Urban II Launches the First Crusade

THE
100
MOST
IMPORTANT
EVENTS
IN CHURCH
HISTORY

At the Battle of Manzikert, in 1071, the Seljuk Turks massacred the Byzantine Empire's armies. The feared Turks overran Asia Minor and began to threaten even the capital of Constantinople. Meanwhile, they had also conquered Jerusalem, preventing Christian pilgrimages to the holy sites.

In 1074, Pope Gregory VII proposed leading fifty thousand volunteers to help the Christians in the East and possibly liberate the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem. Finally, in 1095, in response

Waves of pilgrims and soldiers embarked for the Holy Land, beginning an era of exploration, conquest, defeat, and folly.

to desperate appeals from Eastern Emperor Alexius Comnenus, the new pope, Urban II, preached a stirring sermon at Clermont:

"A horrible tale has gone forth," he said. "An accursed race utterly alienated from God . . . has invaded the lands of the Christians and depopulated them by the sword, plundering, and fire." Toward the end, he made his appeal: "Tear that land from the wicked race and subject it to yourselves."

The people were riled. They began shouting, "Deus vult! Deus vult!" ("God wills it!") Urban II made "Deus vult" the battle cry of the Crusades.

Why the crusaders went

The pope's representatives then traversed Europe, recruiting people to go to Palestine. The list of the First Crusade's leaders read like a medieval "Who's Who," including the fabled Godfrey of Bouillon. Soon waves of people—probably over one hundred thousand, including about ten thousand knights—were headed for the Holy Land. Thus began over three hundred years of similar expeditions and pilgrimages, which gradually became known as *crusades*, because of the cross worn on the clothing of the crusaders.

Why did so many respond?

A spirit of adventure, for one thing. Pilgrimages to the Holy Land had become a feature of medieval piety, and now the pilgrimage was coupled with the prospect of fighting to recapture the pilgrimage sites, to avenge the dishonor their Lord Jesus had suffered.

The crusaders also took on an arduous journey in dismal conditions for spiritual reward. This was a holy undertaking, so participants could receive an indulgence—remission of sins allowing for direct entry to heaven or reduced time in purgatory. Finally laypeople could do something that was nearly as spiritually noble as entering the monastery.

Further, many of the crusaders hoped to acquire land in the East, to plunder and grow rich.

Progress of the First Crusade

The first crusaders ventured for Constantinople, slaughtering Jews throughout Germany and occasionally skirmishing with local peoples over food and foraging rights. By late 1096, Emperor Alexius found his city of Constantinople overrun with fifty thousand unruly visi-

tors. In exchange for the crusaders' oaths of fealty, he provided them with supplies and sent them on. The Muslims were divided into rival factions at this time, so the crusaders advanced fairly rapidly, capturing Antioch in 1098 and Jerusalem by the following July. The Crusaders followed a "take no prisoners" line; an observer at the time wrote that the soldiers "rode in blood up to their bridle reins." Following their conquest, the Crusaders set up four Latin states, including the Kingdom of Jerusalem under the rule of Godfrey of Bouillon. They built numerous structures, especially at the holy sites, and some still stand.

The First Crusade was the most successful. The Second, preached by Bernard of Clairvaux, was a stunning failure, and later ones did little to regain territory. The infamous Children's Crusade disintegrated before it reached the Holy Land, with most of the children dying or being sold into slavery. The last Christian stronghold in Syria fell in 1291 when the Muslims captured the city of Acre. The major waves of the Crusades had ended.

Crusades' consequences

We find it hard to sympathize with the crusaders. Their holy wars seem like an incredibly unChristian waste of energy and time. The medieval mind, however, easily accepted the idea of fighting for—and dying for—a holy cause. Some crusaders were truly pious, while admittedly, others were just violently adventurous.

The Crusades deeply damaged Western Christians' relations with others. When, in 1204, the knights of the Fourth Crusade sacked Constantinople, the breach between Eastern and Western Christians became wide and lasting. The major calls to crusade invariably sparked pogroms against the Jews. And the crusaders' brutality worked only to make the Muslims more militant.

On an economic level, however, the Crusades increased trade and stepped up Europe's economic growth. They also led to a greater interest in travel, map making, and exploration.

Modern cynics point to the Crusades as an example of Christians' fanaticism and intolerance. In the 1990s Christians are still living down a reputation created by bands of medieval pilgrims and soldiers intent on liberating the Holy Land. □

The massive treatise set forth a theological system so influential it has been declared eternally valid.

THE
100
MOST
IMPORTANT
EVENTS
IN CHURCH
HISTORY

The Dumb Ox"—that was the name given by his college classmates to the heavy, quiet, and serious lad from the Count of Aquino's family. They might never have guessed that the Ox would produce eighteen huge volumes of theology, nor that the theological system he constructed would become an official theology of Catholicism.

The greatest theologian of the Middle Ages was born about 1225 to a wealthy and noble family. At age 5, the pudgy boy was sent to the school at the nearby monastery of Monte Cassino (the community founded by Benedict seven hundred years earlier). At age 14, Thomas went to the University of Naples, where his Dominican teacher so impressed him that Thomas decided he, too, would join the new, study-oriented Dominican order.

His family fiercely opposed the decision (apparently wanting him to become an influential and financially secure abbot or archbishop rather than take a friar's vow of poverty). Thomas's brothers kidnapped him and confined him for fifteen months; his family tempted him with a prostitute and an offer to buy him the post of Archbishop of Naples.

All attempts failed, and Thomas went to Paris, medieval Europe's center of theological study. While there he fell under the spell of the famous



Thomas Aquinas Concludes His Work on *Summa Theologiae*

Summa

Thomas Aquinas, the most prominent theologian and philosopher of the Middle Ages.

teacher Albertus Magnus, also known as Albert the Great.

Thomas's educational climate

In medieval Europe, the idea of "secular education" had not occurred to anyone. All learning took place under the eye of the church, and theology reigned supreme in the sciences. Yet Thomas lived in a time when non-Christian philosophers were stirring the minds of many thinkers. Aristotle the Greek, Averroes the Muslim, Maimonides the Jew—their (and others') works were being translated into Latin. Scholars were fascinated particularly by Aristotle, whose works had been unknown in Europe for centuries. He seemed to have explained the entire universe not by using Scripture, but simply by using his powers of observation and logic.

The new (or newly translated) philosophies' emphasis on reason, however, threatened to undermine traditional Christian beliefs. Could an intellectual person who held to the reasonable new philosophies retain his or her faith?

Thomas's *Summa*

Thomas avidly followed Aristotle. But, feeling more devoted to the church than to any brand of philosophy, Thomas determined to extract from Aristotle's writings what was acceptable to Christianity.

At the beginning of his massive *Summa Theologiae* (which means "A summation of theological knowledge"),

Thomas stated, "In sacred theology, all things are treated from the standpoint of God." Thomas proceeded to distinguish between philosophy and theology, and between reason and revelation, though he emphasized that these did not contradict each other. Both are fountains of knowledge; both come from God.

Reason, said Thomas (following Aristotle), is based on sensory data—what we can see, feel, hear, smell, and touch. Revelation is based on more. While reason can lead us to believe in God—something that other theologians had already proposed—only revelation can show us God as he really is, the Triune God of the Bible.

Thomas's theology is not easy reading. Few modern readers can sit through many pages of his intricate reasonings. Yet all can appreciate his attempt to harmonize revelation with reason. He showed that though revelation never contradicts reason—a conclusion many would dispute—reason alone is not sufficient to understand ourselves or God. Sense experience can explain some of nature's workings, but heavenly knowledge alone, which every believer will experience after death, gives clear knowledge of God. And though a person apart from Christianity can practice certain "natural virtues," only a believer can practice faith, hope, and love, the truly Christian virtues.

Thomas's legacy

Thomas's work, along with his

many other writings (notably the *Summa Contra Gentiles*, a manual for missionaries to the Muslims, which also contains some lovely hymns) was not universally well received at first. Some of his statements were condemned after his death, though the condemnations were later reversed. But before long Thomas's system gained preeminence. When Catholicism faced the rise of Protestantism in Europe, it used the works of Thomas in drafting the decrees of the Council of Trent (1545–63). Four years later, Thomas was declared a "doctor of the church." And in 1879, the papal bull *Aeterni Patris* endorsed Thomism (Aquinas's theology) as an authentic expression of doctrine and said it should be studied by all students of theology. Today, both Protestant and Catholic scholars draw upon his writings, and no one can claim to be a theologian unless he or she is familiar with his work.

Thomas Aquinas himself might not have approved. In spite of his stature as a teacher and author, he remained humble throughout his life. Consistently he turned down offers to be made bishop or abbot. More remarkable than this was an announcement he made three months before his death in 1274. He said, after apparently seeing a heavenly vision during a worship service, "All that I have hitherto written seems to me nothing but straw . . . compared to what has been revealed to me." He gave up all theological writing, and so the *Summa Theologiae* was never actually completed. □

The Great Papal Schism

FRANCIS OAKLEY

When two popes, and later three popes, vied for supremacy, the medieval church entered a dramatic, forty-year crisis of authority.

THE
100
MOST
IMPORTANT
EVENTS
IN CHURCH
HISTORY

On Friday, St. George's Eve, there was another session," wrote an observer of the Council of Constance. "In this session Our Holy Father Pope Martin gave to all who were present at the Council of Constance permission to leave and likewise absolution from penalty and guilt. Afterward he gave the people his blessing in the upper court. Our lord King stood beside him, dressed as an evangelist, wearing his imperial crown and holding the orb in his hand while a man held a naked sword before him. Cardinal Conti proclaimed to the people in Latin the indulgence of seven years for mortal sins and seven Lents. Master Peter repeated it in German, and everyone was given permission to go home."

