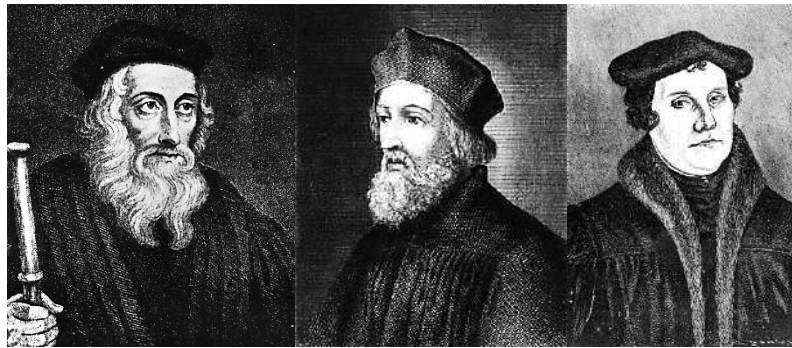


DVBC
2017

Lecturer: Dr Jeffrey Khoo

FAR
EASTERN
BIBLE
COLLEGE

In Commemoration of
the 500th Anniversary of
the Reformation



SEVEN STARS OF THE PROTESTANT REFORMATION

*"The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches" (Rev 1:20). The stars are angels
and the Greek "angelos" means "messenger".*

Seven Stars of the Protestant Reformation

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In commemoration of the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation

Daily Vacation Bible College @ Resort Lautan Biru, Mersing, Malaysia

Lectures: May 1-4, Exam: May 6, 2017 (one credit)

INTRODUCTION

This year 2017 is the 500th anniversary of the 16th Century Protestant Reformation. In 1517, Martin Luther nailed his 95 theses on the castle door of Wittenberg which led to a worldwide exodus out of the Roman Catholic Church. The Roman Church preached a false gospel of salvation by works—that forgiveness can be bought with money. The Bible says that salvation is purely by the grace of God through faith in Christ alone, and totally free (Eph 2:8-9).

Although the Protestant Reformation is traced back to 1517, it actually happened much earlier, not in Germany but in England. It began in the 14th century with John Wycliffe of Oxford who preached that it is Christ who is the Head of the Church and not the Pope, who preached that salvation is by grace alone and not by works, who translated the Bible into English so that people could read and know the gospel truth for themselves and be freed from the superstitious yoke of the Roman Church. Wycliffe was the “Morning Star of the Reformation”.

Besides John Wycliffe, there were three other Johns—Huss, Calvin, Knox—who were also Reformation Stars. William Tyndale and Ulrich Zwingli also shone brightly for the Word of God and the Testimony of Jesus Christ. Altogether seven stars including Luther. These “stars” are the “angels” (Greek *angeloi*, “messengers”) of God to the Church (Rev 1:20).

“Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation. Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.” (Heb 13:7-8).



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I. HISTORICAL CONTEXT

1a. Rise of the Roman Catholic Church (RCC)

1b. Constantine the Great

- 1c. Year 312 saw the end of the persecution of Christianity.
- 2c. By this time, the Roman Empire had been divided into two parts—Eastern and Western. Both were fighting for supremacy.
- 3c. A battle was fought at Milvian Bridge, near Rome.
- 4c. This battle between Maxentius and Constantine was won by the latter. He attributed this victory to the Christian God because he saw a vision—a cross in the sky with the words “By this, conquer.” He adopted the cross as his symbol and with this standard he led his soldiers to victory.
- 5c. Constantine became sole emperor, and by this time had lost all confidence in the Roman gods. He began to rely on the God of the Christians for help, and believed that it was this God that helped him to victory.
- 6c. However, most historians doubt that Constantine became a true convert. His favourable disposition to Christianity was largely political and not spiritual. Know that he was not baptised until just before he died in 337.
- 7c. He moved the capital of the Roman Empire from West to East, from Rome to Byzantium. Byzantium was renamed Constantinople. Constantinople fell to the Ottoman Turks in 1453 and the city was later renamed Istanbul.
- 8c. The emperor had now become a defender of the Christian faith. It was a turning point in the history of the Christian Church. Was this good for the Church?

1d. Yes.

- 1e. End of persecutions.
- 2e. Building of churches.
- 3e. Freedom of worship.
- 4e. Sunday was recognised as a day of rest and Christian worship, and even Christian soldiers were given time off to attend services.

2d. No.

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1e. Clergy received liberal salaries from the government.

2e. Danger of pagans converting to Christianity not because of genuine faith but for gain and fame (cf John 6:26, Luke 6:26).

3e. Image of Christianity changed. No more simple and humble, but proud and pompous.

4e. Constantine granted the Church the right to receive gifts and legacies, and so the Church became very wealthy. A worldly spirit crept in.

5e. Bishops became involved in secular business, owning properties and governing large towns.

6e. Emperor decided that he was the head of the Church which was actually Christ's position, and His alone. The Emperor acted as if he was the one who called the shots, calling for meetings of bishops and other church leaders and presiding over these meetings.

7e. All this led to heresies and apostasy.

2b. Changing Face of the Church

1c. Papal Claims

1d. By the 7th century, the Pope had become a powerful figure. Instead of being a humble pastor, he is now able to hold his own with kings and beat them in the political game.

2d. His proud claim is that he is supreme over all the churches and all other bishops. The biblical Presbyterian system gave way to the Episcopal/papal system where only one man holds the key – a dictatorship.

3d. *Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) 881, 882.*

1e. 881: "The Lord made Simon alone, whom he named Peter, the 'rock' of his Church. He gave him the keys of his Church, and instituted him shepherd of the whole flock. 'The office of binding and loosing which was given to Peter was also assigned to the college of apostles united to its head.' This pastoral office of Peter and the other apostles belongs to the Church's very foundation and is continued by the bishops under the primacy of the Pope."

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2e. 882: "The *Pope*, Bishop of Rome and Peter's successor 'is the perpetual and visible source and foundation of the unity both of the bishops and of the whole company of the faithful. 'For the Roman Pontiff, by reason of his office as Vicar of Christ, and as pastor of the entire Church has full, supreme and universal power over the whole Church, a power which he can always exercise unhindered.'"

2c. **Lord's Supper**

1d. The Holy Communion was traditionally seen as a memorial of the death of Christ. However, the idea that it was more than a memorial but also a sacrifice began to take hold of the Church.

2d. The doctrine of the Real Presence was widely accepted. In 831 Paschasius Radbertus published a treatise advocating the doctrine of transubstantiation which developed to become the official doctrine of the RCC in 1215.

3d. CCC 1374, 1378.

1e. 1374: "... In the most blessed sacrament of the Eucharist 'the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity, of our Lord Jesus Christ and, therefore *the whole Christ is truly, really, and substantially contained*' This presence is called 'real' ... it is presence in the fullest sense: that is to say, it is a *substantial* presence by which Christ, God and man, makes himself wholly and entirely present. It is the conversion of the bread and wine into Christ's body and blood that Christ becomes present in this sacrament."

2e. 1378: "*Worship of the Eucharist*. In the liturgy of the Mass we express our faith in the real presence of Christ under the species of bread and wine by, among other things, genuflecting or bowing deeply as a sign of adoration of the Lord. 'The Catholic Church has always offered and still offers to the sacrament of the Eucharist the cult of adoration, not only during Mass, but also outside of it, reserving the consecrated hosts with the utmost care, exposing them to the solemn veneration of the faithful, and carrying them in procession.'"

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3c. **Purgatory**

1d. This doctrine was first introduced by Augustine, bishop of Hippo. Since then, it had gone on to gain ground in the RCC.

2d. The belief that souls need to be purged of sins by fire was something common among the pagans.

3d. Purgatory was a doctrine favoured by Gregory the Great. But it became an official article of faith only in the RCC in 1439.

4d. CCC 1030, 1031, 1032.

1e. 1030: "All who die in God's grace and friendship, but still imperfectly purified, are indeed assured of their eternal salvation; but after death they undergo purification, so as to achieve the holiness necessary to enter the joy of heaven."

2e. 1031: The Church gives the name Purgatory to this final purification of the elect, which entirely different from the punishment of the damned. ..."

4c. **Prayer for Dead and Prayers to Saints**

1d. The increasing acceptance of purgatory came also the accompanying practices of Indulgences and Masses. People began to pray for the dead, buying their forgiveness through Indulgences, and through Masses.

2d. Saints and martyrs were increasingly venerated, and the people began to pray to them for blessings. This practice of praying to the saints/martyrs was officially recognised by the RCC in 787.

3d. CCC 1032: "...The Church also commends almsgiving, indulgences and works of penance undertaken on behalf of the dead."

5c. **Adoration of Mary**

1d. The idea of Mary as "Mother of God" continued to grow from the 5th century onwards. The idea of Mary as "Mother of God" came from similar expressions in pagan religions (eg, Demeter, Cybele,, and others).

2d. By the end of the 6th century, Mary was practically worshipped and the people had the superstitious belief that

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prayers to her would be more effective than prayers to Jesus or to God Himself.

3d. Later, the RCC began to introduce the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of Mary (1854) and the Assumption of Mary (1950). This makes the RCC a Mary cult.

4d. CCC 490, 491.

1e. 490: "To become the mother of the Saviour, Mary 'was enriched by God with gifts appropriate for such a role.' The angel Gabriel at the moment of the annunciation salutes her as 'full of grace' (Luke 1:28).
..."

2e. 491: "Through the centuries the Church has become ever more aware that Mary, 'full of grace' through God, was redeemed from the moment of her conception. That is what the dogma of the Immaculate Conception confesses, as Pope Pius IX proclaimed in 1854: 'The most Blessed Virgin Mary was, from the first moment of her conception, by a singular grace and privilege of almighty God and by virtue of the merits of Jesus Christ, Saviour of the human race, preserved immune from all stain of original sin.'"

6c. **Auricular Confession**

1d. Confession of sins was traditionally practised so that sinners could be restored to the fellowship of the church especially after a grievous fall. Such confessions were done publicly in church.

2d. But Leo I (440-461) decided to make confessions a private matter between the confessor and the priest, so as to protect the church from being scandalised.

3d. The practice was made compulsory only in 763.

7c. **Places of Worship**

1d. When the church grew more and more wealthy, the church buildings became more ornate (eg, St Sophia in Constantinople).

2d. Churches began to be built with expensive materials and elaborate designs and paintings and sculptures which made the buildings look more and more idolatrous.

8c. **Priesthood**

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1d. Sacerdotalism (priest-craft) became more and more the feature of worship services in the church.

2d. The altar instead of the pulpit began to take centre place.

3d. The priests began to be more aloof and distanced from the laity. The priesthood became a special caste, and they began to adorn themselves with special garments and colourful robes. For hundreds of years, the clergy did not wear any special or distinctive clerical dress.

9c. **Incense**

1d. Incense at first was used in the church as an insect repellent.

2d. Tertullian (4th century) considered the burning of incense for worship as pagan and should not be practised by Christians.

3d. However, from the 5th century onwards, it became more or more used and associated with worship in the church.

3b. **Monastic Movements**

1c. **Benedictine Order**

1d. Founded by Benedict of Nursia at Mount Cassino in Italy in 529. Discipline was very strict.

2d. Very popular with the rich, but when it prospered, the order itself became corrupted.

2c. **Cluniac Movement**

1d. Started with Bernon in 910 at Cluny in France to counteract the corruption in the Benedictine Order.

2d. It stood for the independence of the Church and its freedom from any interference by the nobility or the state.

3d. The abbots were elected by their own monks.

4d. It strongly advocated celibacy.

3c. **Cistercians**

1d. Founded at Ceteaux in Burgundy who wanted to keep the original Benedictine rules of strictness and purity aimed at plain simple living.

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2d. Known as a Protestant before there were Protestants because he was against the Roman Catholic doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of Mary. He taught that salvation was by faith alone. Calvin quoted him several times to show that the doctrine of *sola fide* had historical roots.

3d. Bernard founded the famous monastery of Clairvaux in 1115. He was a powerful speaker, and wrote the famous hymn, "Jesus the Very Thought of Thee."

4c. **Franciscan Order**

1d. Founded by St Francis of Assisi in Italy. A mendicant order (ie, the practice begging).

2c. Some famous Franciscan monks were Bonaventura, Duns Scotus, and William of Occam who became well known for their philosophies. Eg, Occam's Razor: "when you have two competing theories that make exactly the same predictions, the simpler one is the better," "The simplest answer is usually the correct answer," "the simplest proof is the best proof".

3c. They promoted agriculture, education, caring for the poor, sick and dying.

4d. Success and popularity soon made them forget their ideal of poverty and they entered the same vicious cycle as other Orders with regard to wealth and worldliness.

5c. **Dominican Order**

1d. A mendicant (begging) order founded in 1215 by Dominic, a Spanish nobleman.

2c. The Pope committed to the Dominicans the Inquisition which led to the death of many Protestant Christians. The Inquisition (*Inquisito Haereticae Pravitatis*, "inquiry on heretical perversity") was to fight heresy, but it was really to put to death and silence anyone who preached the good news of Jesus Christ and direct believers to God's Word as the sole, supreme and final authority of their faith.

6c. **Augustinian Order**

1d. Founded in 1243 by decree of Pope Innocent IV to form a united community of monks based on the rule of life of St Augustine.

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2d. The Augustinian rule of life was austere. Involved selling away one's possessions and surrendering one's life to prayer and service. Augustine: "Before all else, live together in harmony, being of one soul and one heart seeking God."

3d. The Augustinian monks lived a very strict life. They gave themselves solely to spiritual cultivation and work. The monastic life begins each day at two in the morning when they assembled to pray. The chapter room is where they gather every day to read a chapter of the rules of the Augustinian order. The monks lived by these rules.

4d. The principal rule was, "If I do something wrong, I must be punished." The punishment could be self-flagellation. Luther was an Augustinian monk and it is said that he whipped himself until he bled.

7c. **The Military Orders**

1d. Knights of St John of Jerusalem (1048), Knights Templar (1119), Teutonic Knights (1121). They began in Palestine.

2d. The original purpose of these Orders was to protect pilgrims who were travelling to the Holy City (Rome or Jerusalem).

3d. They later took up arms to fight the Saracens (Muslim Arabians).

4d. They became very rich and influential and spread to various lands.

4b. **The Monastery**

1c. Head of monastery is called the abbot (Latin: *Abbas* – Father). Head of a convent/nunnery would be the Abbess.

2c. Monasteries were places of isolation and seclusion because the monks want to keep themselves away from sin and temptations that come from the world in order to seek a life of holiness. Medieval monastery life consisted of worship, reading of Scriptures, and manual labor. Every day began and ended with worship services in the monastery church. The first service came usually about two o'clock in the morning; the last, just as evening set in, before the monks retired. In addition to their attendance at church, the monks spent several hours in reading from the Bible, private prayer, and meditation. For the remaining parts of the day,

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they worked hard to cultivate their crops, wash and cook in the kitchen, clean and maintain the premises.

3c. But more often than not, the monks themselves became addicted to the most terrible sins. Why? It is not the environment but the spiritual condition of the heart.

2a. Disorder and Intrigue

1b. False Decretals

1c. Decretals refer to papal decrees, judicial decisions, mandates, edicts and similar official pronouncements.

2c. In about 850, fabricated decretals were circulated by some unscrupulous priests. These false decretals were attributed to Isidore of Seville, a great prelate and writer of the early 7th century.

3c. These forged decretals contained decisions and laws of the Bishop of Rome allegedly going back to the 1st century supporting the stupendous claims that the Pope was supreme ruler of Church and State.

4c. The mighty power of the RCC was built up on such false and unscriptural foundations.

2b. The Donation of Constantine

1c. This forged document claimed that Constantine was baptised by Pope Sylvester in 324. After his baptism, it was alleged that Constantine presented the Pope with the Lateran Palace and all the insignia of the Western Empire, with the whole of Italy, and other provinces of the Roman Empire.

2c. The forgery is clearly evident because Constantine was not baptised by Sylvester at all, but by Eusebius of Nicomedia, as Arian bishop, in 337 and not 324.

3c. The aim of the forgery was to deceive people into thinking that the Pope's political power was conferred on him 500 years ago, although it was actually granted to him only in time of Pepin and Charlemagne.

