There Should Be No Beggars
How the Christian Reformations Changed the Very Fabric of Their Times and That of the Modern Christian World

Brother Thad
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Introduction to Part One

“There should be no beggars among Christians.”
~ Andreas Bodenstein von Karlstadt (1522)

No one causative agent underlies the Protestant Reformation. However, a series of enabling threads helps explain the rise of the Reformation and provides the necessary context to understand the Reformation’s earth-changing series of events. Part One of this book will examine those causative threads as it details the Reformation and the extraordinary new religious tapestry woven by its reformers. In addition, Part One of this book will examine those who sought to unravel the new Protestant tapestry as it follows the weft threads of the Counter Reformation.

This book will also present a graphically-based overview of the tattered cloth of this period by examining the changing perception of the poor as seen by the religious community. These observations will be presented in snapshot form as graphical text boxes at appropriate points throughout the discussion.

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“Crown and cloth maken no priest, nor the emperor's bishop with his words, but power that crist giveth; and thus by life been priests known.”

~ John Wycliffe

Late medieval (1300-1500) Christian piety was characterized by its intensity of feeling. A predominant theme in this intensely personal form of medieval piety was the transitory nature of life and the ultimate importance of eternity. The cause? One cause not to be overlooked was the horrific destruction wreaked by the Black Death. The effects of the Black Death were inexorable and manifest. As noted English church historian Henry Donald Maurice Spence-Jones wrote:

“We first hear of it in the Italian ports on the Black Sea. During the year 1347 there were notable atmospheric disturbances, extending over a large area of southern Europe, resulting in extensive failure of the harvest, and consequent distress and famine. In the January of 1348 we hear of a violent earthquake, which wrought immense damage in Italy and on the Mediterranean seaboard. And early in the same year the pestilence made its appearance in Avignon and other cities, and a dreadful mortality was reported, especially in the towns of Italy and France. Enormous numbers are said to have perished on the continent of Europe in the fatal year of 1348.”

Early in the following year, the Black Death made its appearance in England. According to Spence-Jones, half of the population of England and Wales was wiped out in less than a year and the economy lay in shambles:

“Its effect on England is best gauged by a simple quotation of the probable numbers who perished of the deadly visitation. The entire population of England and Wales previously to the mortality of 1349 apparently consisted of from four to five millions half of whom seem to have perished. The general result on the life of the country was most striking. Rents fell to half their value. Thousands of acres of land lay untitled and valueless. Cottages mills and houses were left without tenants. Ordinary commodities increased 50, 100 and even 200 percent in value. Wages everywhere rose to double the previous rate and more.”

Incredibly, the effect of the Black Death on the clergy in England was even worse. In the county of Norfolk alone 527 of 799 priests died. In the West Riding of Yorkshire, 96 priests died out of 141. In the East Riding, 60 out of 95 perished. In all, Spence-Jones estimates that more than two thirds of the clergy of England were killed by the Black Death. Indeed, the Black Death not only killed the majority of English clergy, it also nearly destroyed the church.

2 Landry, Stan M. Late Medieval Reformers, University of Arizona, Online presentation. 18 October 2010. Lecture notes.
3 Belyea, Gordon. Late medieval popular religion: Piety 1270-1500. Wycliff College, University of Toronto. utoronto.ca. Web. 2 November 2010
Jones quoted Dr. Jessop when he wrote:

“It is impossible to estimate the effect of the plague upon the religious houses … The monasteries suffered very greatly indeed from the terrible visitation. A violent disturbance of the old traditions and the utter breakdown in the old observances acted as disastrously upon these institutions as the first stroke of paralysis does upon men who have passed their prime; they never were again what they had been.”

This “utter breakdown” would deeply affect the church for generations to come. The deaths of so many of the experienced clerics required the bishops who survived to promote young and inexperienced — indeed “positively uneducated clerics” — to fill the historic void within the Church of England.

The news on the continent was equally grave. At the general chapter meeting of the Franciscans held in 1351 at Lyons it was reported that the order had lost 13,883 members in Europe. As cited by Spence-Jones, Wadding the Franciscan annalist attributed the “frightful mortality” of the plague to the near destruction of his own European order:

“This evil (the black death) wrought great destruction to the holy houses of religion carrying off the masters of regular discipline and the seniors of experience … Our illustrious members being carried off the rigours of discipline, being relaxed by these calamities, could not be renewed by the youths received without the necessary training rather to fill the empty houses than to restore the lost discipline.”