This passage, from Ulrich Richental's *Chronicle of the Council of Constance*, describes the closing session of that great council. The session took place on April 22, 1418, at a moment when the new pope, Martin V, with plague moving in on the city, was anxious to speed the council fathers on their way and make his own departure.

Constance may not exactly be a

household word—not even in the history of representative assemblies—but in size alone it was one of the most imposing of medieval gatherings. Nor was it distinguished by size alone. It was the greatest and certainly the most memorable of the general assemblies held by the medieval Latin Church (i.e., the Western church). When it assembled in 1414, it did so at a time of supreme crisis in the life of that church, when what later came to be known as the Great Schism of the West had endured for almost forty years.

Causes of the Schism

In 1377, after the papacy had been resident for almost seventy years at Avignon, under the shadow of French royal power, Gregory XI had finally succeeded in bringing it back to Rome. He had done so despite the hostility of some of the Roman nobility and some of his own cardinals. When he died in March 1378, six of the twenty-two cardinals were still in residence at Avignon, where a considerable part of the papal bureaucracy was still functioning.

With Gregory XI's death, the Romans feared the election of a French pope and the removal of the papacy back to Avignon. As a result, the papal election that took place in April did so amid considerable confusion—rioting outside the conclave and dissension within. It ended with the election of a compromise candidate, Urban VI (1378–1389), an Italian who had served at Avignon.

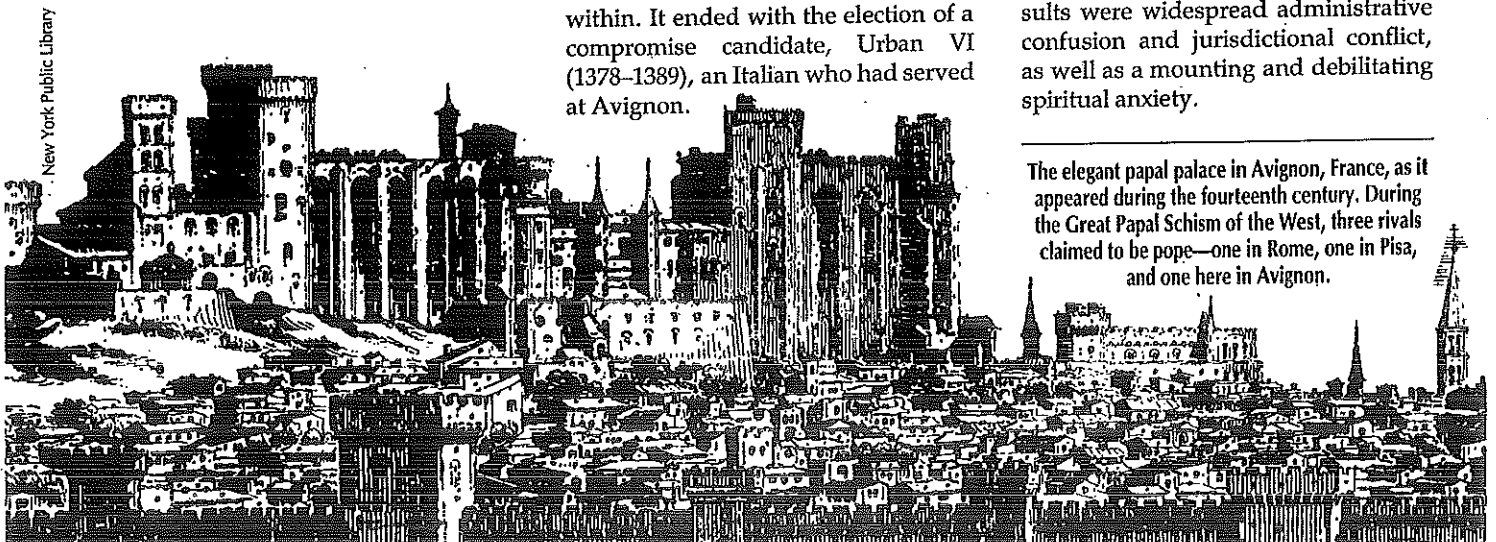
But Urban VI's subsequent violent and abusive treatment of the cardinals caused them to fear for their lives and suspect him of insanity. That, combined with the turbulent conditions surrounding his election, gave rise to doubts about the validity of Urban VI's title. The cardinals publicly repudiated his election and selected one of themselves as Clement VII (1378–1394). By the summer of 1379, having failed to capture Rome, Clement took up residence at Avignon, and the stage was set for two rival papal "obediences," Roman and Avignonese.

As their previous political and diplomatic alignments might have suggested, France, Castile [a Spanish kingdom], and Scotland backed Clement. Meanwhile, England and much of the German Empire sided with Urban. As a result, neither of the rival claimants had a decisive edge of power. Neither pope being able to dislodge the other, and neither being willing to relinquish his claim, there began the most serious schism ever to disrupt the unity of the Latin Church.

Over time, loyalties hardened, and the rival papal courts strove to perpetuate their claims. At Rome, Boniface IX (in 1389), Innocent VII (in 1404), and Gregory XII (in 1406) were elected to succeed Urban VI. At Avignon, Benedict XIII was elected in 1394 to succeed Clement VII. The understandable results were widespread administrative confusion and jurisdictional conflict, as well as a mounting and debilitating spiritual anxiety.

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The elegant papal palace in Avignon, France, as it appeared during the fourteenth century. During the Great Papal Schism of the West, three rivals claimed to be pope—one in Rome, one in Pisa, and one here in Avignon.



End Schism

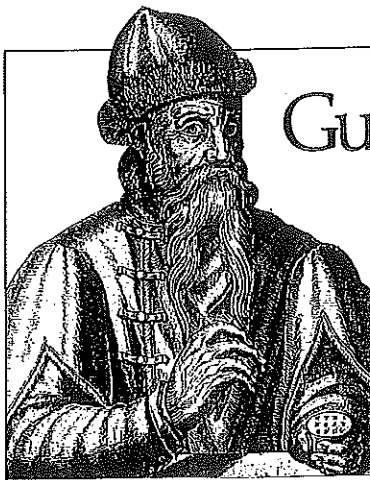
The Council of Constance

Many attempts were made to end the schism, yet the most promising had led only to the addition (at Pisa) in 1410 of yet another line of claimants to the papal title. The intolerable situation of three rival popes ultimately led, through a complex process of ecclesiastical and secular diplomacy, to the Council of Constance. Although the council was summoned (under imperial pressure) by the Pisan pope, John XXIII (1410–1415), in its determination to end the schism, it did not hesitate to depose him along with his Avignonese rival, Benedict XIII, and to accept the "resignation" of the Roman claimant, Gregory XII. The council then proceeded to elect a successor, Martin V (1417–31), the first pope in forty years to be able to command the allegiance of the whole Latin Church.

The achievement of the council was considerable. Not only did it end years of turbulence in the church, but it did so by asserting these historically significant beliefs:

- the pope, however divinely instituted his office, was not an absolute monarch but in some sense a constitutional ruler;
- the pope possessed a merely ministerial authority delegated to him by the community of the faithful and for the good of the whole church;
- the community of the faithful had not exhausted its inherent authority in the mere act of electing its ruler but had retained whatever residual power was necessary to prevent its own subversion or destruction;
- the community of the faithful could exercise power via its representatives assembled in a general council—even, in certain critical cases, against the wishes of the pope and, if need be, it could judge, chastise, and even depose a pope.

The Great Schism of the West thus set forth a greatly expanded authority for general councils of the church. As the miseries of the schism receded into the background, however, a resurgent papacy succeeded in marginalizing this "conciliar" consciousness in the life of the church. But a strengthened role for councils never wholly disappeared, and, in the wake of the Second Vatican Council (1962–65), it has shown unambiguous signs of renewed vitality. □



This 1584 engraving, the earliest known depiction of Johann Gutenberg, shows the famous inventor holding a die for twelve letters of the alphabet.

Gutenberg Produces the First Printed Bible

Using his revolutionary invention—printing from movable type—he made the Scriptures potentially accessible to every person.



Last year saw a curious item: the entire Bible on a hand-held computer. The technological wonder can look up chapters and verses instantly and project them on its screen, saving the reader from flipping pages. Whether or not this invention will replace printed Bibles, however, it pales before the technological breakthroughs of a German printer over five hundred years ago. Indeed, it is hard to imagine a modern church, or world, apart from the mass-produced printed page he made possible.

In search of efficient printing

Christianity, following Judaism, has always been a religion of the Book. For centuries scribes dedicated themselves to copying the Scriptures by hand—primarily on papyrus or animal skin parchment. With the rise of monasteries, copying the Scriptures became the occupation for some monks. But it was truly a labor. The idea that every believer or family could have a Bible was unthinkable.

In the 1440s, the German Johann Gutenberg began experimenting with novel, mysterious ways of approaching printing. So did many other Europeans, all looking for a faster, cheaper way to produce books. Usually, if Europeans didn't write by hand, they used hand stamps or woodcuts—an improvement, but still painfully slow. And the printing methods used in the Orient, primarily block printing, were

unknown in Europe.

Gutenberg had an advantage: he was skilled in engraving and metal working. While living in Strasbourg, Gutenberg perfected several unique ideas: a hand-held mold that could adjust to cast any letter accurately and in large quantities; a durable tin alloy that melted and solidified quickly and without distortion; an oil-based ink; and a modified printing press. By about 1440, he had assembled the necessary components for mass-produced printing, but if he printed anything in Strasbourg, it has not survived.

By 1448, Gutenberg returned to his hometown of Mainz and borrowed money for his printing business. He failed to repay the sizable loans, and in 1455, his creditor and partner foreclosed, taking possession of Gutenberg's typefaces for two projects underway: a Bible printed in forty-two lines per page, and a psalter. Thus, no printed material that bears Gutenberg's name has survived. Nor is there an authentic portrait of him or a copy of his autograph.