4c. These false documents were used by the popes to strengthen their claims to unlimited authority in the temporal realm. The first to do so was Pope Nicholas I (858-867) who proudly proclaimed, "that which the pope has decided is to be observed by all."

3b. Pope versus Emperor

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1c. The Pope held spiritual and ecclesiastical power, and the Emperor held temporal or political power. But there were three theories on how this relationship between Pope and Emperor worked:

1d. Theory #1 was that both were commissioned by God, the former to rule the souls and the latter to rule the bodies of men. Both were equal and were to cooperate and help each other.

2d. Theory #2 was that the Emperor was superior to the Pope in secular affairs.

3d. Theory #3 was that the Pope was above the Emperor. The Pope argued that God had created two lights in the heavens, the sun and the moon, and He also instituted two powers on earth, the spiritual and temporal. But as the moon is inferior to the sun, and receives its light from the sun, so the Emperor is inferior to the Pope, and receives all power from him. Eg: It was the Pope who crowned the Emperor Charlemagne in Rome in the year 800. No Pope, no Emperor.

2c. The power struggle between the Pope and Emperor was mainly due to the strong ambition of the Pope for political power. For hundreds of years, this sinful strife threw Europe into political disorder and many evil and wicked things were done by the Church. A Pope is not expected to last very long in office. There was a rapid succession of popes because of the fight for power, some were deposed, cast into prison, or killed. Here a couple of examples:

1d. Pope John XII (955-963) was charged by the Roman Synod with almost every crime depraved humanity is capable of. He was accused of drinking to the good health of the devil, and to have invoked the heathen gods and the demons for help as he threw dice. The Synod labeled him "a monster of iniquity." John XII replied them "If you wish to set up another Pope, by Almighty God I excommunicate you, so that you will not have power to perform mass or to ordain anyone."

2d. Pope Boniface VIII who strangled his predecessor to death in 1300 was considered a "papal monster" by a Synod for "his abject depravity exceeds all mortals." Now if this was true of the Pope, how much more the priests? The RCC was utterly corrupt.

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3c. In 1073, Hildebrand became Pope. He wanted to remodel the Church and Christendom. His twofold aim was to establish the supremacy of the Pope over the Church and the State. How did he do this?

1d. He abolished Simony. Simony is named after Simon the magician (Acts 8). It is the buying and selling of church offices. There were priests in those days who became priests by buying the office from the State. Many of these were neither literate (ie, they could not read or write), nor trained in the ministry. This effectively cut off the rich from acquiring power by buying the titles of the clergy.

2d. He abolished Investiture. Investiture concerned the claim of kings and rulers to appoint bishops and abbots. Hildebrand asserted that those who were conferred church positions by a layman committed a sin. Since church leaders were servants of the Church and not the State, any appointment must come from the head of the Church and not the State.

4c. Pope Gregory VII (Hildebrand) versus King Henry IV.

1d. Hildebrand took the name Gregory VII when he became Pope. He went about to abolish Simony and Investiture. This antagonised Henry IV who lived in Germany because he was in the habit of selling ecclesiastical positions and often appointed his friends to those positions.

2d. The Pope pronounced a ban against five privy councilors of the King charging them of simony. This meant they were excommunicated from the Church. This of course enraged the King.

3d. When Henry refused to follow the papal decree, Gregory summoned him to Rome. Henry refused to go and in turn deposed the Pope. Gregory replied in kind by excommunicating Henry and had him deposed. He also issued an interdict which is a ban on all churches in the regions governed by the excommunicated king.

4d. The Pope by this time wielded tremendous power.

1e. If a person was excommunicated, it meant that he was cut off from all relations with his fellow men. Anyone who befriends him, helps him, shelters him etc incurred the wrath of the Church. An excommunicated man was no better than a leper.

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2e. If a place was under a ban via an interdict, the churches in that region cannot open for service. No bell could be rung, no marriage or burial could be conducted, all church services came to an end.

5d. Henry IV had many enemies. He was not a popular king. Now, with Gregory's excommunication and interdict, he became even more unpopular and many of his subjects required him to surrender to the Pope. Henry found his authority slipping away and his kingdom falling into pieces. He had no choice but to kowtow to the Pope.



Henry IV waiting outside the Canossa castle in wintry & windy weather

6d. King Henry IV had to beg for the Pope's forgiveness and reinstatement. S M Houghton in his Church History recounted, "What followed is one of the most notable events in the history of Europe. With his wife and child Henry set out in midwinter to cross the Alps, braving all the discomforts of wind and weather, to present himself at the feet of the Pope. He found Gregory at Canossa, a stronghold of Countess Matilda of Tuscany. But the Pope refused to admit him to his presence. He intended to humble the Emperor to the dust. In the cold and snow of winter, and on three successive days, Henry stood with bare feet and the white garment of a penitent, in the snow of the courtyard of the castle, waiting for the Pope to grant him permission to kneel at his feet and ask forgiveness. On the fourth day the Pope consented to receive him, and the sentence of excommunication and the interdict removed."

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Henry kissing feet of Gregory VII

7d. The Pope and the King were reconciled. But would it last? It could not last because the reconciliation was not sincere, the spirit of both men were contrary to the spirit of Christ.

1e. The Pope was proud and arrogant, and power-hungry.

2e. The King was filled with hatred and resentment, and revenge was in his mind.

3e. Vengeance was exacted seven years later. Henry attacked Rome and drove Gregory into exile in Salerno (to the South of Naples) where he died in 1085.

8d. The war between Church and State continued for centuries. King Henry had an unnatural son. The Pope took issue with him and excommunicated him a second time. In 1006 Henry died, dethroned by his unnatural son.

5c. The papacy became most powerful in the time of Pope Innocent III (1198-1216). He followed the policy of Gregory VII (Hildebrand) and was even more successful in doing so. The circumstances also favoured him for by this time the people

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believed that the Pope was all-powerful and every ruler was under his control especially after the humiliation of Henry IV and other kings. Innocent III himself made King John of England and King Philip of France bow before him.

6c. Innocent III knew no bounds in his quest for power. He launched an all-out crusade against the Albigenses who wanted to separate themselves from the corruptions of the RCC and live a simple and devout life according to the Scriptures. He falsely charged them of heresy and many were massacred. They were forerunners of the Reformation.

4b. Weakening of the Papacy

1c. The mighty power of the papacy continued unabated until the days of Pope Boniface VIII (1294-1303) when it began to decline. Boniface released his papal bull—*Unam Sanctum*—which stated, “We declare, state, define and pronounce that for every human creature to be subject to the Roman Pope is altogether necessary for salvation.” This led to a rebellion by the kings, and finally the Philip the Fair, King of France, arrested Boniface and put him in prison. Boniface was roughly treated and died within a month.

2c. What weakened the papacy further was the fighting between the popes. In 1378-1417, two men claimed to be the Pope, one in Rome (Italy), and the other in Avignon (France). This led to confusion over who was the true successor of Peter since the Roman Catholics believed that their salvation depended on Peter’s successor.

3a. Rising Opposition to the Roman Catholic Church

1b. Waldenses

1c. Named after their founder Peter Waldo, a wealthy merchant from Lyons.

2c. In 1170, he employed a priest to translate the 4 Gospels from Latin to French. He read the Gospels, and by the grace of God became a believer of Jesus Christ.

1d. He learned that the Scriptures alone were to be his sole and supreme basis of faith and practice, and not any human being whether pope or king.

2d. He learned that Jesus Christ is the only Mediator. The saints could do nothing for a person’s salvation and they were not to be worshipped.

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3d. He learned that there are only two sacraments—baptism and the Lord's Supper—instituted by the Lord Himself.

3c. In 1177, he organised a society of men and women who were willing to help him preach the good news of Jesus Christ. Members of this society were known as Waldenses or Waldensians, named after their leader and teacher.

4c. They were also called "the poor men of Lyons." This was because they followed Jesus' command in Luke 10:1-17.

5c. The Waldenses were "harmless as doves" but also "wise as serpents" for they disguised themselves as peddlers selling odds and ends. They went house to house to sell their goods, and made sure every home heard the good news.

6c. They exposed the errors of the RCC frankly and openly and preached the Word of God boldly and fearlessly to those who wish to hear.

7c. They evangelised the whole of Southern France, and they also went into Switzerland and Northern Italy. They were usually quite well received, and gathered those of the same mind to worship in secluded places. They conducted Bible studies in homes opened to them and made sure they left behind portions of Scripture and devotional material in these homes.

8c. The RCC at first ignored them, but when they saw that the movement was winning converts, they banned the Waldenses from evangelising. The Council of Valencia (1229) forbade the laity from reading the Bible. Only the priests were allowed to read the Bible. The Bible was also placed in the Index of Forbidden Books.

9c. The RCC began persecuting the Waldenses and all others who protested against the corruption of the Church. The Inquisition was used to arrest and put to death all who opposed the Church. Many thousands were tortured, treated cruelly and slain.

10c. Even mothers with babies were thrown down the cliffs. This happened in the area known as Piedmont. Owing to the persecution, believers fled to the mountains for refuge. At one time, 400 women and children found refuge in a cave. When the hiding place was discovered, the enemies lit a fire at the cave entrance and all who were inside the cave perished.

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Massacre of Waldensians in 1545



Waldensians Burned at Stake

11c. Monks from the Dominican order were appointed to carry out the Inquisition.

12c. The Waldenses had to flee for their lives, and many fled to Spain, Savoy, Piedmont, France, and Italy. But they were not welcomed in many of these countries. Most of them found refuge in the Southern Alps, in the Western Piedmont. There they lived

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and founded a church which survives till this day. There is also a Waldensian church in the city of Rome today.

13c. Their enemies persecuted them and tried to destroy them, but even they could not deny that they lived a morally pure life and they were very sincere in holding fast their convictions and their refusal to deny their faith in Christ and His Word, *"Of whom the world was not worthy: they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth."* (Heb 11:38).

14c. John Milton wrote a hymn in memory of the sufferings that the Waldenses had to go through for the sake of their faith. Entitled "On the late massacre in Piedmont (1655)", the lyrics went like this:

*Avenge, O Lord, thy slaughtered saints, whose bones
Lie scattered on the Alpine mountains cold;
Even them who kept thy truth so pure of old
When all our fathers worshipped stocks and stones,
Forget not: in thy book record their groans
Who were thy sheep, and in their ancient fold
Mother with infant down the rocks. Their moans
To heaven. Their martyred blood and ashes sow
O'er all the Italian fields, where still doth sway
The triple tyrant; that from these may grow
A hundredfold who, having learnt thy way,
Early may fly the Babylonian woe.*

2b. Albigenses

1c. The Albigenses (aka Cathari) were a group from Albi in Southern France. They protested against the corruptions in the RCC. They considered the priests as worthless because they were not men of God.

2c. The Bishop of Citeaux and Simon de Montfort started to persecute them, and it lasted two decades. They were almost exterminated.

3c. The Inquisition was employed to wipe them out. The Dominican monks were the Gestapo of the RCC. They were very successful in their cruel campaign to destroy all true believers and those who did not wish to follow the RCC.

4c. Archbishop Trench described the Inquisition, "The machinery, so wonderful in its wickedness and its craft, did not fail in its object. ... By the middle of the fourteenth century there were probably few Albigenses more."

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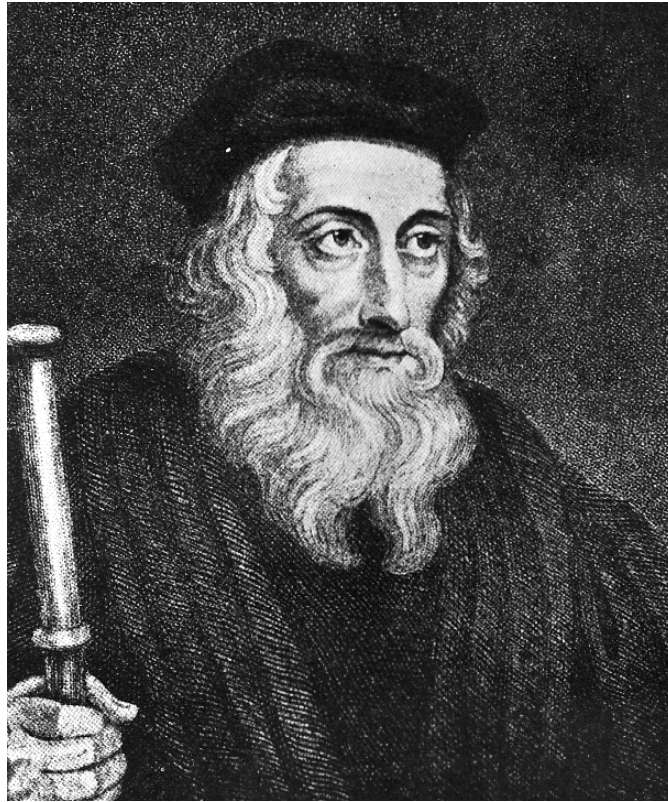
The Inquisition

5c. The great persecution and extermination programme notwithstanding, the faith and the spirit of these believers live on. The fact that there is a Protestant movement today testifies to the truth that Truth never fails, it always prevails, and the true Church which is built on Christ and Christ alone can never fall or be destroyed.

6c. The Albigenses based their beliefs solely on the authority of the Bible. For this, they were labeled heretics by the RCC. The RCC accused the Albigenses of doctrinal heresy, but were these charges and accusations true? Renwick wisely advised, "Much historical research is still called for in order to bring out the true story and the theological position of those numerous bodies. There are complicated questions involved and in the past historians have depended too much on the statements of the enemies of the dissenting groups for their assessment of their doctrine and morals."

II. FIRST STAR: JOHN WYCLIFFE

1a. John Wycliffe (1320-84)



John Wycliffe

2a. Wycliffe's Birth and Education

1b. He was born in about 1320 in a village in Yorkshire.

2b. At 16 years old, he commenced his studies at the University of Oxford. The rest of his life would be closely associated with the University. He finally earned his Doctor of Theology at Oxford and became a professor there. He was an excellent scholar with "a brilliant mind, undaunted courage, and a silver tongue." He was also a skilful writer.

3a. Wycliffe's Opposition to Rome

1b. In 1366, Wycliffe supported King Edward III for refusing to pay tribute to the Pope. He said that the Pope had no right to collect money from the Anglican Church.

2b. He declared that the only head of the Church is Christ. As far as the Pope was concerned, he said, "The pope ... is the vicar of Antichrist." He called the Pope "the proud worldly priest of Rome, the most accursed of clippers and robbers."

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- 3b. He criticised the monks for their laziness. Instead of toiling in their fields for their food, they were begging. He also criticised their false religious practices.
- 4b. He rejected Transubstantiation as something contradictory to Scripture and reason.
- 5b. He denied the infallibility of the RCC in matters of faith, and was against the Confession Box, Indulgences, Purgatory, and the veneration of saints and relics.
- 4a. **Opposition from the Church of England**
- 1b. Wycliffe's criticisms of the Pope angered the Anglican Bishops. He was summoned to a meeting in 1377 and according to Houghton "was savagely attacked by his opponents". The king's son John of Gaunt protected him.
- 2b. In the same year, five papal bulls were issued against Wycliffe condemning him and his writings against the Pope and the RCC.
- 5a. **Opposition from the King and the University of Oxford**
- 1b. Although the King of England initially supported Wycliffe, he later withdrew his support when Wycliffe denounced the RCC doctrine of Transubstantiation in 1381.
- 2b. The administration and faculty of Oxford University also opposed him.
- 3b. But the common people loved him and supported him. And this popular support prevented the King and the University from doing any harm to him.
- 6a. **Peasants' Revolt (1381)**
- 1b. The Black Death (1349), the poor living conditions in England, and high taxes led the peasants to revolt against the government. Wycliffe discouraged the peasants—many of whom were his followers—from doing so. Despite this, Wycliffe was blamed by the government for instigating the peasants to revolt.
- 2b. Wycliffe later realised that reformation cannot happen overnight. It would take a long time. People had to be educated with the truths of Scripture so that they would not act ignorantly, foolishly or violently.
- 7a. **Order of Poor Preachers**
- 1b. Wycliffe realised that the best way of freeing the people from the shackles of the RCC was to let the people read the Bible for themselves. Wycliffe was the first to translate the whole Bible into English. The

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translation was done not from the Hebrew and Greek since Wycliffe knew no Hebrew nor Greek, but from the Latin Vulgate. Although the translation was not as accurate as could be since it was not from the original languages, it was accurate enough for God's purpose to be fulfilled. At long last, the people could finally read for themselves the truth of salvation by grace through faith in Christ alone.