The news was much the same for members of other religious orders. As chronicled by Henry Knighton an Augustinian canon of Leicester in the early 1390’s and then translated by 19th century editor J. R. Lumby:

“On a single day 1312 people died in Avignon, according to a calculation made in the pope’s presence. On another day more than 400 died. 358 of the Dominicans in Provence died during Lent. At Montpelier only seven friars survived out of 140. At Magdalen seven survived out of 160, which is quite enough. From 140 Mi-

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norites at Marseilles not one remind to carry the news to the rest — and a good job too. Of the Carmelites of Avignon, 66 had died before the citizens realized what was causing the deaths; they thought that the brothers had been killing each other. Not one of the English Augustinians survived in Avignon ...”

Monasteries were ruined. Church orders were decimated. Ecclesiastical discipline was destroyed. In some areas cathedral construction was abruptly halted. In other areas, cathedral construction raced forward as a tangible display of piety despite plague-caused economic depression, labor shortages, and soaring construction costs. So many people died that, in a firsthand account, Agnolo di Tura wrote: “all believed it was the end of the world”.

Having once felt the immanence of God, many people now questioned the very presence of God. In fact, the terrors of the Black Death, followed by deadly earthquakes in Italy in 1348, coupled with the scandals in the Church “intensified in the popular mind the feeling that the end of all things was come”.

The Black Death has been termed the “great watershed” for medieval European history and a defining event for medieval Christianity. Indeed, the horrific results of the Black Death — and the memory of its effects — empowered and tied together many of the late medieval reformers.

One late medieval reformer who was deeply affected was John Wycliffe. As Jackswon Wray wrote in his Quincentenary Tribute of Wycliffe:

“It was while he was at Oxford and engaged in these studies that England was visited with the fearful pestilence known as the Black Death . . . . This fearful visitation as we may well imagine made a profound and painful impression on the mind of Wycliffe and it is very probable that it had much influence in producing that severe and serious cast of character ascetic and self repressing which marked his whole career. There is a tract entitled The Last Age of the Church which is supposed to have been written by him under the solemn influences of that terrible time.”

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12 Landry, Stan M. Late Medieval Reformers, University of Arizona, Online presentation. 18 October 2010. Lecture notes.
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**There should be no beggars ... according to John Wycliffe**

Wycliffe's Triologus (1525) is a treatise in the Scholastic style on various subjects which he believed were being wrongfully taught in the Catholic Church. Wycliffe cast the argument in the form of a classical dialogue between three people called Alithia (Truth), Pseudis (Fraud) and Phronesis (Reason).¹ In Section XX called “On the Begging Friars” Alithia asks Phronesis to make some statement regarding the begging of the friars “for many are of the opinion that Christ so begged”. Phronesis details a multitude of scriptural reasons against begging including the far-reaching conclusion “Christ prohibits such public begging, inasmuch as he who so begs is burthensome to the community”. While Wycliffe (as Phronesis) goes on to specify that begging by able-bodied beggars is what is prohibited, his accompanying conclusion that “beggary is contrary to the laws of nature” is what will be repeated by clerics for centuries to come:

> “Do not the friars receive the grace of God in vain, who are endowed by God with bodily strength, and have the opportunity, and yet will not work—‘to the great burden of the church?’ Again, when Christ prohibits such public begging, inasmuch as he who so begs is burthensome to the community, a course of life which Christ through Paul repeatedly forbids, how can the new orders have the effrontery to proclaim such open mendicancy in the case of able-bodied men, and found a new form of devotion on such an ordinance? Do not Francis, and other idiot traffickers, depart from the faith of the church, and from the Lord Jesus Christ? Furthermore, when paupers, the blind, the sick, and the infirm, ought, according to God’s commandment, to receive such alms, (Luke xiv.) the robust mendicant taking the relief away from them, wrongs this class of men; and what robbery can be more infamous? Such beggary is contrary to the law of nature: what blasphemous necessity, then, could impose it upon our Lord Jesus Christ, especially when it neither became him to beg, nor have the Gospel commandments, wherein is involved all truth, expressed anything of the sort? How dare the friars, then, thus blaspheme the Lord Jesus? For Christ and his disciples, in abstaining from such mendicancy, obeyed the tenth commandment in the decalogue, the law of nature, and the bidding of the Old Testament.”²


Wycliffe was, indeed, severe and serious. He was a fierce critic of the pope's involvement in secular affairs, believed the Roman Church and its hierarchy was a false church, and maintained that the Bible was the only source of divine revelation and authority. Wycliffe battled with the Roman Church over the number and validity of the sacraments, denied the doctrine of transubstantiation, objected to the idolatrous veneration of Mary and the saints and relics, and
rejected monasticism as unscriptural.\textsuperscript{16}

As historian Mike Ibeji noted in a series for the BBC:

“Wycliffe’s teachings were vilified by the Church, and he was tried for heresy in 1377. However, John of Gaunt literally stood by him in court, causing the trial to break up in confusion. Yet Wycliffe’s teachings had struck a dangerous chord amongst the populace. During the chaotic end to the trial of 1377, the London congregation had rioted (albeit in defence of their bishop against Gaunt). Thanks to the new social freedoms released by the Black Death, the Commoners had become more confident in demanding their rights.”\textsuperscript{17}

The followers of Wycliffe’s ideas were known as Lollards. The Lollards — inspired by their new social freedoms — were an elite group\textsuperscript{18} of citizens who helped lead the only truly popular uprising in English medieval history. Among the Lollards was an itinerant preacher named John Ball whose sermons to the men of Kent were truly revolutionary. In one sermon Ball preached:

“Ah, ye good people, the matter goes not well to pass in England, nor shall not do so till everything be common, and that we be all united together and that the lords be no greater masters than we. What have we deserved or why should we be thus kept in serfdom? We be all come from one father and one mother, Adam and Eve. How can they claim to prove that they be lords more than us, save by making us produce and grow the wealth that they do spend?”\textsuperscript{19}

Ball’s preaching helped spark the Peasant’s Revolt of 1381 (also known as Wat Tyler’s Rebellion or the Great Rising). According to Ibeji, the Peasants’ Revolt was the first ever mass uprising of the common man in England. But this revolt was not led by the peasantry. The Peasants’ Revolt was, in fact, a revolt of the “elite” yeoman gentry. This elite group, newly empowered by the labour shortages caused by the Black Death, lived — and many of them then died — in pursuit of the rights and beliefs delineated by the Lollards.\textsuperscript{20/21}

The Peasant Uprising of 1381 failed but similar groups that were dedicated to the reform of the church began to spring up on the continent. In the Low Countries, one group desperate for reform was The Brethren of the Common Life. The Brethren was a predominately lay Christian group inspired by a Dutch preacher named Gerhard Groote.\textsuperscript{22}

In 1350, at the tender age of 10, Groote lost his father and mother to the Black Death leaving Groote a wealthy orphan under the care of his uncle.\textsuperscript{23/24} In 1373, when Groote became seriously ill himself, he experienced a dramatic conversion experience. He resigned his prebends, gave his worldly goods to the Carthusians of Arnheim, and lived in solitude for seven years. In 1380, Groote began to preach publicly proclaiming the beauty of Divine love and decrying the

\textsuperscript{16} Landry, Stan M. Late Medieval Reformers, University of Arizona, Online presentation. 18 October 2010. Lecture notes.
\textsuperscript{17} Ibeji, Mike. Black Death: Political and Social Changes. BBC British History in-depth. bbc.co.uk. Web. 3 November 2010.
\textsuperscript{18} Landry, Stan M. Late Medieval Reformers, University of Arizona, Online presentation. 18 October 2010. Lecture notes.
\textsuperscript{19} Ibeji, Mike. Black Death: Political and Social Changes. BBC British History in-depth. bbc.co.uk. Web. 3 November 2010.
\textsuperscript{21} Ibeji, Mike. Black Death: Political and Social Changes. BBC British History in-depth. bbc.co.uk. Web. 3 November 2010.
\textsuperscript{22} Landry, Stan M. Late Medieval Reformers, University of Arizona, Online presentation. 18 October 2010. Lecture notes.
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degradation of the clergy. As Ernest Gilliat-Smith wrote in the 1901 Catholic Encyclopedia:
“The effect of his sermons was marvellous; thousands hung on his lips. “The towns”, says Moll, “were filled with devotees; you might know them by their silence, their ecstasies during Mass, their mean attire, their eyes, flaming or full of sweetness.” A little band of these attached themselves to Groote and became his fellow-workers, thus becoming the first “Brethren of the Common Life”. The reformer, of course, was opposed by the clerks whose evil lives he denounced, but the cry of heresy was raised in vain against one who was no less zealous for purity of faith than for purity of morals. The best of the secular clergy enrolled themselves in his brotherhood, which in due course was approved by the Holy See. Groote, however, did not live long enough to perfect the work he had begun. He died in 1384 …”

Groote died of the Black Death — contracted while ministering to the sick — at age 44.

The Brethren of the Common Life continued in the example of Groote. The Brethren were a unique group because, while they lived and worshipped in common like a monastic order, they steadfastly remained lay people and took no vows. The Brethren were at the forefront of the Devotia Moderna, a novel form of Christian piety that stressed a mystical oneness with God and the cultivation of personal virtue and piety. One of the most famous members of the Brethren was the German-Dutch mystic Thomas à Kempis.