The famous 42-line Bible

By the following August, however, a copy of Gutenberg's forty-two-line Bible—specifically, Jerome's Latin translation, the Vulgate—was completed. The Bible, which was printed simultaneously on six printing presses, was stunning. (See photograph on page 3.) Some collectors say this first printed book is also the most beautiful ever printed, and they pay astounding sums for the forty or fifty copies that

Luther Posts the 95 Theses

ERIC W. GRITSCH

An obscure monk invited debate on a pressing church issue—and touched off a history-shattering reform movement.

THE
100
MOST
IMPORTANT
EVENTS
IN CHURCH
HISTORY

Sometime during October 31, 1517, the day before the Feast of All Saints, the 33-year-old Martin Luther posted theses on the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg. The door functioned as a bulletin board for various announcements related to academic and church affairs. The theses were written in Latin and printed on a folio sheet by the printer John Gruenberger, one of the many entrepreneurs in the new print medium first used in Germany about 1450. Luther was calling for a "disputation on the power and efficacy of indulgences out of love and zeal for truth and the desire to bring it to light." He did so as a faithful monk and priest who had been appointed professor of biblical theology at the University of Wittenberg, a small, virtually unknown institution in a small town.

Some copies of the theses were sent to friends and church officials, but the disputation never took place. Albert of Brandenburg, archbishop of Mainz, sent the theses to some theologians whose judgment moved him to send a copy to Rome and demand action against Luther. By the early months of 1518, the theses had been reprinted in many cities, and Luther's name had become associated with demands for radical change in the church. He had become front-page news.

The issue of indulgences

Why? Luther was calling for a debate on the most neuralgic issue of his time: the relationship between money and religion. "Indulgences" (from the Lat-

in *indulgentia*—permit) had become the complex instruments for granting forgiveness of sins. The granting of forgiveness in the sacrament of penance was based on the "power of the keys" given to the apostles according to Matthew 16:18, and was used to discipline sinners. Penitent sinners were asked to show regret for their sins (contrition), confess them to a priest (confession), and do penitential work to atone for them (satisfaction).

Indulgences were issued by executive papal order and by written permission in various bishoprics, and they were meant to relax or commute the penitent sinner's work of satisfaction. By the late eleventh century it had become customary to issue indulgences to volunteers taking part in crusades to the Holy Land against the Muslims; all sins would be forgiven anyone participating in such a dangerous but holy enterprise. After 1300 a complete commutation of satisfaction ("plenary indulgence") was granted to all pilgrims visiting holy shrines in Rome during "jubilee years" (at first every hundred years, and, eventually, every twenty-five years).

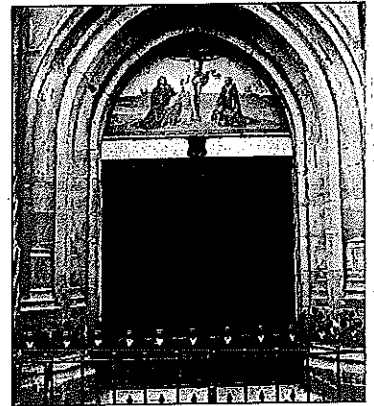
Abuses soon abounded: "permits" were issued offering release from all temporal punishment—indeed, from punishment in purgatory—for a specific payment as determined by the church. Some popes pursued their "edifice complex" by collecting large sums through the sale of indulgences. Pope Julius II, for example, granted a "jubilee indulgence" in 1510, the proceeds of which were used to build the new basilica of St. Peter in Rome.

In 1515, Pope Leo X commissioned Albert of Brandenburg to use the Do-



Top: Luther shows his Theses. The glamorized painting does capture the fact that "within a fortnight, every university and religious center was agog with excitement."

Right: The north door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg, Germany, which in Luther's day was a common bulletin board for local church and university announcements.



minican order to sell St. Peter indulgences in his lands. Albert owed a large sum to Rome for having granted him a special dispensation to become the ecclesiastical prince ruling three territories (Mainz, Magdeburg, and Halberstadt). He borrowed the money from the Fugger bank in Augsburg, which engaged an experienced indulgences salesman, the Dominican John Tetzel, to run the indulgences traffic; one half of the proceeds went to Albert and the Fuggers, the other half to Rome. Tetzel's campaign gave rise to the famous jingle, "As soon as the coin in the coffer rings, a soul from purgation

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tory springs."

The issue of indulgences had now become linked to the prevalent anxiety regarding death and the final judgment. This anxiety was fueled by a runaway credit system based on printed money and the new banking system.

The message of Martin Luther

Luther attacked the abuse of indulgence sales in sermons, in counseling sessions, and, finally, in the Ninety-Five Theses, which rang out the revolutionary theme of the Reformation: "When our Lord and Master Jesus Christ said, 'Repent,' He willed the entire life of believers to be one of repentance" (Thesis 1).

By 1520, Luther announced that baptism is the only indulgence necessary for salvation. All of life is a "return to baptism" in the sense that one clings to the divine promise of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ alone, who by his life, death, and resurrection liberated humankind from all punishment for sin. One lives by trusting in Christ alone and thus becoming a Christ to the neighbor in need rather than by trying to pacify God.

It is this simple reaffirmation of the ancient Christian "good news," the gospel, that created in the church catholic the reform movement that attracted legions in Germany and other

European territories. The movement was propelled by slogans stressing the essentials of Christianity: faith alone (*sola fides*), grace alone (*sola gratia*), Christ alone (*solus Christus*). Many joined because Luther criticized the papacy, which had claimed to have power over every soul. "Why does not the pope whose wealth today is greater than the wealth of the richest Crassus (a wealthy Roman nicknamed "Fats," who died in 53 B.C.) build this one basilica of St. Peter with his own money rather than with the money of poor believers?" (Thesis 87).

The Ninety-Five Theses were the straw that broke the Catholic camel's back. When Luther was asked later why he had done what he did, he answered, "I never wanted to do it, but was forced into it when I had to become a Doctor of Holy Scripture against my will." Though condemned by church and state, Luther survived the attempts to burn him as a heretic.

Hindsight suggests that Luther's theses planted the seeds of an ecumenical dialogue on what is essential for Christian unity, indeed for survival, in the interim between Christ's first and second coming. That dialogue will bear fruit as long as it wrestles, as Luther did, with the proper distinction between the power of the Word of God and the power of human sin. □

The Diet of Worms

Was the wayward Luther
free to dissent?

A German council
rendered a judgment.

ERIC W. GRITSCH

THE
100
MOST
IMPORTANT
EVENTS
IN CHURCH
HISTORY

A complex constellation of events and circumstances dominated Europe in the first two decades of the sixteenth century. The rediscovery and study of pre-Christian Greek and Roman culture, known as "renaissance" and "humanism," called into question much of the contemporary Christian culture. Discovery and exploration of a new, non-European world expanded trade and led to what was later called "capitalism." The Holy Roman Empire, a symbiotic relationship between spiritual and temporal rulers—pope and emperor—was being threatened by a massive invasion of Muslims led by Turkish sultans. Moreover, the unity of Christendom was being imperiled by the fast-growing reform movement started by Martin Luther. In this turbulent era, the diet (assembly) held at Worms in 1521 was one attempt to preserve that unity.

Pressures for the diet

Politics and religion had become strange bedfellows in Germany. The "Golden Bull" of 1356 had provided for the election of an emperor by majority vote of four secular and three ecclesiastical princes. Two years before the Diet of Worms, the elector Frederick "the Wise" cast the deciding vote in favor of Charles I of Spain to become Charles V, Holy Roman Emperor. Luther was

Historical Picture Service, Chicago

The sale of indulgences, as depicted in a woodcut. Luther objected to abuses in what was called "the holy trade."



Frederick's subject; thus, when the papacy moved to silence him, Frederick insisted that his professor—a growing attraction at the University of Wittenberg, newly founded by Frederick—be heard on German soil and treated fairly.

As a result, Luther had a hearing before a cardinal in Augsburg in 1518, and he could debate the issue of papal authority at a well-publicized event at the University of Leipzig in 1519. He was also free, in 1520, to publish his ideas on church reform through best-selling treatises such as *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church* (a stinging critique of the hierarchical system of sacraments) and *The Freedom of the Christian* (the exposition of a Christian stance liberated from bondage to a church claiming to have an inerrant structure).

In 1520, Rome threatened to excommunicate Luther unless he recanted, but the Wittenberg professor refused to do so. The letter threatening excommunication was burned in a festive bonfire staged by faculty and students in December. Luther's actual excommunication by papal bull in January 1521 only fueled the opposition to Rome. Under pressure from Elector Frederick and other princes, Emperor Charles V agreed to hear Luther at a German diet scheduled to meet in Worms in the spring of 1521.

Proceedings of the diet

Rome hoped that the diet would reject Luther's cause, thus easing the task of a general council of bishops, chaired by the pope, who would be dealing with the religious issues raised. Virtually all of Germany was supporting Luther. As the official papal representative to the diet, Jerome Aleander, put it in his secret message to Rome, "Nine-tenths of the people are shouting 'Luther!' and the other tenth are crying 'Death to the Roman Court!'"

Luther appeared before the diet on April 17 at 4:00 P.M., after a triumphant journey from Wittenberg. Silence descended on the room where the diet was meeting. A representative of the emperor asked Luther to respond to two questions: Did he acknowledge the authorship of books that had been brought to the diet and bore his name? Would he stand by them or retract anything in them?