2b. It has to be noted that it was not easy to mass-produce the Bible in Wycliffe's day because the printing press has yet to be invented. (Johan Gutenberg invented the movable-type printing press in 1440.) To produce one copy of the Bible would take about 10 months. One copy would cost about 5000 chickens. How much would it cost to buy that many chickens today? Since it was so costly, the Bible was sold in parts or in pages. Some could only pay a few cents just to have the New Testament to read for just a day.



The Lollards: Order of Poor Preachers

3b. To spread the gospel truth, a group of pastors known as the Lollards used Wycliffe's translation to read and preach the Word to the common folk. For reading the Bible and preaching the gospel to the people, many of these Lollards were burned to death. Many copies of Wycliffe's Bible were also burned. Nevertheless, the production of Wycliffe's Bible could not be stopped, and the world today still has 200 copies of it. Faith is the victory, and the Bible is indestructible.



Burning of the Lollards

8a. Impact of Wycliffe's Work

1b. Wycliffe's Bible spearheaded the Reformation movement which led many to reject the falsehoods of the RCC. He was called "The morning star of the Reformation".

2b. It goes without saying that the RCC hated Wycliffe intensely. Their hatred for him was so great that they did all they could to dishonour him at the 40th anniversary of his demise. Seeking to wipe out all memory of Wycliffe, the RCC dug up his bones, burned them, and cast the ashes into the River Swift. God would see to it that such a disgraceful act would serve only to hasten the Reformation instead of deterring it. The more the Truth is opposed, the more it will flourish. The Truth cannot be snuffed out. As Luther later wrote, "The body they may kill, his truth abideth still; His kingdom is forever.

3b. Bible Translation Work Today

1c. The Trinitarian Bible Society (TBS) in its *Quarterly Record* 604 (Jul-Sep 2013) reported on the Waray-Waray and the Kalenjin translation of the Holy Scriptures. "Waray-Waray is one of the ten officially recognised regional languages in the Philippines. In 2012, the Society was brought into contact with a native Waray-Waray man with significant abilities in several languages, including

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Biblical Greek. As there is currently only a poor Waray-Waray Bible available—based on the Critical Text and dynamically translated—he has embarked on a new translation from the Hebrew and Greek in partnership with the Society. Work commenced earlier this year in the Gospel according to John. A second native Waray-Waray speaker, a pastor, is also involved. Both workers are self-supporting, and have said that they do not need any material or monetary support, only prayer!” Dennis Kabingue (MDiv 06, ThM 08) who is Greek tutor at FEBC is involved in this work.

2c. The TBS also reported, “In the providence of God we have been led to a group in Kenya, who since 2001, have been revising the existing Critical Text-based Kalenjin New Testament so that it conforms to the Scrivener Greek Received Text. The process of evaluating their work using the Society’s standard analytical tools is in hand.” Jonathan Langat (BTh 01, MDiv 03) who wrote his BTh thesis on “Examining the Kalenjin Bible in the Light of the Textus Receptus” is assisting in this work. Jonathan currently serves as pastor of Bomet Africa Gospel Unity Church and lectures at the Bomet Bible Institute in Kenya.

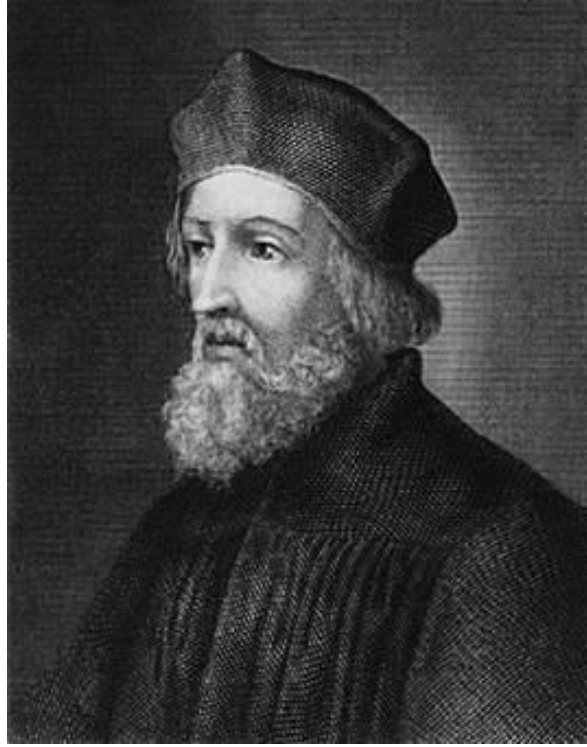
3c. On 20 December 2016, the TBS recruited the Rev Nguyen Gia Hien (MDiv 03, ThM 04) to revise the Vietnamese translation and make it conform to the Hebrew Masoretic Text and the Greek Textus Receptus.



John Wycliffe Monument

III. SECOND STAR: JOHN HUSS

1a. **John Huss (1360-1415)**



John Huss

2a. **Huss's Birth and Educational Background**

1b. John Huss was born in Bohemia (modern-day Czech Republic). He was a forerunner of the Reformation in Europe.

2b. Huss was born a poor peasant. His father died when he was very young. He was schooled by his mother.

3b. King Richard II of England married Anne of Bohemia who loved God's Word. Through Queen Anne, Wycliffe's writings entered Bohemia and influenced Huss.

4b. By sheer ability and hard work he became the Rector of Prague University at 34 years of age. Prague was one of top-ranking universities in Europe in those days together with the ones in Paris and Oxford.

3a. **Huss's Work as a Reformer**

1b. Huss was an avid reader of God's Word. The reading of God's Word convicted him of his sins.

2b. He was influenced by the writings of Wycliffe. He saw the contrast between Jesus and the pope—Jesus wore a crown of thorns but the pope

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wore a crown of gold. Jesus forgave sins freely but the pope sold indulgences (forgiveness coupons) to the people.



University of Prague

3b. He became a preacher at Bethlehem Chapel in Prague (1402-13). He was a powerful preacher proclaiming the gospel with great zeal and rebuking sin and the superstitious practices of the Catholic Church.



Bethlehem Chapel in Prague

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4a. **Opposition and Martyrdom**

1b. Huss was asked whether he would obey the commands of the Pope. His reply, "Yes, so far as they agree with the doctrine of Christ, but when I see the contrary I will not obey them, even though you burn my body." The word "contrary" was a word often used by Wycliffe.

2b. The Catholic clergy began to oppose him when he preached against their greed, their lust for wealth and their laziness.

3b. The Church began to charge him for heresy. They burnt his books in public and tried to silence him.

4b. He was summoned to the Council of Constance in 1414. The Emperor promised his safety. But it was a trap. As soon as he reached the city, he was thrown into prison and tortured for 7 months.

5b. A kangaroo court was convened; they had convicted him before even proving his guilt or hearing his defence. In fact, his defence was drowned by shouts of "Recant, Recant!" He replied that he would not recant unless he was proved to be wrong from God's Word.

6b. They sentenced him to death. He was to be burned at the stake. After sentenced was passed, he knelt down and prayed, "Lord Jesus, pardon all my enemies for the sake of thy great mercy. Thou knowest that they have falsely accused me, brought forward false witnesses, and concocted false charges against me. Pardon them for the sake of thine infinite mercy."



Huss Burned at the Stake

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7b. At the execution grounds, they placed a hat on his head with the words, "This is an arch-heretic," and with pictures of demons tearing his soul. The archbishop then declared, "We commit thy soul to the devil." Hus responded, "And I commit it to the Lord Jesus Christ." He confessed, "I am willing patiently and publicly to endure this dreadful, shameful and cruel death for the sake of thy gospel and the preaching of thy Word." And falling on his knees he cried, "Into thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit."

8b. When he was burning, he also said something prophetic, "Today they burn a goose (Huss means "goose") but out of these flames a swan would arise and no one will be able to stop him." The swan would be Luther.

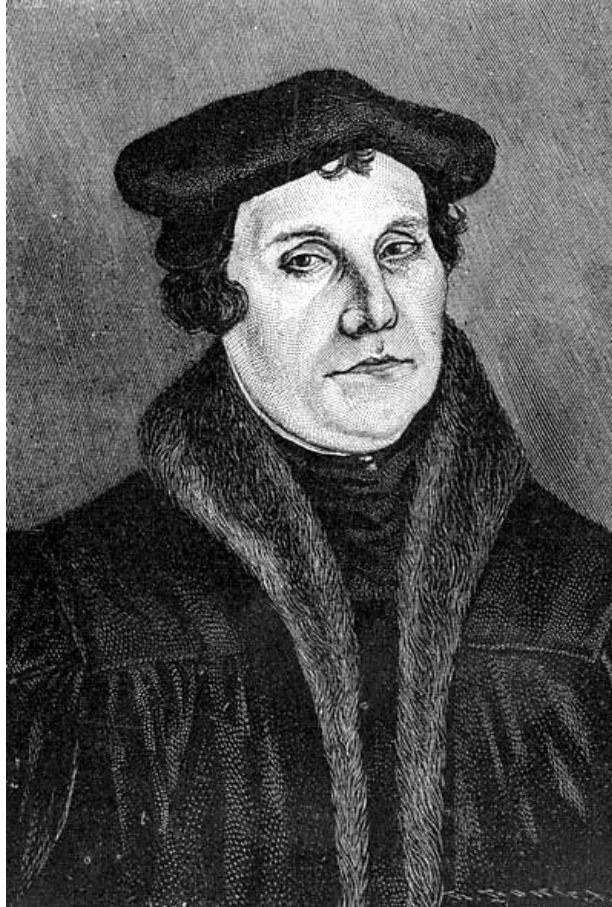


Memorial Stone: Huss' Execution Site in Constance

9b. Huss was burned to death and his ashes were cast into the river just like the ashes of Wycliffe.

IV. THIRD STAR: MARTIN LUTHER

1a. **Martin Luther (1483-1546)**



Martin Luther

2a. **Luther the Swan**

1b. Elector Frederick of Saxony had a dream on the night before October 31, 1517: *“Having gone to bed last night, fatigued and out of spirits, I fell asleep shortly after my prayer, and slept calmly for about two hours and a half; I then awoke, and continued awake to midnight, all sorts of thoughts passing through my mind. Among other things, I thought how I was to observe the Feast of All Saints. I prayed for the poor souls in purgatory; and supplicated God to guide me, my counsels, and my people according to truth. I again fell asleep, and then dreamed that Almighty God sent me a monk, who was a true son of the Apostle Paul. All the saints accompanied him by order of God, in order to bear testimony before me, and to declare that he did not come to contrive any plot, but that all that he did was according to the will of God. They asked me to have the goodness graciously to permit him to write something on the door of the church of the Castle of Wittenberg. This I granted through my chancellor.*

“Thereupon the monk went to the church, and began to write in such large

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characters that I could read the writing at Schweinitz. The pen which he used was so large that its end reached as far as Rome, where it pierced the ears of a lion that was crouching there, and caused the triple crown upon the head of the pope to shake. All the cardinals and princes, running hastily up, tried to prevent it from falling. You and I, brother, wished also to assist, and I stretched out my arm; – but at this moment I awoke, with my arm in the air, quite amazed, and very much enraged at the monk, for not managing his pen better. I recollected myself a little; it was only a dream.

“I was still half asleep, and once more closed my eyes. The dream returned. The lion, still annoyed by the pen, began to roar with all his might, so much so that the whole city of Rome, and all the States of the Holy Empire, ran to see what the matter was. The pope requested them to oppose this monk, and applied particularly to me, on account of his being in my country. I again awoke, repeated the Lord's prayer, entreated God to preserve his Holiness, and once more fell asleep.

“Then I dreamed that all the princes of the Empire, and we among them, hastened to Rome, and strove, one after another, to break the pen; but the more we tried the stiffer it became, sounding as if it had been made of iron. We at length desisted. I then asked the monk (for I was sometimes at Rome, and sometimes at Wittenberg) where he got this pen, and why it was so strong. ‘The pen,’ replied he, ‘belonged to an old goose of Bohemia, a hundred years old. I got it from one of my old schoolmasters. As to its strength, it is owing to the impossibility of depriving it of its pith or marrow; and I am quite astonished at it myself.’ Suddenly I heard a loud noise – a large number of other pens had sprung out of the long pen of the monk. I awoke a third time; it was daylight.”

2b. Martin Luther who had knowledge of Huss acknowledged that he was the swan Huss prophesied would come. Huss’ prophecy was even mentioned in the sermon at Luther’s funeral in 1546. The swan became a symbol of Luther. The Lutheran Press bears the swan logo and proudly continues to “Trumpet the Swan!”

3a. **Luther’s Childhood**

1b. Martin Luther was born on November 10, 1483 at Eisleben. He was the son of a poor country farmer. They were a family who lived from hand to mouth. Luther himself said that his parents “worked their flesh off their bones”. He thus tasted the hardships of life since childhood.

2b. Schaff commented, “All the Reformers, like the Apostles and Evangelists, were men of humble origin, and gave proof that God’s Spirit working through his chosen instruments is mightier than armies and navies. But they were endowed with extraordinary talents and energy, and providentially prepared for their work. They were also aided by a combination of favorable circumstances without which they could not

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have accomplished their work. They made the Reformation, and the Reformation made them.”

3b. Luther’s parents were strict disciplinarians. The punishments which he often received sometimes drew blood. Even in school, he was not spared corporal punishment. This, in a way, prepared him for the hardships that were to come in the future. Miller said, “From an early age he was trained in the school of poverty, hardship, and suffering, for a future life of warfare.”

4a. **Luther’s Education**

1b. Luther received his tertiary education in one of the best universities in Germany—the University of Erfurt. He majored in scholastic philosophy and studied the writings of Aristotle, Scotus, Aquinas, Ockham, and Bonaventura. Such vain studies devoid of theology did not bring Luther any closer to God. Nevertheless, his acquaintance with human philosophy made him capable of exposing its worthlessness in matters spiritual and theological.

2b. In 1503, Luther graduated with a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Erfurt. In those days, after the first degree, the graduate proceeded to specialise in one of these three areas: (1) Medicine, (2) Law, (3) Theology. His father wanted him to study law, but Luther was interested in theology.

3b. In 1505, he was conferred the degree of Master of Theology. Finally in 1512, he got his Doctor of Theology from the University of Wittenberg. In the University, he excelled in his own German tongue, and the Greek language.



Wittenberg 2016

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5a. **Luther's Conversion**

1b. A series of providential occurrences, namely, the death of his best friend, the accidental slash on his leg by a rapier and a terrible thunderstorm caused him to enter an Augustinian monastery in 1505. According to Schaff, the Augustinian monastery was “the cradle of the Lutheran Reformation.” It was during this trying period as a monk that he was brought to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

2b. Luther was a sincere and devout monk. When he was in the monastery, he was very concerned about his salvation. At that point of time, he still had no peace in his heart and yearned for the assurance of salvation. He was taught by the Augustinian monks that he must work towards perfection if he wants to be accepted by God. One of the practices was to read the Book of Rules every day in the Chapter Room—“A chapter a day keeps the devil away” it is said. After reading, the monks would confess their sins to one another. Luther's confessions were particularly long because he was so sensitive to his sinful self and would confess every little thing he felt he did wrong.



Augustinian Monastery in Erfurt

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Inside the Augustinian Monastery



Chapter Room

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Monk's Robe and Room

3b. In the monastery, he would mortify his own body with zeal, thinking that this will earn his way to heaven. Luther himself wrote of his mortifications, "I was indeed a pious monk, and followed the rules of my order more strictly than I can express. If ever a monk could obtain Heaven by his monkish works, I should certainly have been entitled to it." Despite all his zealous works to purify himself, he could find no freedom from the bondage of sin which weighed so heavily upon him. It was at this time when Luther was in such a state of spiritual desperation that the Lord by His providential hand used two men—John Staupitz and an unknown elderly monk—to lead him to salvation.