Luther asked for time to reflect before answering, and he was granted twenty-four hours. On April 18, 6:00 P.M., he gave his now-famous answer:

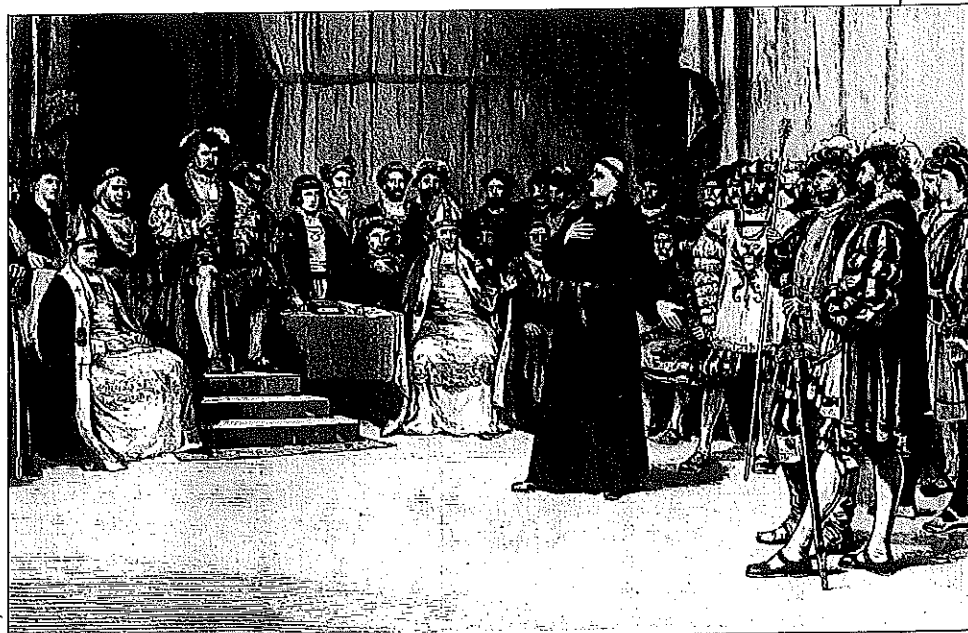
"Unless I am convinced by the testimony of Scripture or by clear reason (for I trust neither pope nor council alone, since it is well known that they have often erred and contradicted themselves), I am bound by the Scriptures I have cited, for my conscience is captive to the Word of God. I cannot and will not recant anything, since to act against one's conscience is neither safe nor right. I cannot do otherwise. Here I stand, may God help me."

The next day, the 19-year-old emperor called Luther "a notorious heretic" who would have to be silenced. A rump session of the diet approved a condemnation edict on May 26. The

there until March 1522 when unrest drove him to return to Wittenberg.

Practical consequences of the diet

The Diet of Worms revealed two radically differing world views: Charles V, armed with the powerful weapons of ecclesiastical ban and imperial edict, embodied institutional authority; Luther stood for the Word of God as revealed in Holy Scripture, which promised freedom from all human bondage, including death. Luther summarized his view in two seemingly contradictory propositions: "A Christian is a perfectly free lord of all, subject to none. A Christian is a perfectly dutiful servant of all, subject to all." For Luther, faith in Christ frees humans from their human righteousness by binding them to the righteousness



Luther defends himself before Charles V, Holy Roman Emperor, at Worms. Luther had already been excommunicated by Rome. Would the state inflict its own penalty for his controversial teachings?

edict called Luther a criminal who had committed high treason; it demanded the capture of Luther and his disciples; and it condemned the "demon in the appearance of a man" as the leader of a notorious heresy that must be exterminated.

In short, Luther was condemned to death, albeit in absentia, for he had been persuaded to leave Worms earlier. Elector Frederick arranged a "kidnapping" of the homeward-bound Luther and hid him at Wartburg, his castle in Thuringia. Luther stayed

of Christ. Believers are subject to no human powers, although they are to serve neighbors in need as if they were slaves.

Luther's dissent at Worms was a testimony to Christian freedom. Subsequent dissent has often been grounded in notions of human rights like freedom of speech. Luther might or might not have agreed with these notions. It is clear, however, that he clung to the ancient biblical mandate to honor no power other than the power of the Word of God. □

The Anabaptist Movement Begins

Hated by Protestants and Catholics alike, these "radical reformers" wanted to not merely reform the church but restore it.

THE *
100
MOST
IMPORTANT
EVENTS
IN CHURCH
HISTORY

Living in an age of religious pluralism, we wonder why people in the sixteenth century would be tortured or drowned over the issue of mode of baptism.

When Luther, Zwingli, and others led their movements away from Catholicism, many practices were changed; but infant baptism, the accepted mode for most of Christian history, was not. Baptizing only adults—that is, people who chose to be baptized—was a radical idea that cut at the heart of both church and state. Yet it was just one of many revolutionary ideas typical of a diverse group called Anabaptists. Their movement is also known as the Radical Reformation.

Anabaptist origins

The immediate issue creating the Anabaptist movement was not just baptism, however, but also civil government. (The two were related. To be baptized was a civil issue, and to refuse it tore a "seamless Christian society.")

Under Ulrich Zwingli and the city council in Zurich, the Reformation was proceeding. But Conrad Grebel, Felix Manz, and other associates of Zwingli didn't feel the Reformation was going far enough. They wanted to do away with the tithes, usury, and military service. Further, some of these radicals wanted a totally self-governing church, free of government interference.

Zwingli, who wanted gradual, orderly change, parted ways with them. On January 21, 1525, the Zurich council forbade the radicals from disseminating their views. That wintry evening, in a nearby village, the radicals met—and baptized each other. The name *Anabaptist*, meaning "rebaptizer," was later given them by detractors.

Anabaptist distinctives

① These believers didn't want to merely reform the church; they wanted to wholly restore it to its initial purity and simplicity. Such a church, they held, consists only of people who present themselves to be baptized.

Congregationalism was another key belief. The Anabaptists could find no justification for elaborate church bureaucracies. Decisions should be made not by a hierarchical leader but by the entire local assembly. In fact, the Anabaptists were the first to try to practice democracy in the congregation. ③

Another central teaching was the separation of church and state. The church, they said, is to be composed of free, "uncompelled" people. The state is not to use coercion on people's consciences.

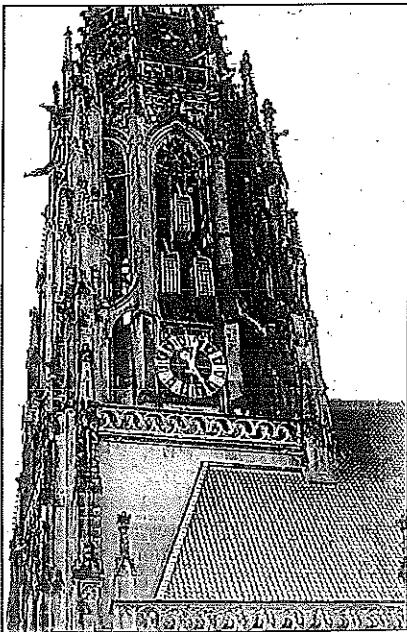
④ Jesus taught the way of nonviolence, the Anabaptists believed, and so pacifism became another important feature of their lives. Even the hated Turks must not be fought with a sword. By obeying Jesus' clear commands, his followers should be distinct from society, even a society claiming to be Christian.

Didn't Luther and the other great Reformers see the wisdom of the Anabaptists? They didn't—partly because they thought the Anabaptists' theology was amiss, partly because the Anabaptists seemed disorderly. In one extreme case in Münster in 1534–5, Anabaptists came to power and took up arms (temporarily throwing aside their taboo on violence), practiced polygamy (citing Old Testament precedents), and claimed bizarre revelations from God. To both Catholics and Protestants these extremes justified persecuting the Anabaptists, executing them by fire or sword or drowning.

Anabaptist development

In spite of persecution, the movement spread, mostly among the lower classes. Since the Anabaptists had no official sanction, they had to increase their numbers by outright evangelism, something new in supposedly Christian Europe. Some courageous leaders emerged, particularly the former priest Menno Simons (1496–1561), a gifted organizer whose name has settled on the group called Mennonites. Other leaders included Conrad Grebel, Thomas Müntzer, Hans Hut, Pilgram Marpeck, Melchior Hoffmann, Jacob Hutter, and Balthasar Hubmaier. As you can guess from the names, most Anabaptists were from German-speaking territories, always the area of their greatest strength. Though no one person tied the movement together, Anabaptists shared many central beliefs, which were set forth in the Schleitheim Confession in 1527.

Today you would not find a listing for "Churches—Anabaptist" in your local Yellow Pages. You would probably find listings for their descendants—Mennonite and Brethren churches, for example. There are hundreds of such churches in the U.S. and in the world. Though small in numbers compared with, say, Baptists or Methodists, their influence has been great, particularly in the areas of pacifism, community, and service. □



The church in Münster, site of a disruptive episode that led to increased persecution of Anabaptists. Bodies of slaughtered Anabaptists were displayed in the cages above the steeple clock.

Henry VIII, king of England from 1509 to 1547, formative years of the Protestant Reformation. He was deeply devoted to Catholic practice; on days when he hunted, he heard three masses, and sometimes on other days, he heard five.



The Act of Supremacy

Breaking from Rome, the English Parliament declared King Henry VIII "the only supreme head on earth of the Church of England."

of the common people was woven with superstition. Earnest leaders like John Colet of Oxford called for reform. At Cambridge, a group of scholars met to discuss Protestant ideas; they became known as "Little Germany" because of their affection for Luther's teachings. In addition to these theological rumblings, there was a growing feeling of nationalism, a higher devotion to England than to the Roman church. The stage was set for a break with Rome.

Rumblings in the king's marriage

Henry VIII, a lustful, selfish ruler, justifiably feared for England's stability if he failed to produce a son to succeed him. (He had at least one illegitimate son, of little use for succession.) Yet his wife of many years, Catherine of Aragon, was in her early forties and had produced only one surviving child, daughter Mary.

Henry sought an annulment, claiming that since Catherine had been his brother's widow, she could not legally be his wife. (He based his claim on Leviticus 20:21.) The pope stalled, partly because Catherine was the aunt of the mighty Emperor Charles V, a party the pope did not want to offend.

Henry, who was already drawn to dark-haired Anne Boleyn, couldn't wait. ("I would you were in mine arms or I in yours, for I think it long since I kissed you," he wrote her.) Henry knew the anti-clerical feeling in England made the time right for a break. He appointed Thomas Cranmer as Archbishop of Canterbury, and Cranmer declared the marriage invalid. Henry married Anne, already six months' pregnant by him, in 1533.

Rupture with Rome

Pope Clement VII then excommunicated Henry, which only fueled dissent. Parliament passed a series of acts restraining the clergy and increasing Henry's power over them. In 1534 came the Act of Supremacy, declaring Henry to be "the only supreme head on earth of the Church of England." England now had a national church, with the king at the helm. The Arch-

Henry, but also a turbulent theological and political situation in England.

Rumblings in England

When Luther posted his *Ninety-five Theses* in 1517, they did not go unnoticed in England. In 1521, young King Henry wrote (probably with assistance) a book attacking Luther's view of the sacraments. The pope graciously replied by bestowing on Henry the title "Defender of the Faith," a title still used by British monarchs.

Like the rest of Europe, however, England was restless with its church situation. Many bishops were rich landowners, priests and monks were often scandalously immoral, and the religion

THE
100
MOST
IMPORTANT
EVENTS
IN CHURCH
HISTORY

The joke in church circles is that the Episcopal church is the only denomination that started because of a divorce. In fact, as part of an advertising campaign in the 1980s, the Episcopal church designed a poster featuring Henry VIII that stated: "The Episcopal Church welcomes divorced people." (The Episcopal Church in the U.S.A. is, of course, part of the global Anglican Communion, rooted in the Church of England.)

The English Reformation is far more complicated, however, involving not only the marital woes of much-married

John Calvin Publishes

with the king at the helm. The Archbishop of Canterbury held the highest clergy office in the realm.

But Henry was no Protestant. He just wanted a Catholic church without a pope. He had broken with Rome, but not with its theology or ritual. In 1539 he issued the *Six Articles*, which insisted on continuing practices such as private confession, clerical celibacy, and private masses.

Yet in two ways, Henry departed significantly from Catholic practice. He closed the monasteries and confiscated their vast holdings of land and wealth. The proceeds went into the royal treasury to support campaigns against France, and the land was transferred to nobles in hopes of increasing their loyalty to the crown.

Henry also ordered that an English Bible be installed in all churches. Henry had no real interest in the English people's studying the Bible, but an English Bible was another way of promoting English nationalism, for the churches would no longer be dependent on a Roman Latin Bible.

Henry died in 1547, having successively acquired four more wives after Anne Boleyn's execution. His successor was the puny Edward VI, son of his union with the third wife, Jane Seymour. During Edward's brief reign, England began to be truly Protestant. But Henry died thinking himself a good Catholic; his will provided for masses to be said for the welfare of his soul.

Repercussions of Henry's reign

The day of the church's political supremacy was over, as seen by the fact that Henry could call himself head of the church in England. A century earlier, a king so audacious might have been assassinated. But Henry wasn't, and for an obvious reason: the English felt more pride in being English than in being Catholic. Nationalism was to be a permanent feature on the landscape of Europe.

The Act of Supremacy broke England from Rome—decisively. Though England briefly returned to Catholicism under Henry's daughter Mary, England was, forever after, not Catholic. Henry's selfish acts paved the way for a church that sought the *via media*, the "middle way" between adherence to the pope, and aggressive dissent. □



Billy Graham Center

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EVENTS
IN CHURCH
HISTORY

There is not one blade of grass, there is no color in this world that is not intended to make us rejoice." These words were penned by a man who has been accused of generating a joyless Christianity. He is remembered as the man who taught predestination, an idea repugnant to modern minds. As historian Will Durant complained, "We shall always find it hard to love the man who darkened the human soul with the most absurd and blasphemous conception of God in all the long and honored history of nonsense."

Yet those who know Calvin well regard him as a saint. Philip Schaff wrote that Calvin "must be reckoned as one of the greatest and best of men whom God raised up in the history of Christianity."

Calvin's Geneva

This controversial theologian was born in 1509 in Picardy, part of France. Calvin was brilliant. Initially he intended to be a priest, but his father induced him to study law. Calvin studied at dif-

ferent universities, including Paris, sharpening his already logical mind and avidly reading the Greek and Latin classics.

Either adored or abhorred, the reformer and his teachings live on in his monumental work.

About 1533 Calvin had what he called a "sudden conversion": "God subdued and brought my heart to docility." Apparently he had encountered the writings of Luther. He broke from Catholicism, left France, and settled in Switzerland as an exile.

In 1536, in Basel, Calvin published the first edition of one of the greatest religious works ever written, *The Institutes of the Christian Religion*. The title, perhaps better translated as "Principles of the Christian Faith," introduced a book designed to "hand on some elementary teaching by which anyone who had been touched by an interest in religion might be formed to true godliness." At the age of 27, Calvin had already produced a systematic theology, a clear defense of Reformation teachings.

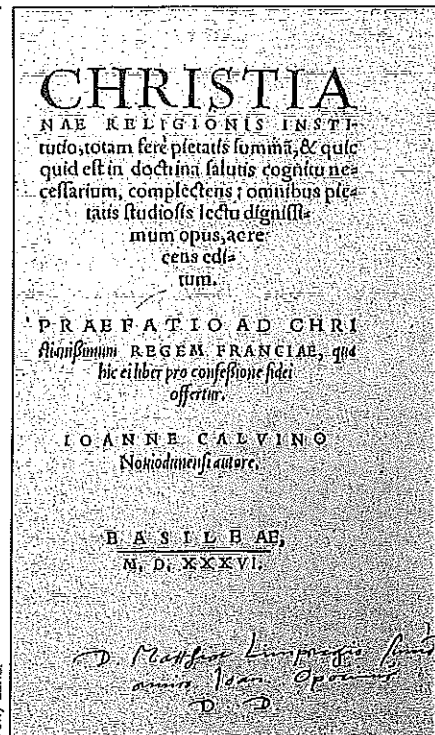
His writings impressed people, including Guillaume Farel, a reformer in Geneva, Switzerland. On his way to Strasbourg, Calvin stopped overnight in Geneva. When Farel learned that the author of the *Institutes* was in town, he sought him out and pled with him to stay and help the church in Geneva. Calvin refused, wanting only a quiet life of study. So Farel swore a curse on Calvin's studies unless he stayed. "I felt as if God from heaven had laid his hand on me," Calvin said, and Geneva was to be his home (with one brief exile) until he died in 1564.

Calvin pastored the St. Pierre church, preaching almost daily. He produced commentaries on almost

Institutes of the Christian Religion

Principles of Christian Faith

Title page of the first edition of Calvin's *Institutes*. This edition, a slim volume of only 6 chapters, was revised and expanded by Calvin five times; the final 1559 edition contained 79 chapters. It is largely the *Institutes* that has caused Calvin to be considered "one of the great seminal minds . . . in the development of Western culture and civilization."



Tony Lane

every book of the Bible and wrote dozens of devotional and doctrinal pamphlets. (He managed to do all this while constantly battling various ailments, including migraine headaches.) He also married and fathered a child. Sadly, his wife died young, as did their son. Calvin refused to remarry, feeling his work would keep him busy. It did.

Calvin wanted Geneva, a city of notoriously lax morals, to be a holy city.

At the age of 27 Calvin had already produced a systematic theology.

His influence was felt everywhere, notably in the schools. He urged excommunicating church members whose lives did not conform to spiritual standards, and every citizen of Geneva had to subscribe to his confession of faith.

Some balked at the moral restrictions, but Geneva became a moral magnet, attracting Protestant exiles from all over Europe. One, John Knox, described Geneva as "the most perfect school of Christ since the days of the apostles."

Calvin's *Institutes*

What is so grand about the *Institutes*? For one thing, no other reformer ever stated Protestant beliefs so systematically. Calvin's book, which he kept enlarging throughout his life, covered all the bases.

Calvin, ever logical, took a logical starting point: the Apostle's Creed, accepted by all Christians. He saw that it has four major points: "I believe in 1 God the Father . . . 2 Jesus Christ . . . 3 the Holy Spirit . . . 4 the holy catholic church." Those are the four divisions of the *Institutes*. Drawing on his wide reading, and building on the work of other reformers, Calvin stated a theology and its practical application in church life.

Book III of the *Institutes* has received much attention. In considering the Holy Spirit, Calvin examined the question of regeneration—that is, How are we saved? He claimed that salvation is possible only through the grace of God. Even before creation God chose some people to be saved. This is the bone most people choke on: predestination. Curiously, it isn't particularly a Calvinist idea. Luther believed it, as did most of the other reformers. Yet Calvin held it so absolutely and stated it so forcefully that the teaching is forever identified with him.

For Calvin, God was—above all else—sovereign. Calvin's constant theme was this: *If you are saved, it is God's doing, not your own*. God alone knows who is elect (saved) and who isn't.

But, Calvin said, a moral life shows that a person is (probably) one of the elect. Calvin himself, an intensely moral and energetic man, impressed on others the need to work out their salvation—not to be saved, but to show they are saved.

★ Calvin's *Institutes* also set forth the presbyterian system of church order. Book IV of the *Institutes* describes a

church under the guidance of elders (*presbuteroi* in Greek), moral leaders elected by the church. Other orders of ministry are pastor, doctor (teacher), and deacon. With modifications, this system is still followed in churches called Presbyterian or Reformed.

In emphasizing God's sovereignty, Calvin's *Institutes* also leads the reader to believe that no person—king or bishop—can demand our ultimate loyalty. Calvin never taught a right to revolution, but his teaching laid the groundwork for this idea. In this sense his works are amazingly "modern," and he is regarded as a father of democracy.