4b. Staupitz was Luther's spiritual father. "He directed him from his sins to the merits of Christ, from the law to the cross, from works to faith, from scholasticism to the study of the Scriptures...". Although a ray of divine light shone into his heart, he was still vexed with sin and guilt and found no way of escape from the terror of divine judgement that so plagued his soul.

5b. It was at this time of despair that he was visited by an old monk, probably John Staupitz (Luther said, "If it had not been for Dr. Staupitz, I should have sunk in hell.") This old monk recited the Apostle's Creed and the part which read, "I believe in the forgiveness of sins", gripped Luther. He now understood that he had to believe that his sins have all been

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forgiven through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. It was a turning point in Luther's life and the joy of salvation flooded his soul. *"For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith."* (Rom 1:17). *"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ"* (Rom 5:1).

6b. We must conclude that the events leading to Luther's conversion were ordered by the Lord. It was at a most critical time of Luther's life when he gave up all hope of living and felt that he was about to die due to the terrible burden of sin which afflicted his soul relentlessly and mercilessly that the light of the gospel broke through and saved him. Luther must be convinced that good works and penance would get him nowhere, that only the blood of Jesus Christ is able to cleanse him from all sin and in Christ only must he trust for forgiveness and eternal life.

6a. **Luther's Defence of the Faith**

1b. The atrocities of the RCC were impressed upon Luther when he visited Rome in 1510. Luther was horrified by the prevailing corruption that he said, "let all who would lead a holy life depart from Rome. Everything is permitted in Rome except to be an honest man." Luther saw how spiritually bankrupt the Church was.

2b. In 1512, Luther became Professor of theology at the University of Wittenberg. In the University, he lectured on the Psalms, the Epistles to the Romans and Galatians which were his favourite books. His study of the Pauline epistles must have made him realise that biblical Christianity must be based on Scriptures and not on the traditions of men or the sayings of the Pope. Owing to the pure teaching of God's Word in the German tongue, many of his students came to know Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour.



Wittenberg Castle Church

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3b. At about this time, the Pope needed money to rebuild St Peter's Basilica in Rome. John Tetzel was commissioned by the Pope to sell specially blessed indulgence letters (forgiveness tickets) to raise money for the building project. Tetzel's sales pitch was delivered most enticingly. He told the people, "The moment the money tinkles in my box, that moment the soul springs up out of purgatory."



Indulgence Money Chest



4b. Luther was infuriated by this sort of trickery. On October 31, 1517, Luther nailed his 95 theses to the doors of the castle-church in Wittenberg to denounce Tetzel and Indulgences. Concerning this event, Schaff said, "No period in the history of the Christian Church has a more clear date set for its close than the Middle Ages. In whatever light the Protestant

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Reformation is regarded there can be no doubt that a new age began with the nailing of the Theses on the Church doors of Wittenberg."

5b. Nobody was willing to take up the challenges to debate Luther. They felt that the issue was not significant enough to warrant attention. However, the Theses were soon found throughout Germany and Europe through the help of the printing press. The hearts of the people were prepared by the Lord to receive Luther's message that the Pope's indulgence letters did not take away sins. Only God alone could remit sins. Every true Christian is forgiven of his sins solely by the atonement of Christ and the grace of God without any need for a letter of indulgence.



An Indulgence Letter

6b. Although the Theses did not protest against the whole Roman system, just the indulgences, it marked "a state of transition from twilight to daylight." The Pope, angered by the Theses, subsequently excommunicated Luther on June 15, 1520. The papal bull of excommunication should strike terror to the heart of every Catholic but Luther had no fear of it because like David he came "in the name of the Lord of hosts" (1 Sam 17:45). Luther himself in a letter wrote, "You may expect everything from me, except fear or recantation. I shall not flee, still less recant." Schaff commented, "Instead of causing Luther and his friends to be burnt, it was burnt by Luther."

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A Papal Bull

7b. In 1521, Luther was summoned by Emperor Charles V to appear before the Diet of Worms. Although Rome had promised Luther safe passage, Luther's friends warned him against going because they feared it could be a trap for John Huss had been promised the same but that promise was not honoured. But Luther replied his friends, *"If there are as many devils in Worms as tiles on the housetops I will still go there."*

8b. So on April 16, 1521, Luther arrived at Worms, and the meeting to hear Luther was set on April 17. The people crowded the streets to see this man who dared to stand against the might of Rome. Luther had a hard time getting to the conference hall due to the crowd. When he finally reached the entrance, a brave and godly knight said these words of encouragement to him, *"My poor monk, my poor monk, you are on your way to make such a stand as I and many of my knights have never done in our toughest battles. If you are sure of the justice of your cause, then forward in the Name of God, and be of good courage – God will not forsake you."*

9b. On April 17, 1521, the Diet of Worms was convened to try Luther for teaching the doctrines of justification by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone, based on Scripture alone. It was one poor, born-again monk versus 206 men of rank and power – the might of Rome. The presiding officer was Dr John von Eck who began the proceedings by asking Luther two questions. Pointing to a table displaying the writings of Luther, he asked (1) Are you the author of these writings? and (2) Are you willing to retract all the doctrines contained in these writings of which the Church disapproved? To the first question, Luther replied with a yes. To the second, he asked to be given time to think because he did not wish to

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reply unwisely or to say something that would be against the Word of God. Luther's request was granted. The meeting was adjourned until the next day.

10b. Luther spent much of that night agonising in prayer. He prayed, *"O God, my God, be with me and protect me against my enemies of the world. Thou must do it, Thou alone, for in me is no strength. It is thy cause, O God, not mine. On thee I rely, not on man, for that would be in vain. O God, dost Thou not hear? Do not hide thy face from me. Thou hast called me, now be my stay, I ask it in the Name of thy Son, Jesus Christ, my protector, my shield and my defence."*



At the Diet of Worms

11b. April 18, 1521 was the greatest day in Luther's life. He was ready. Dr Eck asked Luther if he would recant his teachings and withdraw his writings. Filled with the Holy Spirit, Luther gave a reply that would shake the very foundations of the RCC till this day, *"Unless I am convinced by testimonies of the Scriptures or by clear arguments that I am in error – for popes and councils have often erred and contradicted themselves – I cannot withdraw, for I am subject to the Scriptures I have quoted; my conscience is captive to the Word of God. It is unsafe and dangerous to do anything against one's conscience. Here I stand; I cannot do otherwise. So help me God."*

12b. All hell broke loose. The assembly accused him of introducing a new doctrine and charged him for heresy. The Emperor stormed out of the hall shouting, *"How could one monk be right and 1000 years of Christendom be wrong."* Of course, the Emperor knew only of a Christendom that had been corrupted and was false. Luther was not introducing something new, but reintroducing the people to the good old liberating faith of the Lord Jesus Christ as taught in the Holy Scriptures, the sole and supreme authority of the Christian's beliefs and practices.

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Model of Cathedral in Worms where Luther was tried.

13b. On April 25, 1521, Luther left Worms. Not long later, the Emperor declared him an outlaw and anyone who helped him with food and lodging would be charged with high treason. God often uses just one man to accomplish His holy purpose. In Scripture, we find the Lord using Moses mightily to deliver Israel out of Egyptian bondage. Then, there was young David who fought Goliath and Elijah who defeated the 450 prophets of Baal. In the same way, God saw it fit to raise an unknown peasant to shake the foundations of the Roman Empire in a way never before.



Commemoration stone of spot where Luther said "Here I Stand".

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Papal edict denouncing Luther as a heretic.

- 14b. Luther wrote a hymn in memory of his experience in Worms:

*A safe stronghold our God is still,
A trusty shield and weapon;
He'll help us clear from all the ill
That hath us now o'ertaken.
The ancient prince of hell
Hath risen with purpose fell;
Strong mail of craft and power
He weareth in this hour –
On earth Is not his fellow.*

*God's Word, for all their craft and force,
One moment will not linger,
But, spite of hell, shall have its course,
'Tis written by his finger.
And though thy take our life,
Goods, honour, children, wife,
Yet is their profit small,
These things shall vanish all,
The city of God remaineth.*

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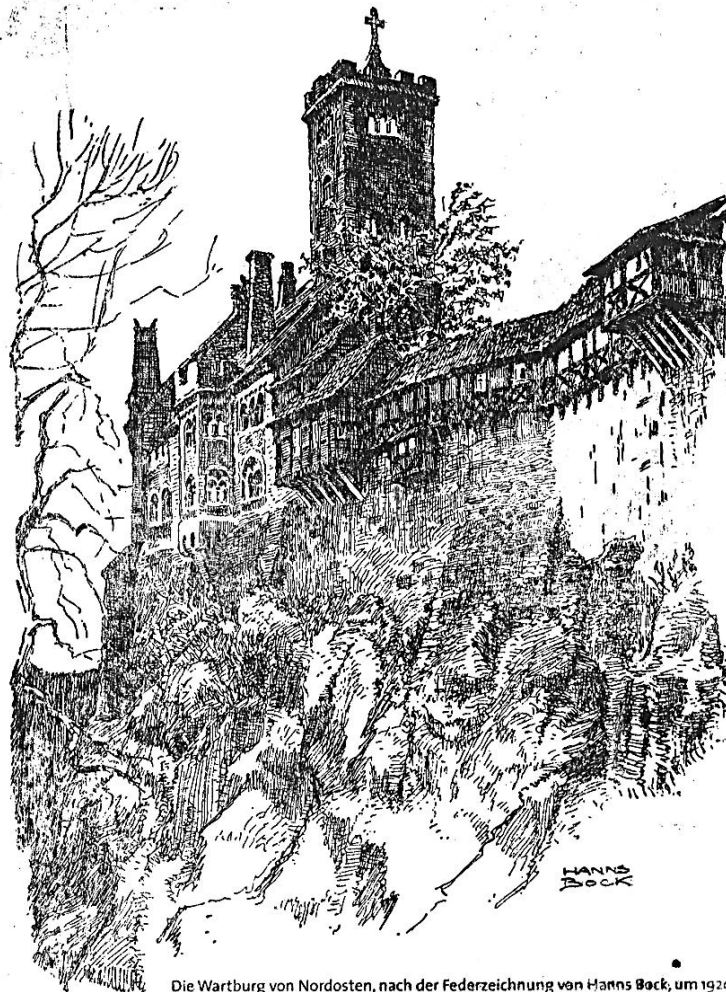
7a. **Luther's Translation of the Bible**

1b. Luther's work was not done and his time was not yet. The gospel was preached and defended. Now the Bible had to be translated. No Bible, no Reformation.

2b. On his way back to Wittenberg from Worms, Luther was "kidnapped" by his friend the Elector of Saxony Frederick the Wise (the one who dreamt about Luther being the swan). Frederick brought him to his castle in Wartburg. This was for Luther's own safety because an assassination attempt had been planned.

Luther und die Deutschen

Nationale Sonderausstellung vom 4. Mai bis 5. November 2017 auf der Wartburg



Die Wartburg von Nordosten, nach der Federzeichnung von Hans Bock, um 1920

Wartburg Castle

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3b. Luther resided in Wartburg Castle (1521-2). He was given another identity—Junker Jorg or Squire George. He grew a beard to hide his identity.



Junker Jorg

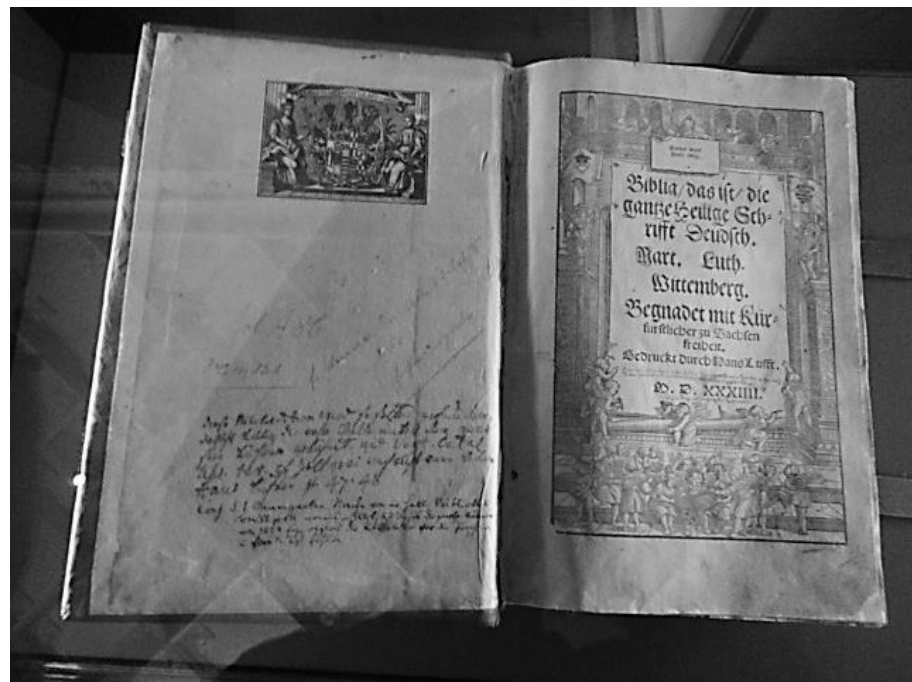
4b. It was God's hiding place for Luther so that he could do the work of translating the German Bible. Luther's command of the German language was impeccable. He also had good knowledge of Hebrew and Greek. He was thus most qualified for this task. He used Erasmus's Greek New Testament of 1519 (2d ed) for the job.



Luther's room and desk in Wartburg where he translated the Bible into the German language.

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5b. Luther translated the NT in just 11 weeks. Luther said, "I fought the devil with ink." It is said that the devil tried to disturb Luther in his work. Luther was so angry that he threw a bottle of ink against the wall where he thought he saw the devil in a shadow. This story is probably a myth. Nevertheless, one can say he did fight the devil with ink. He did so through his writings and his translation of the Bible. The whole German Bible was finally completed in 1534.



German Bible by Luther

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6b. Luther's translation was in such excellent German that it influenced the development of German language and prose just like the KJV influenced the English.

8a. **Luther's Marriage**

1b. After nearly a year in Wartburg, Luther returned to Wittenberg to the joy of all his friends.



Luther's House in Wittenberg

2b. On June 13, 1525, he decided to break his vow of celibacy and get married. He married a converted nun by the name of Katharine von Bora. She was 26 (Luther was 41). June 13 is celebrated today in Wittenberg, and is an auspicious date for weddings.



Luther's Wife Katharine von Bora

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3b. Luther and Katharine had a happy married life. She bore him six children. She was a good cook, and entertained his visitors and friends who came over for his “Table Talks” where various topics on the Bible and theology were discussed. Luther described her as his “pious, faithful and devoted wife, always loving, worthy and beautiful.”

9a. **Luther’s Table Talks**

1b. Luther’s house under Katharine became a hospitable place for Bible study and theological discussions. Luther would invite his university professors and students, government officers, foreign visitors etc for lunch and they could ask him whatever questions they might have or discuss anything they were interested in.