Calvin's influence

A single article cannot do justice to Calvin's influence. Calvin's theology found a home in places as far apart as Scotland, Poland, Holland, and America. Volumes have been written about him, some applauding him, some calling him a puritanical fiend. But it is safe to say that few Christians have been more brilliant, more energetic, more sincere, more moral, and more dedicated to the purity of the Christian church. □

1545

The Council of Trent Begins

Responding to the Reformation, the council charted the Catholic church's course for the next 400 years.

THE *
100
MOST
IMPORTANT
EVENTS
IN CHURCH
HISTORY

If 1517 marks the beginning of the Protestant Reformation, then 1540 (the founding of the Jesuit order) and 1545 (the opening of the Council of Trent) mark the beginning of the Catholic Reformation, also known as the Counter-Reformation.

When Luther sounded the call for reform, not all Catholics fled their church and became Protestants. Instead, many stayed, hoping for renewal. Pleasure-loving Pope Leo X was not the right person to bring reform. But a later pope, Paul III (1534-1549), appointed a commission to examine the state of the church. The commission's report, *Concerning the Reform of the Church*, was pointed: Popes and cardinals had become too worldly; bribery to gain church office was widespread; monasteries had lost their discipline; and the selling of indulgences was widely abused. (Protestants obtained a copy and published it as evidence of the church's corruption.)

Conflicting interests

In 1537, Paul III called for a council, but political squabbles postponed its opening for eight years. The council finally began, in the northern Italian city of Trent, in 1545. The council held a number of meetings, with the three main sessions occurring in 1545-7, 1551-2, and 1562-3. The drawn-out sessions, and long delays between them, meant that representatives changed over the course of the council. And attendance was small; the opening session attracted only 34 leaders, and the

largest meeting of the third session had only 255.

The council brought together a variety of competing agendas. Some churchmen, particularly members of the papal curia, resisted any reforms that would hinder their lifestyles. Bishops from Spain and France wanted a stronger, independent role. The Jesuits, on the other hand, stood firmly for papal supremacy. Some council delegates, like Emperor Charles V (who faced a Protestant challenge in his realm, the vast Holy Roman Empire), wanted Protestants and Catholics to reach a compromise. (Under his pressure, the council allowed Protestants to attend the second session, and informal talks were held. But when Protestant demands were not put on the agenda, the Protestants left, in 1552.) In a few instances, the delegates came to blows.

Resolutions

Reform was high on the agenda. On the issue that had sparked the Reformation—the selling of indulgences—the council abolished indulgence sellers and halted some of the worst abuses. In addition, the council passed numerous measures to halt clerical corruption. Acknowledging that Luther's revolt had been prompted by the "ambition, avarice, and cupidity" of clergy, it called for leaders to avoid "even the smallest faults." Many abuses were condemned, such as holding several cathedral churches, offering favors to relatives, and having mistresses.

The council dealt extensively not only with morality, but also with doctrine. It reaffirmed the traditional medieval understanding—and rejected contemporary Protestant teaching—on nearly every subject.

The council held that there are seven sacraments, not two as the Protestants claimed, and that these are necessary

for salvation. All the Protestant interpretations of Communion were condemned, and transubstantiation (the belief that the bread and wine become in substance the body and blood of Christ) was re-affirmed. Protestants were worshiping in their own languages, but the council upheld the Latin Mass, and it defined more precisely the sacrificial understanding of the Mass.

On the critical issue of justification, the council could not support the Reformation understanding of salvation by faith alone. It affirmed that no person can know for certain he or she is justified, and that good works do contribute to a right standing with God.

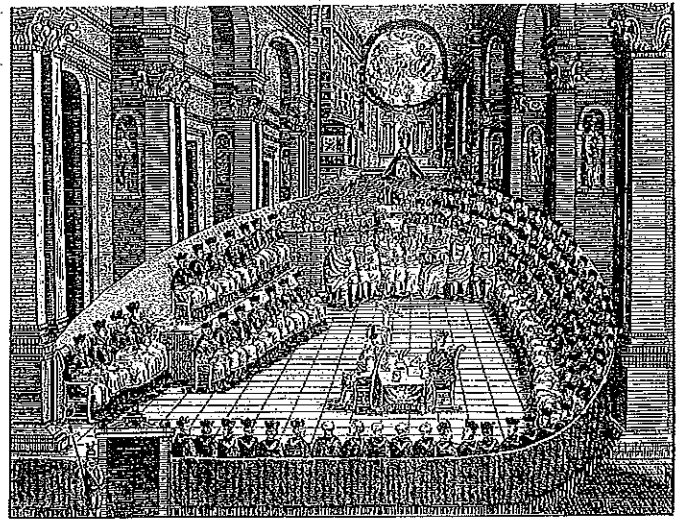
On the issues of Scripture and authority, the Catholic church moved further from Protestants. Reformers such as Luther had been translating the Bible into the common language of the people. The council held instead that the only official version of the Bible was the Latin Vulgate, and that no private interpretations of Scripture could depart from the church's teachings. It also rejected the Protestant view of "Scripture alone" and declared that along with the Scriptures, tradition as preserved by the church was a source of authority.

Results

The Council of Trent helped to bring much-needed reform to the Catholic church. It also refined the church's structure and marshalled its forces for the years ahead.

On matters of doctrine, however, the council made the gulf between Catholics and Protestants deep and lasting. Any remaining hopes of reunion were dashed.

The Council of Trent defined what the church would be for four centuries. Not until Vatican II, in the 1960s, did a major reexamination take place. □



The Mansell Collection

Publication of the King James Bible

A team of scholars produced an English Bible translation unsurpassed in linguistic beauty and longevity.

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IN CHURCH
HISTORY

To the most high and mighty Prince James by the Grace of God." So begins the dedication in the most popular English Bible of all time, the Authorized Version, widely known as the King James Version. The much-loved KJV, as it is often abbreviated, may have fallen out of favor in recent years as more readable translations are published for twentieth-century readers. But generation after generation of readers has absorbed its phrases. We can safely say that no other translation will ever have such an effect on the English language.

King James

Who was the "mighty Prince James" whose name has been stamped on millions of Bibles? He was the son of Mary Queen of Scots, executed by her half-sister, England's Queen Elizabeth I. When the childless Elizabeth died, James, next male in the royal line, and already king in his native Scotland, marched south to London to be crowned king of England too. He is known to history as James I of England and James VI of Scotland.

Under Elizabeth, the Church of England had assumed an episcopal form of Protestantism. The growing number of Puritans felt Elizabeth had created a "compromise" church that wasn't Protestant enough. They wanted to "purify" the church of anything that resembled Catholicism, including bishops, clerical garb, and high ritual.

Before James had even reached London, the Puritans presented him with the Millenary Petition (so called because it had a thousand signatures), asking for moderate changes in the Church of England.

But James liked the Church of England's episcopal structure and its title for the king, "Defender of the Faith." James was, in fact, rather pretentious and committed to the idea that kings ruled by divine decree. (His contemporaries called him "the wisest fool in Christendom" and snickered that he was hardly the person to insist on kings' divine rights.) James agreed to a conference, which met in January 1604 at Hampton Court. Here, however, James warned the Puritans that if they did not conform, he would "harry them out of the land." The conference was a failure for the Puritans, except on one point: James gave his approval to the making of a new translation of the Bible.

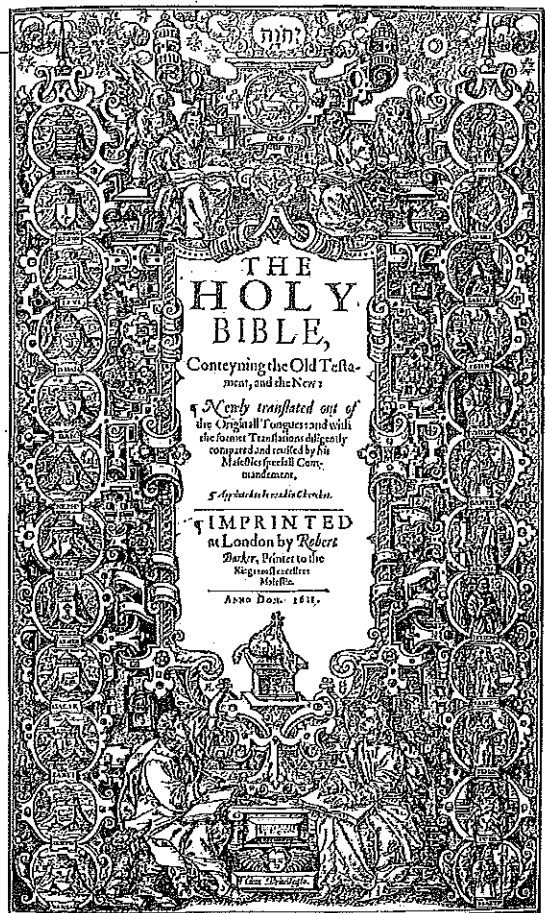
Translation or revision?

James wanted something to replace the popular Geneva Bible. This 1560 version was much loved by the people (and probably the version Shakespeare read), yet it had a perceived Calvinistic slant, something James didn't like. The Puritans, meanwhile, disliked the Bishops' Bible, an authorized 1568 ver-

sion read in churches but not widely accepted by the common folk. England needed one version that both churches and individuals, and both the Church of England and the Puritans, could read with benefit.

In 1607, James appointed nearly fifty scholars and divided them into six companies. For two years and nine months they worked individually and in conference, and then the whole text was gone over by a committee of twelve. While the scholars used the original Hebrew and Greek, they closely followed previous translations. In fact, it may be inappropriate to call the King James Version a translation. As the "Preface of the Translators" explains, it is more accurately a revision of earlier versions. For example, the work of William Tyndale, the first major English translator, is evident in many passages.