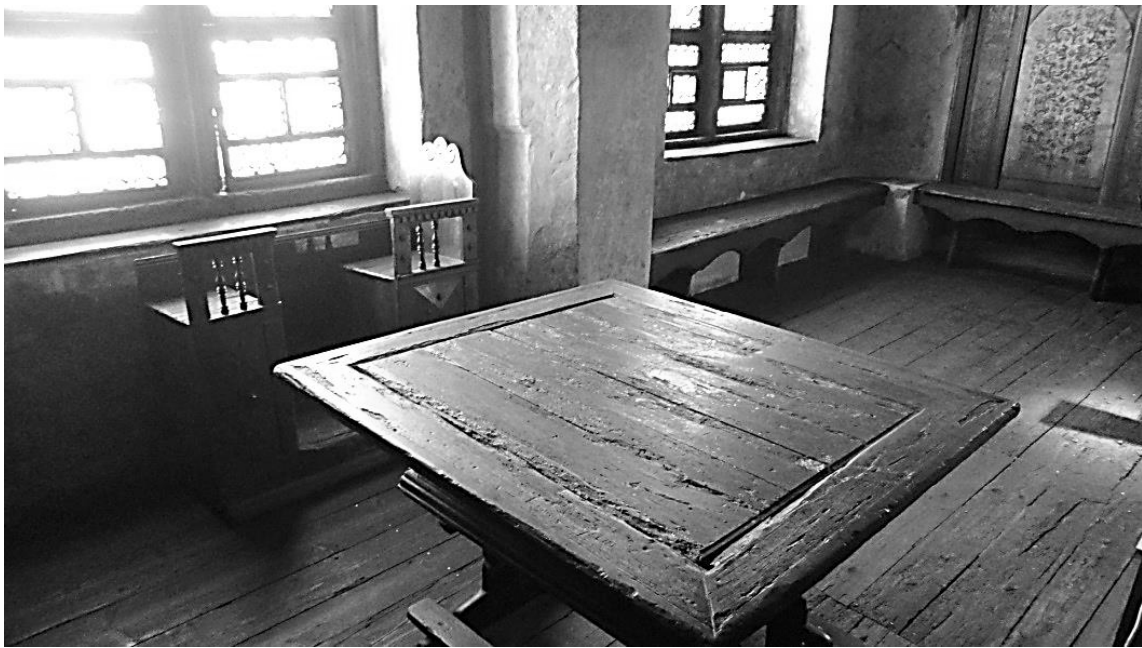


Table Talks: Dining Area in Luther’s House

2b. On writing against his opponents: “The papists and I write against each other in different ways. I enter the fray after careful reflection and in a sufficiently hostile frame of mind. For ten years I battled with the devil and established all my positions, and so I knew they would stand up.”

3b. On temptations: “Young fellows are tempted by girls, men who are 30 years old are tempted by gold, when they are 40 years old they are tempted by honor and glory, and those who are 60 years old say to themselves, ‘What a pious man I have become!’ (ie, conceit).”

4b. On his writings: “I’d like all my books to be destroyed so that only the sacred writings of the Bible would be diligently read.” He also said, “I’d like them to be preserved for the sake of history, in order that men may observe the course of events and the conflict with the pope, who once seemed formidable but is now regarded with disdain.”

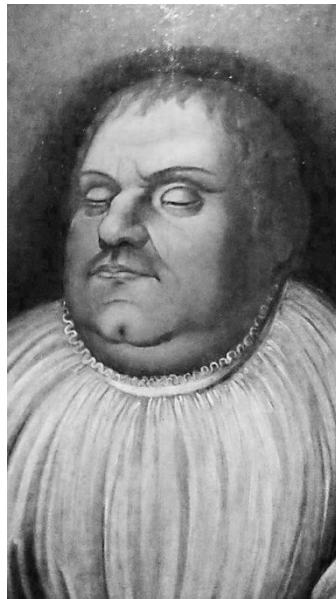
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10a. **Luther's Death**

1b. Luther kept himself busy with God's Word and work. He was a prolific writer, and more than 50 volumes of his writings (many translated into English) have been published today.

2b. He also wrote many hymns, the most famous being "A Mighty Fortress is Our God."

3b. Luther died in 1546 in Eisleben his birthplace. He died of sickness, and it is said that he finally departed after praying thrice, "Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit."



Luther at Death (by Cranach)

11a. **From Germany to Switzerland**

"In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established." (2 Cor 13:1). If reformation only occurred in Germany, it might be fair for sceptics to conclude that there was nothing providential about the whole movement. But God would not allow His work to be regarded in such a way for the reformation did not occur only in Germany, it was also found in Switzerland.

V. FOURTH STAR: ULRICH ZWINGLI

1a. Ulrich Zwingli (1484-1531)



Ulrich Zwingli

2a. Zwingli's Birth and Childhood

1b. Zwingli was born seven weeks after Luther and was thus Luther's contemporary. Zwingli, however, preceded Luther in his reformation endeavours. Zwingli himself said, "I began to preach the gospel in the year of grace 1516, that is to say, at a time when Luther's name had never been heard in this country. It is not from Luther that I learnt the doctrine of Christ, but from the Word of God. If Luther preaches Christ, he does what I am doing; and that is all." This goes to show that the divine hand was involved in charting the progress of the Reformation. D'Augbigne well said, "There was no doubt a connecting link between these two men; but we must not look for it upon earth: it was above."

2b. Ulrich Zwingli was born into a shepherd's family in the Swiss Alps in Zurich on New Year's day 1484. During summertime, Zwingli would follow his father to graze their sheep in the summits of the Alps. The beauty of creation drew Zwingli to his Creator. Surely, "*The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament showeth his handiwork.*" (Ps 19:1). One of his friends once remarked that Zwingli being brought so near to heaven

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on these sublime Alpine heights contracted something heavenly and divine.



Swiss Alps



Reformed Church in Swiss Alps

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- 3b. The winter season would often find the young Zwingli in rapt attention as he listened to his pious grandmother tell the stories of the Bible. As much as the biblical Timothy was influenced towards God by his godly grandmother Lois, so was Zwingli by his grandmother. God's provision of godly parents reveals His providential grace and desire for us to walk towards a holy goal and direction.
- 3a. **Zwingli's Education and Conversion**
- 1b. God endowed Zwingli with a sharp and methodical mind. His intelligence was discovered when he was still a young boy of ten. He was later very successful in his studies at Basle, Berne and Vienna. He enjoyed reading Erasmus and therefore had humanistic tendencies. However, the Lord had implanted in His appointed servant, an intense desire to know His Word. So, Zwingli, addicted himself to the study of the Bible. He learned Greek, translated Paul's epistles and memorised them.
- 2b. Zwingli studied theology under Thomas Wittenbach. Just as Luther received the salvation light from Staupitz, Zwingli was directed to the gospel by Wittenbach. Zwingli's heart was challenged by the Word of God. Filled with the Holy Spirit and with holy zeal, he took a strong stand against the doctrinal and ecclesiastical corruptions of Rome.
- 4a. **Zwingli's Defence of the Faith**
- 1b. The more Zwingli studied the Scriptures, the more He was persuaded that the RCC was a handmaid of the devil. In 1506 he was ordained into the gospel ministry and became the pastor of the church in Glarus. As a pastor, he faithfully and courageously exposed the corruptions of the RCC. This started the Reformation in Switzerland.
- 2b. In 1518, he was promoted to become the pastor of the Grossmunster (great cathedral church) in Zurich. It was in Zurich that he was convicted that the Bible and the Bible alone was the "touchstone" of all Christian beliefs and practices. Zwingli, as with all the reformers, were men of one book—the Holy Bible. He was known for his systematic treatment of the Scriptures. He preferred to preach a series of expository messages from particular books of the Bible than to dwell on topics. In Zurich, he covered the whole New Testament (except the book of Revelation) in four years. Zwingli had a very high view on the inerrancy of Scripture. He would not preach anything he could not prove from the Bible. Zwingli believed that the God of the Bible would redirect people to Himself when the pure, unadulterated Word was preached. Thus, he did not expose the corruptions of the RCC initially but preached against the sins of the human heart for there is where the root problem lies. Man must be brought to see the light before they can appreciate the darkness that is found in the world.

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Grossmunster in Zurich



Zwingli's house was near the Grossmunster.

3b. Zwingli regarded "Scripture as touchstone". In 1522, he wrote, "Even if you hear the gospel of Jesus Christ from an apostle you will not follow it unless the heavenly Father teaches and draws you by his Spirit. The words are clear: God's teaching clearly enlightens, teaches and gives certainty without any intervention on the part of human knowledge. If people are taught by God they are well taught with clarity and conviction. If they had first to be taught and assured by men, they would be more correctly described as men-taught rather than taught by God."

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Door to Zwingli's House



Inside Zwingli's House

"You must be *theodidacti*, that is, taught of God, not of men: that is what truth itself said (John 6:45) and it cannot lie. If you do not believe, and believe firmly, leaving the vanities of men and submitting yourselves solely to God's teaching, you have no true faith. ...

"I know for certain that God teaches me, for I know this by experience. In order that you may not misrepresent my meaning let me tell you how I

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know that God teaches me. In my youth I devoted myself as much to human learning as did others of my age. Then, some seven or eight years ago, I undertook to devoting myself entirely to the Scriptures, and the conflicting philosophy and theology of the schoolmen constantly presented difficulties. But eventually I came to a conclusion—led thereto by the Scriptures and the Word of God—and decided ‘You must drop all that and learn God’s will directly from his own word.’...

“Finally here is the answer to any opposition. It is my conviction that the word of God must be held by us in the highest esteem (the Word of God being that alone which comes from God’s Spirit) and no such credence is to be given to any other word. It is certain and cannot fail us; it is clear and does not let us wander in darkness. It teaches itself, it explains itself and it brings the light of full salvation and grace to the human soul.

“... In these it has its being, through these it strives, rejecting all human consolation, relying on God alone for comfort and confidence. Without God there is no rest, for repose is with him alone. Yes, salvation comes to us here and now, and in any material form but in the certainty of consolation and hope. May God increase this in us and may it never be lacking. Amen.”

4b. In 1522, Zwingli’s reformation efforts gained public support. The Reformation in Germany was ignited when Tetzel started selling the Pope’s indulgence letters which led to Luther’s 95 Theses. The Reformation in Switzerland, on the other hand, began at the festival of Lent when people were required by the Catholic Church to fast. However, instead of fasting, the reformers in Zurich held a sausage feast. By so doing, they defied the tradition and authority of the RCC, claiming the Bible and the Bible alone to be their sole and supreme authority of faith and life.

5b. In 1523, Zwingli published his 67 Conclusions or Articles which were the Swiss equivalent of Luther’s 95 Theses. While Luther’s 95 Theses concentrated on the abuses of indulgence letters, the 67 Articles centred on Christ as the only Saviour of the world. Here, we see the Reformation developing in a progressive manner. During the Swiss Reformation, the people became more rooted in Christology through Zwingli. The God of the Bible is a God of order and not of confusion. We see such divine order in the Reformation movement. We shall see later on the Lord raising John Calvin to systematise the fundamental doctrines of the Christian Faith.

6b. Zwingli issued a challenge to his opponents to debate the 67 theses he had laid down. The request was accepted and a conference for discussion held on January 29, 1523. Miller rightly observed that “This was the first of those public disputations which under the overruling

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providence of God, so rapidly advanced the progress of the Reformation." The Senate of Zurich invited all opponents of the Articles to refute them on the basis of Scripture and not the customs or traditions of men. During the meeting, none of Zwingli's opponents dared to debate him. The Roman Catholic theologians who so fervently assailed Zwingli's propositions and slandered his character in secret, now surprisingly chose to remain silent in public. Why this was so is quite easy to explain. They could not refute Zwingli because they had no knowledge of the Bible and were simply too lazy to study the truth.

7b. Since none dared to say anything against Zwingli or his doctrines, the Lord moved the Senate to pass this edict: "That since Master Ulric Zwingli had publicly and repeatedly challenged the adversaries of his doctrine to confute them by Scriptural arguments, and since, notwithstanding, no one had undertaken to do so, he should continue to announce and preach the Word of God, just as heretofore. Likewise that all other ministers of religion, whether resident in the city or country, should abstain from teaching any tenet which they could not prove from Scripture; that they should refrain, too from making charges of heresy and other scandalous allegations on pain of severe punishment. The cooperative aspect of God's sovereign will is evident here. As the Psalmist say, *"Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee; the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain."* (Ps 76:10).

5a. **Luther versus Zwingli**

1b. Luther and Zwingli agreed on many points of Protestant doctrine, but they disagreed on the Lord's Supper. Luther held to Consubstantiation (modified Transubstantiation), but Zwingli held to Commemoration (elements are merely symbolic). Luther's view was erroneous.

2b. In the Marburg Colloquy of 1529, the two debated. Zwingli could not persuade Luther to abandon his view. Zwingli said tearfully, "There are no people on earth with whom I rather be in harmony than with the Wittenbergers' (ie, with the followers of Luther). But Luther would not bend to Zwingli's teaching and would only receive the Swiss reformer and his followers as his friends, not as brethren and members of the Church of Christ."

3b. To distinguish themselves from the Lutherans, the Swiss Protestants began to call themselves Reformed.

6a. **Zwingli versus Anabaptists**

1b. In 1525, Conrad Grebel and Felix Manz felt that Zwingli's reforms did not go far enough. They were opposed to infant baptism, and baptism

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by sprinkling. They felt that these were Roman Catholic, and insisted on adult or believer's baptism and immersion. They were also against tithing and military service. They broke away from the Reformed Church and started their own assemblies by baptising themselves again through immersion. This was how they got their name – Anabaptist – which means to be baptised again.

2b. In 1526, the Zurich city council which was under Zwingli decreed that the Anabaptists were heretics and should receive the death penalty. Heresy in those days was a capital crime.

3b. In 1527, Felix Manz was drowned in the river Lammat. This is one black mark in the history of the Reformation. Although heresy and heretics ought to be condemned, they should not be put to death for their beliefs and convictions. If they are to be judged and punished, then it is for God Himself to do it in His own sovereign will and way, not the Church. 2 Peter 3:9 applies, "The Lord ... is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

4b. George Blaurock in 1529 wrote, "Conrad and Felix ... believed that one must and should be correctly baptised according to the Christian ordinance and institution of the Lord, since Christ himself says that whoever believes and is baptised will be saved. Ulrich, who shudders before Christ's cross, shame, and persecution, did not wish this and asserted that an uprising would break out. ...

"... Soon also there was issued a strong mandate at the instigation of Zwingli that if any more people in the canton of Zurich should be rebaptised, they should immediately, without further trial, hearing, or sentence, be cast into the water and drowned." The Anabaptists were in error to condemn infant baptism and insist on immersion for salvation (some today believe that only immersed believers are true members of the Church or the Bride of Christ). Although the civil authorities had the right to mete out the death penalty, Zwingli should not use it against those who held to different religious beliefs or convictions.

5b. As the Rev Dr Timothy Tow says, "Water more or less, the gospel is the best." We should not fight over the mode of baptism. Dr John Sung said, "More faith less water, less faith more water." Do you get it?

7a. **Zwingli's Death**

1b. The Catholic parts of Switzerland were against the Reformation in Zurich. The RCC raised an army of 8000 soldiers to invade and take over Zurich. Zurich had only 2700 soldiers to defend itself.

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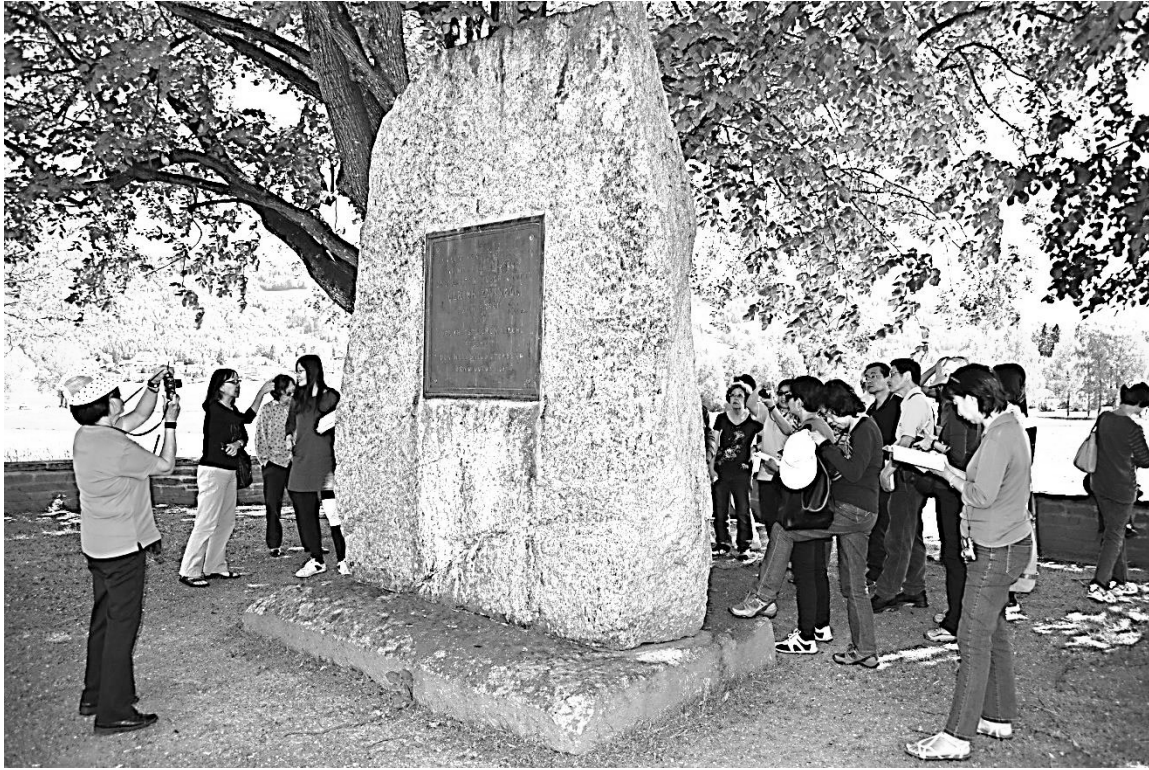
2b. Zwingli was part of this army to defend Zurich but he was in this army more as a chaplain than as a soldier. His monument in Zurich shows him holding a Bible and a sword.



Statue of Zwingli with Bible & Sword

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3b. In the battle of Kappel in 1531, Zwingli was killed. His body was cut up into four pieces by his enemies and burned. He was 47 years old when he died.



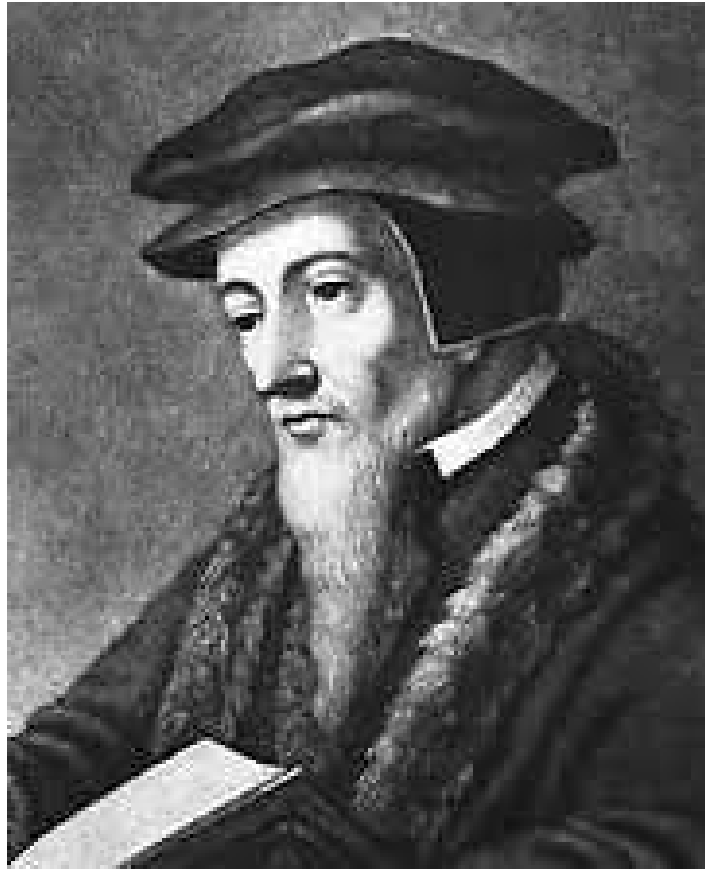
Memorial Stone at Kappel

8a. From Luther to Zwingli to Calvin

While the German Reformation brought the masses back to the pure and unadulterated gospel, the Swiss Reformation under Zwingli restored the Bible to its rightful place. The absolute authority and total sufficiency of the Bible as the only basis for faith and practice was one doctrine which Zwingli constantly stressed. The forte of Zwingli's reformation was his constant appeal to Scripture. Miller correctly concluded that "One line of Scripture far outweighs ten thousand reasons." The Reformation torch is now passed to John Calvin. It is he whom the Lord used to systematise the Christian Religion.

VI. FIFTH STAR: JOHN CALVIN

1a. John Calvin (1509-64)



John Calvin

2a. Introduction

1b. In the previous chapter, we saw the progress of the Reformation in German Switzerland. We now proceed to French Switzerland. We find here a man by the name of John Calvin who carried on where Zwingli left off. By the providence of God, Calvin gave a greater impetus to the Reformation Movement.

2b. As we study about God's providential hand in the 16th century Reformation now through Calvin, we want to acknowledge that Calvin was the one who saw clearly the higher hand of God over the events of the world and affairs of man. Calvin's consciousness of God's providential hand is evident by his very own confession. Calvin testified, "As David was taken from the sheepfold and elevated to the rank of supreme authority; so God having taken me from my originally obscure and humble condition, has reckoned me worthy of being invested with the honorable office of a preacher and minister of the gospel. When I was yet a very little boy, my father had destined me for the study of theology. But

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afterwards, when he considered that the legal profession commonly raised those who follow it, to wealth, this prospect induced him suddenly to change his purpose. Thus it came to pass, that I was withdrawn from the study of philosophy and was put to the study of law. To this pursuit I endeavored faithfully to apply myself, in obedience to the will of my father; but God, by the secret guidance of his providence, at length gave a different direction to my course. And first, since I was too obstinately devoted to the superstitions of popery to be easily extricated from so profound an abyss of mire, God by a sudden conversion subdued and brought my mind to a teachable frame, which was more burdened in such matters than might have been expected from one of my early period of life. Having thus received some taste and knowledge of true godliness, I was immediately inflamed with so intense a desire to make progress therein, that though I did not altogether leave off other studies, I yet pursued them with less ardor.”

3b. It was God’s purpose that Calvin should be, first and foremost, a theologian. Calvin clearly takes the lead among the systematic teachers of Christian doctrine. His theology stems from a thorough knowledge of the Bible. He was undoubtedly the ablest exegete among the Reformers and his commentaries are rated to be one of the very best in expounding the Christian Faith both in ancient and modern times. Calvin became the theologian of the Protestant Reformation.

3a. **Calvin’s Education**

1b. John Calvin was born on July 10, 1509, 25 years after Luther and Zwingli. While Luther and Zwingli spent much time opposing the RCC and preaching salvation in Christ alone, the teaching aspect of the ministry was somewhat lacking. The task of deepening the roots of the Reformation Movement on the Word of God was thus providentially entrusted to Calvin. The Church cannot survive without doctrine. As the Apostle Paul told Timothy, *“Take heed unto thyself and unto doctrine; continue in them; for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee.”* (1 Tim 4:16).

2b. His achievements in theology found its beginnings when he was still a student. Calvin received the best education—in the humanities, law, philosophy and theology—which France at that time could give. He studied successively in the three leading Universities—Orleans, Bourges, and Paris—from 1528 to 1533. He started out studying for the priesthood, but later switched to law because his father wanted him to be a lawyer. After the death of his father, he returned with increased zeal to the study of humanities and subsequently to theology.

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Calvin Theologian Par Excellence

3b. Calvin made such progress in his studies that he was called upon occasionally to take the place of his professors when they were absent. While he avoided the carnal activities and noisy excitements of life as a student, he spent his leisure time enjoying the company of like-minded fellow students. However, some of his fellow students dubbed him the “accusative” case because he was so strict and severe in his conduct.

4b. After Calvin completed his elementary course, he moved to the College de Montaigu, which was renowned for two things: the strictness of discipline and the taste of school meals. Neither was welcomed by its students. Calvin, however, thrived in such a school. It was there that the foundation for his future ministry was laid. Each morning at four was the morning service. This was followed by a lecture until six and then there was the morning mass. After breakfast, the main class of the day came, from eight to ten in the morning, and then an hour was given to discussion of the subject. Lunch was then taken, and followed by the public reading of the Scriptures or a biography of a saint and then another hour of revision was spent before one in the afternoon to ensure that the morning lecture had been fully understood. Siesta took place from one to two in the afternoon, but was often accompanied by more public readings. From three to five, the main class for the afternoon was held.

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This was followed by prayers, discussion of the afternoon lessons and supper with more readings. Before bedtime at eight or nine, more time was devoted to questions and discussions.

5b. It must have been a very tough life for the students there, but for someone of Calvin's God-given intellect and discipline, it was the kind of challenge he welcomed. Surely, it would have been physically, mentally and spiritually impossible for him to have sustained the output which characterised his life and ministry without these foundations being laid while he was under training. God saw to it that His servant would come out fully equipped for the task appointed for him.

4a. Calvin's Conversion and Call

1b. Calvin's conversion was not a dramatic one, unlike Luther's. It was a gradual and natural affair. Calvin was an extremely devout Roman Catholic and lived a pious life. At that time, Reformation was in the air and Calvin searched the Scriptures to find out whether the Reformation claims were true or not. By the grace of God, the more Calvin studied the Bible, the more he became convinced that the Roman Catholic system was not of God. His conversion as Schaff said was, therefore, "a change from Romanism to Protestantism, from papal superstition to evangelical faith, from scholastic traditionalism to biblical simplicity." Calvin's conversion was not by any direct human influence but as Calvin said, "God Himself produced the change. He instantly submitted my heart to obedience." The exact time and place of his conversion remain a mystery.

2b. Calvin's conversion to the Protestant faith and his call to reform the Church could be seen as simultaneous. God had already predestined Calvin to be saved and to take a lead in the Reformation. The Lord thereby equipped His servant in an extraordinary way for the ministry of reforming the Church. Know that the Reformers "belong not to the regular order of priests, but to the irregular order of the prophets whom God calls directly by his Spirit from the plough or the shepherd's staff or the workshop or the study. So he raises and endows men with rare genius.... All good gifts come from God; but the gift of genius is exceptional, and cannot be derived or propagated by ordinary descent." Calvin belonged to such a class.

5a. Calvin's Defence of the Faith

1b. Calvin's first confrontation happened before a large assembly in the Church of Mathurins on November 1, 1533. His friend, Nicolas Cop, having been elected Rector of the University of Paris, was required to deliver his inaugural speech. Cop requested Calvin to write his speech. The speech called for a reformation. It spoke against the scholastic philosophers who were described as people still unregenerate. Calvin

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said, "They teach nothing of faith, nothing of the love of God, nothing of the remission of sins, nothing of grace, nothing of justification; or if they do so, they pervert and undermine it all by their laws and sophistries. I beg you, who are here present, not to tolerate any longer these heresies and abuses."



Calvin's Logo

2b. The RCC was infuriated by such an audacious rebuke. Cop, worried for his life, fled to Basle. Calvin escaped by lowering himself through a window using bedsheets and disguised as a farmer.

3b. From 1533–1536, Calvin laboured as a traveling evangelist in Southern France, Switzerland, and Italy. During this time, he also wrote a book which was a systematic defence of the Christian Faith. His *Institutes of the Christian Religion* was published in 1536. He was only 26 years old when he completed the first edition of his *Institutes*. Schaff wrote, "This book is a masterpiece of a precocious genius of commanding intellect and spiritual depth and power. It is one of the few truly classical productions in the history of theology and has given its author the double title of Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas of the Reformed Church."

4b. Calvin's book was instrumental in spreading the Reformed doctrines far and wide. Felice said, "This was the first theological and literary monument of the French Reformation, spreading abroad in the schools, the castles of the gentry, and the houses of the burghers, even the workshops of the people, the *Institutes* became the most powerful of preachers."

6a. **Calvin in Geneva**

1b. Now, in Geneva, the Reformation had already begun through a French evangelist by the name of William Farel. Farel's fiery preaching

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led to many conversions. However, Farel did not think himself to be adequately equipped to further the work of the Reformation in Geneva. When he heard that Calvin had come to Geneva, he thought that this must be God's higher plan that in such an opportune time, He had provided such a famous theologian for the Reformation work in Geneva.



Calvin was the pastor of St Peter's Church in Geneva.

2b. Geneva was, however, only a stopover for Calvin who was on his way to Strassburg where he wanted to spend all his time in peace, studying and writing. He did not know anyone in Geneva and thus did not expect anyone to call on him. But Farel knew him through his *Institutes* and visited him and asked him to stay in Geneva to pastor the church there. However, the more Farel shared about the work in Geneva, the more Calvin shrank from the task presented to him. Timid by nature, Calvin declined the offer because he felt he was too young, inexperienced in practical matters, and generally unfit for the work. He insisted that he needed more time to study. He told Farel that this was his final decision and would entertain no further discussion. The elderly Farel then "rose from his chair, and, straightening himself out of his full height as his long beard swept his chest, he directed his piercing look full at the young man before him and thundered: 'May God curse your studies if now in her time of need you refuse to lend your aid to His Church.'" Calvin was stunned by Farel's words of imprecation. He testified, "I was so stricken with terror, that I desisted from the journey which I had undertaken." As Moses could not effectively excuse himself from God's appointment to lead the Israelites out of Egypt, neither could Calvin resist God's call to do the reformation work in Geneva.

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3b. Calvin and Farel tried to make Geneva a model Christian city and therefore instituted many drastic changes. The people, however, were not ready for the strict reforms. So in 1538, both of them were banished from Geneva. Calvin then went to Strassburg and there pastored a church and spent time writing. His stay in Strassburg was going to be a temporary one. God was going to put Calvin back in Geneva after He had prepared the heart of the people in that city to accept a thorough reformation.



St Nicolas Church in Strassburg – Calvin preached here.

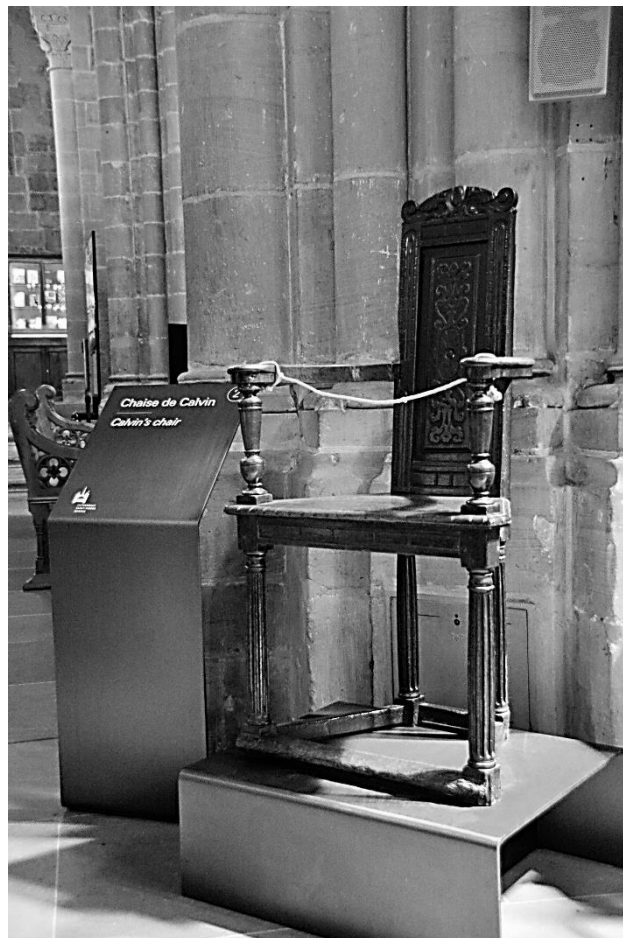


Calvin's Home in Strassburg

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4b. Calvin had no desire to return to Geneva after being so badly treated by the people there. As the saying goes, "Man proposes but God disposes". Calvin might have had plans to stay in Strassburg for the rest of his life but God's will was for him to return to Geneva. True enough, by the direction of God, Calvin returned to Geneva on September 13, 1541. Kuiper rightly observed, "We can similarly see the wonderful providences of God in bringing John Calvin to Geneva. This free and independent city with its democratic institutions was at that time, of all the places in the world, the most admirably fitted to be the scene of the great reformatory labors of Calvin. His entire life up to this time was one long preparation for the task which was now awaiting him in Geneva, and which was to be of world-wide significance."

5b. Calvin's most significant achievement in Geneva was the establishment of the Geneva Academy where men from all over Europe were being trained for the ministry. Many Protestants from various European countries fled to Geneva because of persecution and there, they were schooled in the Academy which equipped them to bring the light of the gospel to every corner of Europe.