The KJV has been called the "Authorized Version," although, oddly, no proof has survived that James formally approved it. Officially, the new version was "appointed to be read in churches," replacing the Bishops' Bible. But it was a long time before it



Title page of the Authorized ("King James") Version, published in 1611.

John & Charles Wesley

replaced the Geneva Bible as the Bible of the individual reader.

Bible English

Once established, however, the KJV was unshakable. Even though some critics said its language was archaic in the very year it appeared, later generations loved its "Bible English." As the language evolved, becoming less and less like the language of James's day, English-speaking Christians continued to express themselves in terms echoing the KJV. For example, many Christians still address God as "Thee" and "Thou."

And how the language has been affected! Even if the KJV were to someday go out of print—which is unlikely—our language still bulges with such immortal expressions as "the skin of my teeth," "Woe is me!" "a drop in the bucket," "my brother's keeper," "holier than thou," and many others.

But the effect goes beyond phrases. There is a cadence, a sentence rhythm, in the KJV that has never been matched in other English Bibles. If this beauty has detracted some readers from hearing the message, it has nevertheless been incredibly memorable and, therefore, *memorizable*. If learning

Most people
who can quote
the Bible quote
a version
published in 1611.

Scripture is important, then committing it to memory is paramount, and we know that poetry—or poetic prose—is easier to memorize than flat prose. Today, almost four hundred years later, most people who can quote the Bible quote a version published in 1611.

Modern-day translators may rightly feel humble, knowing they can never produce a work that will so mold a language and shape an entire culture. □

They were ordained ministers and missionaries. Then their hearts were "strangely warmed," and their changed lives gave rise to a worldwide movement.



John and Charles Wesley were two of nineteen children born to Samuel and Susannah Wesley. Samuel pursued the labors of an Anglican clergyman in Epworth, England, while Susannah, ever the model Christian, formed both the spiritual and academic inclinations of her children.

Although quite different in temperament, John and Charles pursued similar academic and religious interests. Both entered Christ Church, one of Oxford's largest colleges; John began in 1720 and Charles in 1726. After receiving his education, John was elected Fellow at Lincoln College, Oxford, and ordained two years later.

"Holy Club" and failed mission

Charles's first year at Oxford was uneventful, but by his second year he settled down to a more serious life. He and a number of friends formed a "Holy Club." They covenanted with each other to live disciplined Christian lives given to serious study of the Bible, prayer, fasting, and charitable works. Charles was the first of the group to be derisively labeled "Methodist" by fellow students, but his title became a badge of honor for these seekers of the Christian way. John Wesley joined the club after an absence from Oxford to help his ailing father in the parish ministry, and he eventually became its leader.

In 1735 the brothers Wesley sailed with General Oglethorpe on his second expedition to Georgia, but even in

this missionary service, the old doubts about their experience of salvation surfaced. Neither John nor Charles could find assurance that he was indeed the child of God by grace. They returned to England believing their lives and ministry had failed. John Wesley wrote of his experience in Georgia, "I went to America to convert the Indians; but, oh, who shall convert me?"

Hearts "strangely warmed"

The answer to his question came shortly after his return from America. Both he and Charles were influenced by Moravian friends who bore witness to salvation by grace through faith in Christ.

Charles Wesley was the first of the two to be justified by faith, and on Whitsunday, May 21, 1738, he experienced Pentecost. He wrote in his journal that the Spirit of God "chased away the darkness of my unbelief." The prolific hymnist (eventually he wrote six to seven-thousand hymns) wrote a hymn to commemorate his day of salvation. While scholars debate which of three possibilities was this conversion hymn, one likely candidate is the hymn that asks, "And can it be that I should gain an interest in the Saviour's blood?" The last verse triumphantly proclaims:

*No condemnation now I dread,
Jesus, and all in Him, is mine;
Alive in Him, my living Head,
And clothed in righteousness Divine,*

Dr. Roger J. Green is professor and chair of biblical and theological studies at Gordon College in Wenham, Massachusetts.

Experience Conversions

ROGER J. GREEN

*Bold I approach th' eternal throne,
And claim the crown, through Christ,
my own.*

Three days later, on May 24, 1738, John's seeking for the grace of God ended in a meeting house on Aldersgate Street in London. He wrote in his journal that now-famous account of his conversion: "In the evening I went very unwillingly to a society in Aldersgate Street, where one was reading Luther's preface to the Epistle to the Romans. About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed."

John immediately shared the good news with Charles. Charles wrote that "Towards ten, my brother was brought in triumph by a troop of our friends, and declared, 'I believe.' We sang the hymn with great joy, and parted with prayer."

Until their conversions the Wesleys had what John described as "a fair summer religion." They were both ordained. They both preached, taught, wrote, composed hymns, and even gave themselves to missionary work—all to no avail. They had not Christ, or rather, Christ did not have them. They lived by good works, but not by faith.

Herculean ministry

With the established church closed to his ministry, John Wesley took to the fields, preaching to coal miners and commoners. Despite recurring opposition, his itinerant evangelism soon expanded throughout the British Isles. It is estimated that he rode over 250,000

miles on horseback and preached over 40,000 sermons. He also published selections of his sermons and wrote voluminously. His use of lay preachers and small "societies" spread the movement to some 120,000 followers by the time of his death.

Brother Charles also preached widely, eventually settling in London. He became the most prolific and skilled hymnwriter in English history, writing hymns that are sung widely today, such as "O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing" and "Love Divine, All Loves Excelling."

Yet the conversions and subsequent ministries of John and Charles Wesley were not isolated events whose impact ended with the passing of the eighteenth century. Their lives continue to greatly affect the church. Many Methodist denominations today (worldwide, the Methodist communion numbers some 50 million people) still embrace those notable elements of the Wesleys' ministry: an emphasis upon preaching; the organization of small groups for prayer and Bible study; (the equivalent of the Methodist societies) and an important element of present church-growth strategies; the importance of book and tract distribution; and a concern for the poor, oppressed, and disenfranchised which to the Wes-



Stained-glass depictions of John (left) and Charles Wesley. The clock above John Wesley's head is set at about a quarter till nine, the time of his conversion. The brothers were converted just three days apart, and both from reading or hearing the writings of Martin Luther.

leys and their followers was the natural expression of the religious life.

The theology of John and Charles Wesley also has an ongoing influence outside of strictly Methodist denominations. The Wesleys' emphasis upon the role of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer and the church has affected the holiness movement, the Pentecostal movement, and even the recent charismatic movement.

An educated clergy and a knowledgeable laity were also concerns of the brothers Wesley, leading to the founding of many Wesleyan colleges and seminaries. The balance between the life of the mind and the life of the spirit is still critical to the Wesleyan tradition, which seeks to preach the gospel to whosoever, convert the sinner, and raise up the saint. □

Willat Stained Glass Studio

The Great Awakening Peaks

MARK A. NOLL

A mighty wave of revival washed across North America, forever altering the religious landscape.

THE
100
MOST
IMPORTANT
EVENTS
IN CHURCH
HISTORY

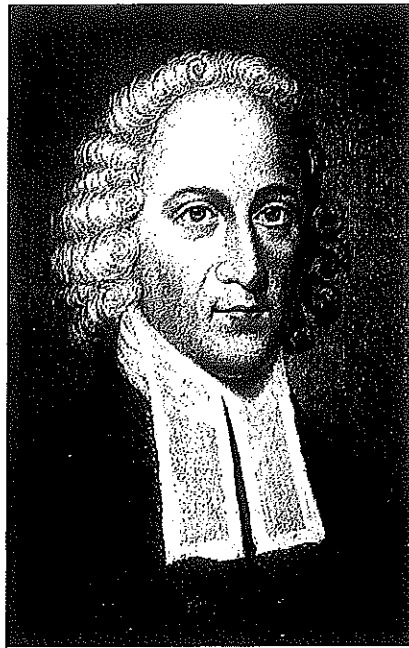
In the fall of 1740, a farmer near Hartford, Connecticut, heard life-changing news. Nathan Cole was a conventionally religious man whose conscience had been increasingly troubled by an unmet need for God. The news was that the young revivalist George Whitefield would be preaching twelve miles away in Middletown. Immediately, as Cole later wrote, "I . . . ran to my pasture for my horse with all my might," and with his wife hastened to Middletown "as if we were fleeing for our lives." They arrived just in time to see Whitefield mount the scaffold that had been erected for his sermon. To Nathan Cole the young British evangelist "lookt almost angelical." But it was Whitefield's message that changed his life: "My hearing him preach gave me a heart wound; by Gods blessing my old Foundation was broken up, and I saw that my right-

eousness would not save me." After several more months, Cole was confident that he had been reconciled to a gracious God.

First stirrings

Nathan Cole and his wife were among the thousands who thrilled to the message of George Whitefield at the high-water mark of America's Great Awakening. But the roots of this revival extended deep in time before Whitefield, and its fruits could be observed for generations. First stirrings occurred during the early decades of the eighteenth century. Preaching aimed at "awakening" the spiritually sluggish or "harvesting" those with a new interest in God's grace took place

in New England Congregational churches, in Dutch Reformed congregations in New Jersey, and among scattered Presbyterians in Pennsylvania and New Jersey. Solomon Stoddard (grandfather and predecessor of Jonathan Edwards as minister



Jonathan Edwards, who interpreted the Awakening in his many writings, is considered by many the greatest theologian America has ever produced.

in Northampton, Massachusetts), Theodore Frelinghuysen (a Dutch minister trained by Continental Pietists), and several members of the Tennent family (Presbyterian immigrants from Northern Ireland) were the pioneers of this work.

Then, in the mid-1730s, the Northampton congregation that Edwards had inherited from his grandfather was deeply stirred by Edwards's dramatic preaching on justification by faith. His account of this stirring, *A Faithful Narrative of the Surprising Work of God in the Conversion of Many Hundred Souls in Northampton* (1737) was read widely in America and the British Isles and stimulated other ministers to look for similar renewal in their congregations.