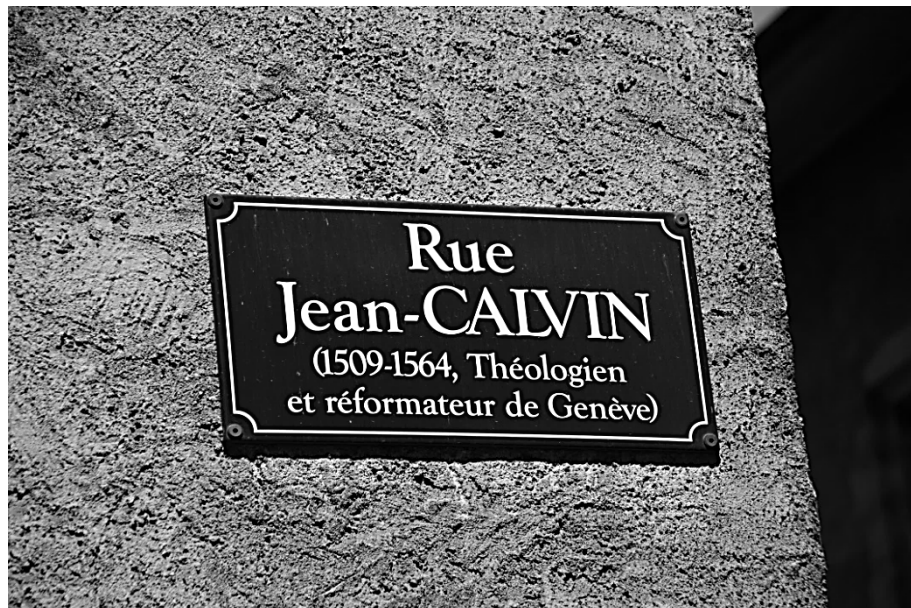
Calvin's Chair

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7a. **God's Grace in Calvin's Life**

1b. It is significant to note that Calvin was a sickly man who suffered many painful diseases. Yet, he was able to accomplish so much for the Reformation and this must be attributed to the God whom Calvin served, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. Without doubt, the Holy Spirit was Calvin's source of power and strength. His deep love for his Saviour was unmistakable. In all his achievements, he gave all the glory to God. In the face of trials and persecutions, he encouraged himself and others with the words of Paul, "*If God is for us, who can be against us?*" (Rom 8:31). Knowing that his heavenly Father is sovereign and watching over him kept him going. To rob God of the glory due to His name was unthinkable to Calvin. Felix Bungener said, "Let us not give him praise which he would not have accepted. God alone creates; a man is great only because God thinks fit to accomplish great things by his instrumentality. Never did any man understand this better than Calvin. It cost him no effort to refer all glory to God. Nothing indicates that he was ever tempted to appropriate to himself the smallest portion of it. Luther, in many a passage, complacently dwells on the thought that a petty monk, as he says, has so well stirred the whole world. Calvin will never say such a thing; he never seems to say it, even the deepest recesses of his heart; everywhere you see the man, who applies all things – to the smallest as to the greatest – the idea *it is God who does all and is all.*"

2b. Calvin's contribution to the Protestant Faith remains till this day. His Institutes of the Christian Religion has since been the mainstay in Reformed theological studies. A theologian is no theologian if he has not read Calvin.



Street named after Calvin in France.

VII. SIXTH STAR: WILLIAM TYNDALE

1a. William Tyndale (1494-1536)



William Tyndale

2a. Tyndale's Birth and Education

1b. He was born a hundred years after Wycliffe died, and came from a farming family.

2b. He was enrolled into the University of Oxford (Magdalen Hall) in 1505. He did not like his schooling, "In the Universities, they have ordained that no man shall look on the Scripture until he be noselled (ie nursed) in heathen learning, eight or nine years, and armed with false principles with which he is clean shut out of the understanding of the Scripture. ... Things were little better when men passed from Arts to Theology, for even in Theology, the true purpose of the Scriptures had been buried out of sight in dismal oblivion."

3b. He lived in a time when the priest did that which was right in his own eyes, and the people were totally ignorant of the Scriptures except for those who could get their hands on Wycliffe's Bible or portions of it. He admired the Lollards for their work of evangelism and Bible distribution.

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4b. According to Sir Marcus Loane, “[T]he struggle of men like the Lollards ... was slowly to take the shape of the form of a resolution to turn the Book of books into the kind of speech which the common people could read and understand. This was the grand motive behind all that he sought to do; it ran through his life and work like a thread of gold. There was little perhaps in the English Reformation so fine as the deliberate forgetfulness of self and the entire consecration of life which he brought to his task for God.”



Magdalen College, University of Oxford

3a. **Tyndale's Preaching Ministry**

1b. However, the Renaissance had brought the study of the original languages in the University. John Colet was Professor of Greek and the Pauline Epistles, and Tyndale probably learned under him. He was so engrossed with the study of Scriptures and even expounded the Scriptures to his classmates. He was well liked by his peers and was good in preaching.

2b. He graduated with a BA in 1512, and an MA in 1515. After which he enrolled into Cambridge. There he was influenced by the teachings of Erasmus and of Luther.

3b. In 1519, Thomas Bilney got saved by reading the Greek New Testament. His enthusiasm of having found Christ could not be contained. He started a fellowship group in Cambridge and they had meetings in the White Horse Inn. Tyndale was one of the early members of this fellowship.

4b. In 1522, he left Cambridge to become a tutor to the children of Sir John Walsh of Gloucestershire.

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- 5b. He would often dine with Sir John Walsh and his guests—Deans, Abbots and Archdeacons—and talk about the views of Luther and Erasmus, and the Scriptures. To these ignorant bigwigs he would teach the Scriptures plainly and defend the views of Luther. They soon got fed up of Tyndale and would no longer attend the dinners of Sir John Walsh.
- 6b. Sir John Walsh and his wife heard Tyndale gladly. Later Tyndale would preach in the villages around and even the Augustinian monastery.
- 7b. The priests and friars in the monastery called Tyndale a heretic and reported him to the Chancellor. Tyndale said about the Chancellor, “He threatened me grievously and reviled me, and rated me as though I had been a dog, and laid to my charge [things] whereof there could be none accuser brought forth.” Tyndale masterfully defended himself and was vindicated. He was freed but he knew that his enemies would return to attack him again.
- 8b. He sought the advice of his Oxford teacher William Latimer who was a friend of Sir Thomas More and Erasmus. The elderly Latimer told Tyndale, “Do you not know that the Pope is very Antichrist, whom the Scripture speaketh of? But beware what you say; for if you shall be perceived to be of that opinion, it will cost you your life.”
- 4a. **Tyndale’s Bible Translation**
- 1b. Tyndale was convinced that all the evils in the Church were a result of people’s ignorance of the Scriptures and of salvation. The only solution was to open the eyes of the people by giving to them the Bible in their own language: “I perceived by experience how that it was impossible to establish the lay people in any truth, except the Scriptures were plainly laid before their eyes in their mother tongue.”
- 2b. Wycliffe had translated the Bible from the Latin, but Tyndale wanted the Bible translated from the Greek. Luther was by that time translating the German Bible based on Erasmus’ Textus Receptus. God was to use Tyndale to translate one for England.
- 3b. Tyndale said, “I defy the Pope and all his laws. If God spare my life, ere many years pass, I will cause a boy that driveth the plough shall know more of the Scriptures than thou dost.”
- 4b. Tyndale went to London but found no help for his translation work there. In 1524, he went to Germany and settled in Wittenberg—the birthplace of the German Reformation. He spent about 10 months there, and completed his English NT.

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Tyndale New Testament

- 5b. In 1526, he went to Worms and there he ordered the printing of 6000 copies of his English New Testament (only 2 copies of this first printing survived till this day).
- 6b. These 6000 copies were smuggled into England by German merchants. The Archbishop of Canterbury did all he could to buy up and burn up all the copies.
- 7b. In 1527, Tyndale started translating the Old Testament from Hebrew. He was by this time denounced by the court as a rebel and a heretic.
- 8b. Although constantly on the run, he was finally caught in Antwerp betrayed by a "friend". While in prison, he wrote a letter to the prison warden: "I entreat your lordship, and that by the Lord Jesus, that I am to remain here during the winter, you will request the Procureur to be kind enough to send me from my goods which he has in his possession, a warmer cap, for I suffer extremely from cold in the head, being afflicted with a perpetual catarrh, which is considerably increased in this cell. A warmer coat also, for that which I have is very thin: also a piece of cloth to patch my leggings. My overcoat is worn out, as also are my shirts. He has a woolen shirt of mine, if he will be kind enough to send it. I have also with him leggings of thicker cloth for putting on above; he also has warmer caps for wearing at night. I wish also his permission to have a lamp in the evening, for it is wearisome to sit alone in the dark,

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“But above all, I entreat and beseech your clemency to be urgent with the Procureur that he may kindly permit me to have my Hebrew Bible, Hebrew Grammar, and Hebrew Dictionary, that I may spend my time with that study.

“And in return, may you obtain your dearest wish, provided always that it be consistent with the salvation of your soul. But if, before the end of the winter, a different decision be reached concerning me, I shall be patient, abiding the will of God to the glory of the grace of my Lord Jesus Christ, whose Spirit, I pray, may ever direct your heart. Amen.”

9b. Tyndale was finally burned at the stake in 1536. As he was burning, he prayed, “Lord, open the King of England’s eyes.”



Tyndale's Martyrdom

5a. **Tyndale and the KJV**

The following is from Dr Jonathan D Moore (PhD, Cambridge), “The Authorised Version: The Influence of William Tyndale’s Translations”:

1b. **Tyndale as Translator**

1c. **Accuracy**

1d. “There can be no doubt about it that the aspect of his translation work that was most important to Tyndale was accuracy. At first this might seem strange to some in the modern church where ease of communication seems to trump accuracy almost every time. How would Tyndale’s ploughboy be adversely affected in any noticeable way by ironing out a few of the complexities of ancient Semitic culture or Greek grammar? **We therefore cannot understand Tyndale aright as a translator until we**

understand him as approaching a single sacred text. Not the partially restored and tentative, fallible texts of the modern academy, but a providentially preserved and infallible sacred text."

2d. "Accuracy of translation was well within Tyndale's reach as he was a naturally gifted linguist and an extremely diligent life-long student. By the time of his death he was fluent in at least eight languages, speaking the modern ones like a native and in the ancient ones being at the forefront of the scholarship of his day. Tyndale was undoubtedly one of the greatest Greek scholars of his generation, if not the greatest. Some believe that Tyndale 'was a greater scholar even than Erasmus'."

2c. **Clarity**

1d. "Tyndale as a translator also sought to achieve clarity. Tyndale wanted the Bible to be read and understood by the ploughboy."

2d. "But Tyndale's mission to bring the Word of God to ordinary people in their mother tongue came second place to accuracy. Indeed, he didn't actually translate the Bible into common speech at all, but rather 'into a register just above common speech'. ... Tyndale was consciously working hard to identify an 'international' kind of English."

3d. "Had Tyndale written in conversational colloquialisms his work would have soon been outdated and would never have attained the degree of timeless clarity that it has, nor, ironically, its global influence and continuing relevance. To appreciate this, one only needs to consider the relative incomprehensibility of Shakespeare's plays compared with the Tyndale Bible."

4d. "Tyndale wanted for the English ploughboy a faithful translation, not a deceptively simple paraphrase based on guesswork. If the ploughboy encountered the words of the Holy Spirit, that same Holy Spirit would continue His great work of illumination. That the ploughboy was not given the illusion of instant comprehension of every verse of Scripture was not a problem for Tyndale, nor for the ploughboy. At the very least it taught the ploughboy to pursue humility even as his knowledge increased."

3c. **Beauty**

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1d. “Tyndale’s Bible is not merely a literal translation, ... The words he chooses, while being faithful to the original, also happen to have great rhetorical effect and stylistic beauty. According to C. S. Lewis—a former fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford, where we are gathered this afternoon—Tyndale was ‘the best prose writer of his age’,³⁷ and David Daniell argues that ‘without Tyndale, no Shakespeare’.”

2d. See for example 2 Samuel 18.33. “The AV here takes up Tyndale almost *verbatim*, but, in my opinion, improves upon his cadences by adding some ‘O’s and emphasising ‘moved’ with an alliteration: ‘And the king was much moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept: and as he went, thus he said, O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!’ Now apart from Absalom’s name and ‘chamber’—everything here is monosyllabic, plain, Saxon English. It’s hard to imagine what could possibly be a stumbling block to the modern reader, even a child.”

3d. “And yet many modern English Bible translators seem unable to keep their fingers off! Listen to what just three attempts have done to expunge the beauty, gravity and pathos of this passage for the alleged benefit of the modern reader: The *New Century Version* reads, ‘Then the king was very upset, and he went to the room over the city gate and cried. As he went, he cried out, ‘My son Absalom, my son Absalom! I wish I had died and not you. Absalom, my son, my son!’ The *Message* styles itself as a ‘fresh’ idiomatic translation, and so we might be forgiven for expecting a powerfully moving rendering at this point, but instead we find David engaging in a rather protracted and emotionally detached musing: ‘O my son Absalom, my dear, dear son Absalom! Why not me rather than you, my death and not yours, O Absalom, my dear, dear son!’ Finally, not to be outdone in this ever variegated pursuit of ‘relevance’, the *New Living Translation* from none other than the Tyndale House Foundation manages to portray David as a spoilt toddler: ‘The King was overcome with emotion. He went up to his room over the gateway and burst into tears...’.”

4d. The modern versions are not an improvement of the good old KJV, but a mutilation and mutation of it.

2b. **Tyndale and the English Bible**

1c. **Percentage of Tyndale in the KJV**

“So what can we say about the influence of Tyndale on our Authorised Version? A recent computerised study has revealed that about 84% of the AV New Testament and about 76% of the Old Testament is verbatim Tyndale.”

2c. **Accuracy**

1d. “So what of the 16 to 24% of the AV that differs from Tyndale? How does the AV compare with Tyndale? In terms of accuracy the AV is marginally more accurate, most of the time. This is partly because by the early 17th century great advances had been made in both the quality and number of Hebrew and Greek scholars available to the Christian church. The AV translators’ knowledge of the original tongues was superior to that of Tyndale and they were therefore often able to make his translation even more accurate, taking advantage of recent advances in philology.

2d. “Another reason for the increased formal accuracy of the AV is the slightly more rigid approach of the translators. Stylistically, the AV is even more literal than Tyndale and ‘tidies up’ Tyndale in places.”

3c. **Clarity**

1d. “In terms of clarity the AV translators were no more concerned to ensure the English Bible was in ‘street language’ than Tyndale was.”

2d. “The AV was intentionally ‘archaic’ from the year it was first published. There never was a time when the AV did not sound ‘dated’ and from another world. But this was primarily because it was following the lead that Tyndale had set as the Father of Biblical English.”

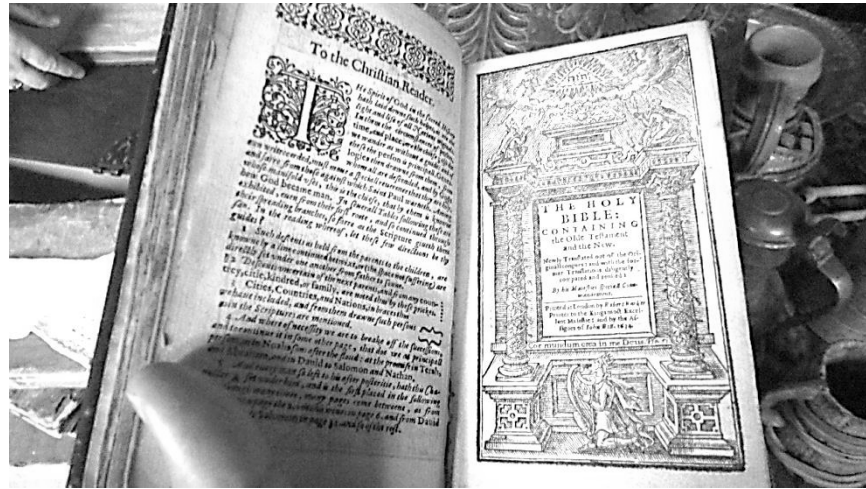
4c. **Beauty**

1d. “In terms of *beauty*, the AV translators not only approved most of Tyndale’s words, but they also followed his rhythmic, literary style.”