Fiery Whitefield

General revival, however, awaited the arrival of Whitefield. This young Anglican had been a colleague of John and Charles Wesley and had already experimented with preaching out-of-doors in Britain. His nominal reason for being in America was to supervise an orphanage in Georgia. His real reason was to preach. A person of nearly overpowering charisma, Whitefield also intuited something about the changing circumstances of his day. Whitefield's dramatic appeal to individuals represented a Christian adaptation of the old gospel to the kind of free market that was speedily developing in trade and ideas. It was to the individual (not as positioned in a traditional hierarchy, not as bound by family constraints, not as member of a local congregation) that Whitefield made his appeal. Whitefield preached more than fifteen thousand sermons in his thirty-five-year career as an itinerant, but none were more effective than in 1740. On a New England preaching circuit in the fall of that year, when he was heard by Nathan Cole and his wife, Whitefield addressed crowds of up to eight thousand people nearly every day for over a month. That tour may have been the most sensational event in the history of American religion.



Billy Graham Center

In his wake Whitefield left thousands asking "What must I do to be saved?" He also left some of the colonies' leaders wondering what such religious "enthusiasm" would do to the social fabric, and not a few ministers dismayed about this radical new approach. The attacks that eventually rose against Whitefield and his message led to lingering disputes. But they also prompted careful, discriminating defenses of awakened piety from Jonathan Edwards. Edwards's defense of the Awakening's revivalistic Calvinism became a major component of the theological work that sets him apart as America's most powerful Christian theologian.

Forceful changes

Revivals like those promoted by Whitefield and defended by Edwards soon spread throughout the colonies. Some, like awakenings under Henry Alline in the Canadian Maritimes, rejected the Calvinism that had undergirded Whitefield's message. Others, like those encouraged by Isaac Backus in New England and Shubal Stearns in North Carolina, were led by Baptists, a group that grew in great numbers as a result of the Awakening. Still other currents of renewal helped prepare the way for the later expansion of the Methodists.

The colonial Awakening stamped American Protestantism with a revivalistic character that it has never lost. Although its leading spirits (Frelinghuysen, the Tennents, Whitefield, and Edwards) were Calvinist members of state churches, its primary institutional legacy was among Baptists and Methodists who rejected Calvinism, the establishment of religion, or both. Historians ponder deeply the connection between the revivalists' willingness to break with religious tradition and the eagerness of Americans only a few decades later to throw off the hereditary rule of England. Christians will be impressed by that possibility, but even more by the renewal of faith that was the revival's gift to humble hearers like Nathan Cole. □

The Second Vatican Council

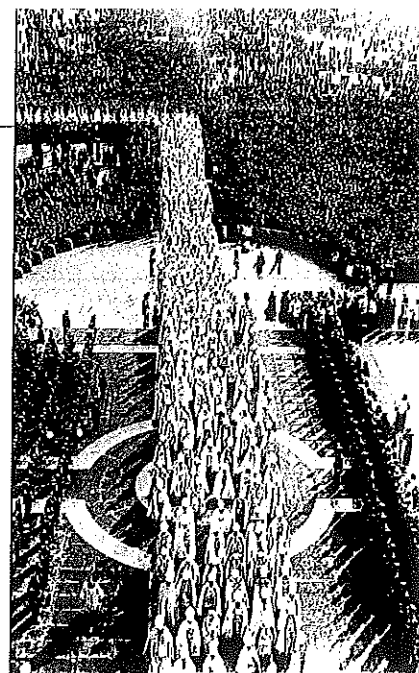
JOSEPH A. KOMONCHAK

In an epochal council, the Catholic Church undertook its most searching self-examination ever—and renewed itself for a modern world.

THE
100
MOST
IMPORTANT
EVENTS
IN CHURCH
HISTORY

By nine o'clock on the morning of October 12, 1962, a brilliant Italian sun had broken out after a torrential rain. Twenty-four hundred Roman Catholic bishops began a long procession through St. Peter's Square toward the Basilica for the solemn opening of the Second Vatican Council. Inside the splendidly appointed church, the bishops took their places in long rows to take part in the ceremony. Near the altar sat observers from other Christian communities invited to attend the council.

Pope John XXIII's opening address had the character of a *Magna Carta*. He distanced himself from "prophets of doom" who could see nothing in the modern world but ruin. He invited the bishops to consider whether a new age might not be dawning for the church. Instead of condemning the ills of church and society, he called for a positive presentation of the Christian message based on a new appropriation of the Scriptures and tradition, and on a careful discernment of the needs and opportunities of the day. The basic content of the faith was one thing, he said; how it is presented is another, and the council was a great opportunity for a new, pastorally oriented exer-



Procession at the opening of Vatican II.

Religious News Service

cise of the church's teaching authority.

End of the Counter-Reformation?

Over two years had already gone into the preparation of the council, which John had announced on January 25, 1959. The most extensive consultation of the bishops in the history of the church had produced over nine thousand proposals for the agenda. On this basis, ten preparatory commissions had produced draft-documents for the bishops now to consider. Throughout this work, the prospect of the council had evoked widespread interest, not only among Catholics, but also among other Christians. The pope had regularly insisted that the council should work not only for the spiritual renewal of the Catholic Church and its adaptation to the contemporary world, but also toward the reunion of Christianity.

The Council met in four sessions over the autumns between 1962 and 1965. The first session was by far the most dramatic and set the direction for the other three. It saw the assembled bishops elect the conciliar commissions, clearly opt for substantial liturgical reform—and, above all, refuse to be

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Martin the

guided by the defensive attitude dominant in the doctrinal texts prepared by a preparatory theological commission controlled by "prophets of doom." When the bishops rejected the draft text on the sources of revelation because of its academic, negative, and unecumenical character, people began to speak of epochal change: the end of the age of Constantine, the end of the Counter-Reformation.

Pope John XXIII saw only the beginning of the council, but when he died, his successor, Paul VI, immediately announced his intention to continue it. The three sessions over which he presided saw the bishops produce sixteen documents, all passed with overwhelming majorities, in which the Catholic Church undertook its most searching self-examination ever.

Structurally and in spirit, the council differed considerably from the two most recent ecumenical councils. The Council of Trent (1545) was convoked in the midst of the Reformation crisis and involved a small number of bishops, drawn almost exclusively from the Latin (European) Church. Vatican I (1869) also met with a sense of crisis, caused largely by the spread of a liberalism that was redefining the role of the church in the modern world, and it was rather strictly controlled in its mode of operations. Vatican II, however, was not called by John XXIII to respond to a particular crisis, but to renew the church in the light of the gospel and to reform it to meet the demands of the late twentieth century. It involved bishops from all over the globe, who were given freedom to set the agenda, choose structures, and write texts.

What the council said

The council's text on the liturgy called for the thoroughgoing reform of the church's worship. The text on divine revelation returned to the rich biblical springs of the church's central message, proposed an ecumenically sensitive notion of tradition, and urged a greater biblical knowledge and awareness among the people. ①

In external matters, the church stopped its foot-dragging and committed itself to the work of repairing the divisions of Christians. The council also made important progress in overcoming attitudes of anti-Semitism. ② ③

Finally, the bishops addressed in two documents the challenges of the contemporary world. In the text on the church in the modern world, they discussed the opportunities and difficulties presented by modernity, with a confident belief that the message of Christ could welcome and redeem them, and provided particular proposals for the worlds of culture, politics, economics, and the family. In a brief text on religious freedom, the church stated that the inalienable rights of conscience must govern relationships between church and state, thus going beyond the nostalgia for earlier political arrangements that had dominated Catholic thought until the very recent past.

The conciliar texts in general reflect Pope John's initial orientations. Theologically, they endeavored to recover the broad tradition that the struggles of the last four centuries had obscured. Pastorally they replaced suspicion and condemnation of the modern world with openness and dialogue. Ecumenically, they insisted on the centrality of the biblical Word and the communion in faith and grace already existing among Christians.

The council's impact

There is scarcely an element in the Catholic Church's internal life or in its relationship with others that has been unaffected by the Second Vatican Council.

Internally, all of the rites have been reformed and are now celebrated in vernacular languages; a far greater access to the Scriptures is common among Catholics; lay people now exercise many more ministries and have more opportunities for participation; a spirit of collegiality now affects every level of church activity; local churches have assumed responsibility for their own life and mission.

Externally, dialogue has replaced suspicion in relations with other Christian communities, with other religions, and with the world itself. The Catholic Church sees itself much more as a partner in the common task of creating a more human world.

It is no exaggeration, then, to say that the Catholic Church has changed more in the twenty-five years since Vatican II than it had in the previous two hundred. □

A Baptist preacher had a dream that guided one of the most profound social movements of our times.



On August 28, 1963, more than 200,000 blacks and whites from all over the United States gathered for a gigantic civil-rights demonstration in the nation's capital. It was the largest demonstration in the history of Washington, D.C. Young and old, black and white, Jew and Gentile marched shoulder to shoulder from the Washington Monument to the Lincoln Memorial. The purpose was to demand passage of a civil-rights bill and immediate implementation of the basic guarantees of the Declaration of Independence and the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments to the Constitution.

Regarded by many as the apex of the nonviolent civil-rights movement, the march brought together all of the major civil-rights organizations and many religious groups. Among the strong supporters of the march were the American Jewish Congress, the National Conference of Catholics for Interracial Justice, and the National Council of Churches. Never before had leading representatives of the Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish faiths identified so visibly with black demands. It also marked the first large-scale participation of whites in the civil-rights movement, and the first determined efforts by the white clergy.

"I Have a Dream"

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., gave the keynote address at the march. In his memorable "I Have a Dream" speech,