2d. “As a result, so many phrases from the AV have taken up a place in wider English literature and modern parlance. Some of the most well-known phrases which reappear in English literature, and which have even attained proverbial status in modern English due to the AV’s influence, go back

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originally to Tyndale. Examples include: ‘be of good cheer’, ‘the last shall be first’, ‘eat, drink and be merry’...”.



1st Edition of the KJV (Puritan Museum of Dr Jeremy Bangs)

3b. Conclusion

“I would like to close now by offering some lines of thought upon our own approach to Scripture in the light of what the marketing departments of many Bible publishing houses would have us believe today. We have seen repeatedly that in Tyndale and in the AV the original language of Holy Scripture is authoritative over against the receptor language—English—and must be allowed to determine the final English form. The English language and English culture were expected to make room for the source language, to have the courtesy to allow the visitor in the room to enrich the encounter by bringing with him some treasures and insights from distant times and lands, not forcing him to leave anything distinctive in the locker in the corridor. Yet in so many modern English translations this relationship has been reversed, and it is contemporary English that dictates what the Bible now may or may not say to us. If the Holy Spirit inspired a sense that doesn’t fit in with modern English today, then He is no longer allowed to say it. If He used an idiom which we don’t like, then He is barred from using it again in our superior company. If His language is too shocking, then He must be taught proper manners at the hands of today’s new communication gurus. So whereas Tyndale coined a new word, enriched the English language and demanded of his readers to make the mental effort required to enter into the layers of meaning in the inspired Scriptures, the modern translations tend to eradicate nuances in favour of instant ease of comprehension. It should not be too hard to see how this can go hand-in-hand with an insufficient reverence for Scripture as the very words of God.”

VIII. SEVENTH STAR: JOHN KNOX

1a John Knox (1505-72)



John Knox

2a. Introduction

The saying “The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church” is very true in the case of the Scottish Reformation. Before John Knox the famous Scottish Reformer came into the scene Scottish soil was already drenched with the blood of Scottish saints who died for their faith in the hands of the RCC. The more the RCC tried to exterminate God’s servants, the more God raised others to replace them. The Reformers prior to Knox braved the fire and the sword. God appointed Knox to establish the Reformation in Scotland on a more permanent scale.

3a. Knox’s Education

John Knox was born in the year 1505 to a middle-class home. His parents were wealthy enough to afford him a good education. At the age of 16, he graduated from the University of Glasgow. He excelled in philosophy and scholastic theology. His proficiency in these two areas was necessary for him to

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defend Reformed theology. God made sure his servant would be trained appropriately and adequately for the task that would be before him.

4a. Knox's Call

Knox initially resisted God's call to enter the ministry. Later, circumstances made him realise he could not escape God's appointment unless he wanted to incur God's displeasure. Miller recounted how Knox struggled within himself whether he should enter the ministry, "The charge of declaring 'the whole counsel of God, keeping nothing back,'... with all the consequences to which the preachers of the Protestant doctrines were then exposed, filled his mind with anxiety and fear. He evidently passed through much conflict of mind on this occasion; for though he possessed great strength of character, being naturally bold, upright, and independent, he was thoroughly honest, conscientious, and modest. But when he felt satisfied that he had the call of God to engage in His work, he resolved to undertake it with all its responsibilities, and say, with the apostle: *"But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the Gospel of the grace of God"* (Acts 20:24).

5a. Knox's Defence of the Faith

1b. One very outstanding feature of Knox was his powerful preaching. Kuiper comments, "The preaching of Knox was powerful. His style was direct, vigorous and plain. Frequently, he employed sparkling wit and cutting satire." It was said of Knox's preaching that "others lop off branches but this man strikes at the root." He was a pulpit-pounding preacher who spoke with an intense zeal and with deep conviction.



Knox the Fiery Preacher

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2b. Knox preached his first sermon in the Parish Church of St Andrews. In his sermon, he spared no effort to prove that the Pope was the Man of Sin, the Antichrist, the Beast spoken of in the book of Revelation. He struck at the root of the corruption in Rome. Many were convinced and converted after they heard him.

3b. The RCC sought to destroy John Knox. The Lord allowed Knox to be taken captive for a while by the French navy under the direction of the Queen Dowager, Mary of Guise. During his captivity, the French spared no effort to force him to denounce the Christian faith and embrace the Catholic faith. Knox mentioned in his *History of the Reformation in Scotland* how on one occasion a “glorious painted lady” – an image of Mary – was presented to him to be kissed. “Trouble me not” said he to the bearer; “such an idol is accursed, and therefore I will not touch it.” “Thou shalt handle it” said several Frenchmen, at the same time thrusting it violently to his face and putting it between his hands. Knox then took the idol and, spying his opportunity, cast it into the river, at the same time crying, “Let her save herself; she is light enough; let her learn to swim.” After this ... no Scotsman was urged with that idolatry.

4b. Of the captivity, Miller wrote, “The Lord had no doubt important lessons to teach His beloved servant and his associates by their rigorous confinement. To escape the persecution ... he was obliged to conceal himself, and to remove from place to place, to provide for his safety.... He was detained nineteen months a galley-slave in French waters. Not one of his associates suffered death!” This surely must be due to God’s providential protection of His servant.

5b. Knox after his release went to England and then to France where he was warmly welcomed by Calvin. The two were contemporaries and were very similar in their doctrinal persuasions. A deep friendship soon developed between the two even though they were quite different from each other in their character. Miller said, “Knox was a rough, unbending, impassioned, impetuous man, but full of humour. Calvin was calm, severe, often irritable, but never impassioned; rising in pure intellect above all his compeers.” Nevertheless, both were knitted in their work towards a common goal – the defence of the Christian Faith through the preaching and teaching of the unadulterated Scriptures to the glory of God. “Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.” (Ps 133:1).

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Statue of John Knox in St Giles Cathedral

6b. Meanwhile, the Lord prepared the hearts of certain nobles in Scotland to receive the gospel. In view of this, Knox returned to Scotland to minister to these people. Knox explained through Scripture the fallacies of the RCC and encouraged them to separate themselves from her. The nobles were thoroughly persuaded by the truth and became Protestants. Among them were Lord Lorne, Lord Erskine, Lord James Stewart, the Earl of Mariscall, the Earl of Glencairn, John Erskine of Dun and William Maitland of Lethington. Miller commented that "These were diligent in attending the sermons of Knox, and helping him in his work. With such a body-guard the Reformer became free and indefatigable in preaching, not only in the capital, but in the provinces." The Lord thus raised these important men from high places because he foresaw that Knox would need all the help he could get in the impending storm ahead. Owing to fresh persecution, Knox had to withdraw to Geneva for the time being.

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7b. Knox's brief visit to his homeland sparked off a rapid progress in the Reformation. People from all classes began to assemble together for worship for the reading of the Word and for prayer. The nobles then drafted the "First Covenant". In this covenant they promised before "the majesty of God and His congregation, to apply their whole power, substance, and their whole lives, to maintain, set forward, and establish the most blessed Word of God and His congregation."

8b. The Roman Catholic priests retaliated by putting many Protestants to death. But martyrdom only increased the number of Protestants. The people were leaving the RCC in droves, and openly uniting with the Reformers. The Queen Dowager, a staunch Roman Catholic, was prevented from executing anything drastic by the nobles.



St Giles Cathedral – Knox's Pulpit in Edinburgh

9b. In this critical period of time, Knox was requested to return to Scotland. Upon his return, he wasted no time in preaching against the idolatry of the mass and the worship of images. As a result, many saw the light and were converted and destroyed their idolatrous statues and images. The Queen Dowager became very angry and vowed to exterminate all the Reformers. She raised an army of considerable size for this purpose. By the providence of God, a massacre was prevented when the Queen Dowager suddenly died. This was a turning point in the Scottish Reformation for it paved the way for the establishment of the

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Reformation without hindrance. Scotland, through the powerful preaching of Knox was ready to cast off the bondage of Rome, and rid its hold over the country.

10b. It was Knox who introduced the Presbyterian system of church government to Scotland which was a rule by Elders or Overseers (plural) instead of the Episcopal system of the Church of England which is a rule by one, the Archbishop of Canterbury.

11b. The providence of God was evident in the Scottish Reformation through John Knox. This can be seen in the divine protection of Knox during his captivity, in the raising of the nobles to assist in the Reformation and in the timely death of the Queen Dowager. The Scottish Reformation reiterates what Daniel had said, *"Blessed be the name of God forever and ever; for wisdom and might are his, and he changeth the times and seasons; he removeth kings, and setteth up kings; he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to those who know understanding"* (Dan 2:20-21).



John Knox House

6a. **Knox's Death**

1b. Knox died in 1572. After fighting long and hard for the Reformation, he said this when his death was imminent, "I am weary of the world and thirst to depart."

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2b. Knox died in 1572 and the gravesite is now a carpark lot (No 23) behind St Giles Cathedral in Edinburgh. His original tombstone was just marked with just a simple inscription – his initials J.K.



Knox's Gravesite

IX. ALL HISTORY IS GOD'S HISTORY

1a. The God of Christianity is the God of history. He is all-knowing, all seeing and all-wise. The Westminster Confession of Faith states, "God, the great Creator of all things, doth uphold, direct, dispose, and govern all creatures, actions, and things, from the greatest even to the least, by his most wise and holy providence, according to his infallible foreknowledge, and the free and immutable counsel of his own will, to the praise of the glory of his wisdom, power, justice, goodness and mercy."

2a. God is sovereign and He is in control. The Protestant Reformation is an excellent example of God's sovereign providence over the affairs of mankind. Nothing happens by chance. God *"worketh all things after the counsel of his own will."* (Eph 1:11).

3a. We have discussed how the Lord raised up the Reformers, namely, Wycliffe, Huss, Luther, Zwingli, Calvin, Tyndale and Knox. The prophet Jeremiah was told by the Lord, *"Before I formed thee in the belly, I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb, I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations."* (Jer 1:5). Surely, the Reformers were prophets in their own right. They were specially chosen by God to bring the world back to biblical Christianity in the midst of dark superstition and crass idolatry in the RCC. In each case, the Lord required only one man, empowered by His Spirit, to go against the might of the RCC with all its pomp, wealth and glory. This should humble us and cause us to view in awe the power of the almighty God.



Reformation Wall in Geneva: (L-R) Farel, Calvin, Beza, Knox

4a. There are many things we can learn from the Protestant Reformation. I would just like to mention one pertinent lesson: the necessity to "earnestly

Seven Stars of the Protestant Reformation

contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.” (Jude 3). The Reformation did not and should not end in the 16th century. The Reformation must remain a movement. It must continue today because we are living in a world that is full of unbelief and where apostasy is rampant in many Christian churches. The good fight of faith must continue until Jesus returns. There was a 20th Century Reformation under Dr Carl McIntire and the International Council of Christian Churches against the World Council of Churches and ecumenism. There is a 21st Century Reformation and it is for the forever infallible and inerrant Word of God, 100% inspired and 100% preserved in the traditional Hebrew Masoretic Text and the Greek Textus Receptus on which our Reformation Bibles especially the KJV and all our Reformed Confessions are based. We need to return to the Reformation, to the old paths, *“Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein.”* (Jer 6:16).

X. HYMNS

1a. A Mighty Fortress Is Our God

A Mighty Fortress Is Our God

46

MARTIN LUTHER, 1483-1546

EIN' FESTE BURG

MARTIN LUTHER, 1483-1546

Trans. by Frederick H. Hedge, 1805-1890

1. A might-y for-tress is our God, A bul-wark nev-er fail-ing;
2. Did we in our own strength con-fide Our striv-ing would be los-ing,
3. And tho this world, with dev-ils filled, Should threaten to un-do us,
4. That word a-bove all earth-ly pow'rs-No thanks to them-a-bid-eth;

Our help-er He a-mid the flood Of mor-tal ills pre-vail-ing.
Were not the right Man on our side, The Man of God's own choos-ing.
We will not fear, for God hath willed His truth to tri-umph thru us.
The Spir-it and the gifts are ours Thru Him who with us sid-eth.

For still our an-cient foe Doth seek to work us woe- His craft and
Dost ask who that may be? Christ Je-sus, it is He- Lord Sab-a-
The prince of dark-ness grim- We trem-ble not for him; His rage we
Let goods and kin-dred go, This mor-tal life al-so; The bod-y

pow'r are great, And, armed with cru-el hate, On earth is not his e-qual.
oth His name, From age to age the same- And He must win the bat-tle.
can en-dure, For lo! his doom is sure- One lit-tle word shall fell him.
they may kill: God's truth a-bid-eth still- His king-dom is for-ev-er.

Seven Stars of the Protestant Reformation

2a. I Greet Thee, Who My Sure Redeemer Art

I Greet Thee, Who My Sure Redeemer Art

John Calvin

TOULON

1. I greet Thee, who my sure Re - deem - er art,
 2. Thou art the King of mer - cy and of grace,
 3. Thou art the life by which a - lone we live
 4. Thou hast the true and per - fect gen - tle - ness,
 5. Our hope is in no oth - er save in Thee;

My on - ly trust and Sav - iour of my heart,
 Reign - ing om - ni - po - tent in ev - ery place;
 And all our sub - stance and our strength re - ceive;
 Thou hast no harsh - ness and no bit - ter - ness;
 Our faith is built up - on Thy prom - ise free;

Who pain didst un - der - go for my poor sake;
 So come, O King, and our whole be - ing sway;
 Com - fort us by Thy faith and by Thy pow'r,
 Make us to taste the sweet grace found in Thee
 Come, give us peace, make us so strong and sure,

I pray Thee from our hearts all cares to take.
 Shine on us with the light of Thy pure day.
 Nor daunt our hearts when comes Thy try - ing hour.
 And ev - er stay in Thy sweet u - ni - ty.
 That we may con - querors be and ills en - dure.

Seven Stars of the Protestant Reformation

3a. The Five Solas

The Five Solas

C. Tan

William B. Bradbury



1. By Grace through Faith a Gift of God,
 2. Christ's gos - pel has the pow'r to save,
 3. Just one High Priest 'tween God and man,
 4. All Scrip - ture's giv'n by in - spi - ra - tion,
 5. All glo - ry to the LORD a - lone,

not by man's work, Sal - va - tion's wrought,
 from Jew to Greek, from king to slave,
 Christ Je - sus ran - somed for all men,
 for doc - trine, re - proof, cor - rec - tion,
 the Ho - ly One sits on the throne,

By Grace a - lone Christ set us free,
 God's right - eous - ness from faith to faith,
 Yea, Christ a - lone, He is the Way,
 For all good works, O man of God,
 O wor - ship Him the LORD thy God,

He gave His life for me, for me.
 The just shall live by faith, by faith.
 O save us now we pray, we pray.
 We have the Word of God, of God.
 All glo - ry be to God, to God!

Seven Stars of the Protestant Reformation

4a. God's Perfect Gift

God's Perfect Gift

J. Khoo

Edited by C. Tan

Traditional American Melody

1. The One and On - ly Per - fect God is Liv - ing and is Truc,
 2. Je - sus, our Per - fect Sav - iour's ful - ly God and ful - ly man,
 3. The Bi - ble is God's Per - fect Book, in - spir - ed and kept pure,
 4. O Trust Him for Sal - va - tion free, of bo - dy and of soul,

God gave His Son, Lord Je - sus Christ, Who died for me and you.
 He died, was bur - ied, rose a - gain, To save the sons of men.
 For - ev - er ev - 'ry word kept pure, Of this we can be sure!
 He'll save you to the ut - ter - most, O Trust in Him my soul!

Who died for me and you, Who died for me and you,
 To save the sons of men, To save the sons of men,
 Of this we can be sure! Of this we can be sure!
 O Trust in Him my soul! O Trust in Him my soul!

God gave His Son, Lord Je - sus Christ, Who died for me and you.
 He died, was bur - ied, rose a - gain, To save the sons of men.
 For - ev - er ev - 'ry word kept pure, Of this we can be sure!
 He'll save you to the ut - ter - most, O Trust in Him my soul!