When Thomas à Kempis (born 1379 or 1380) took his monastic vows at the age of twenty-six, he had lived in the shadow of the bubonic plague all of his life. It is that shadow that may have influenced his most famous work, The Imitation of Christ completed around 1418. In The Imitation of Christ Kempis suggested that his readers contemplate the life of Christ and his teachings as an example for their own personal lives. It was a kind of instruction book on how to achieve the cultivation of personal virtue and piety that the Brethren encouraged. One way was to understand that man was ordained to live in misery and that such events as the Black Death were to be endured in honor of God. In the chapter on “Thoughts on the Misery of Man”, Kempis wrote:

“Wherever you are, wherever you turn, you are miserable,
Save when you turn to God.
Why are you so disturbed
When things succeed not with you as you dearly wish?
Who is there that has all things to suit his will?
Not I, not you,
Not any man on earth.
There is no one in the world
Without some tribulation or distress

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King though he be or Pope
Who is it that is best off?
Surely he who can bear something for God.”

Kempis and The Brethren saw life as taking up the cross of Jesus and pestilence was simply a part of that burden. As Kempis wrote in *The Imitation of Christ* in the chapter entitled “The Royal Road of the Cross”:

“Nothing is dearer unto God, nothing to you more wholesome in this life than willing suffering for Christ. And if you had to make a choice you should choose rather adversity for Christ than the refreshment that many consolations bring. For you would be liker Christ and liker unto all the Saints. Our merit and our progress in our life lie not in many sweetmesses and consolations but rather in suffering great troubles and afflictions.”

In addition to lay spiritual groups like the Brethren of the Common Life, there were many unlicensed preachers who took up the cross of Jesus throughout Europe. These preachers fervently preached against wealth and authority and for Christian equality. As such, their messages were wildly popular among the common people and the poor. One such preacher was Matthew of Janov (d. 1394). Janov opposed the cult of saints and the veneration of relics and preached that Christians should be devoted to God and Jesus only. Janov was critical of the Western Schism and decried the divisions caused by the Avignon Papacy. When Janov rose up to preach at the Bethlehem Chapel in Prague, his religious road had already been metaphorically paved by the bones of the dead from the Black Death. Religious historian Enrico S. Molnar detailed this process of preparation in a thesis he wrote for the Pacific School of Theology in 1947. This passage is a little long, but it explains the Bohemian situation in an exceptionally perceptive and unique way. Molnar wrote:
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“A rigid caste system, perpetuating itself by a ruthless exploitation of the common people, was entrenched on the whole continent of Europe, upheld by secular powers and sanctioned urbi et orbi by the Church. The iron hand of authority and the cramped hand of plague were the two clutches which held Europe in a deadly embrace. However, by a strange twist of fortune, Bohemia was spared – for a while at least – of all these ... plagues. It was soon recognized that the rich seemed to be unaffected by the diseases; for they did not live in the over-populated cities and unhygienic suburbs of the poverty-stricken plebeians. At any rate, under the rule of the Luxembourg Emperor Charles IV (regnavit 1346-1378 as Karel I), Bohemia reached its peak of economic wealth and prosperity, and the King-Emperor inaugurated a new policy of tearing down old overcrowded city slums and building completely new districts, particularly in Prague, with wide streets, vineyards, and spacious palaces. Perhaps this sanitary urban reconstruction was one of the reasons why the plague stayed away so long from Bohemia (it appeared there only during the Thirty Years’ War). Of course, the contemporaries did not explain it that way. They found their answer rather in supernatural phenomena. It became a common belief that Bohemia was under a special protection of God and St. Wenceslas, with the result that all the rich nobles of the entire continent, desirous of enjoying the cultural life in the Emperor’s capital and to escape at the same time the sword of Damocles continuously hanging over their plague-infested towns, flocked in droves to Bohemia. All this glory, prestige, and material wealth gave rise to many kinds of abuses and to a general moral decadence. The Church was thoroughly enmeshed in this demoralization. The Bohemian Church of that day possessed, for instance, not only extensive rights, but also one half of the entire area of the country. It was precisely at this moment of crisis that Bohemia heard the prophetic voices of protest, hurled from the pulpits and housetops byby Konrad Waldhauser (+1369), John Stěkna (+1369), Matthew of Janov (+1394), Milič of Kroměříž (+1374), and particularly John Hus (+1414).”

Janov preached stridently against this moral decadence but did not preach directly against Catholic dogma (other than the worship of pictures and images). However, it is apparent from his sermons that he was praying for a truly radical reform of the very essence of the Catholic church. As quoted in the History of the Moravian Church published in 1909, Janov preached:

“I consider it essential to root out all weeds, to restore the word of God on earth, to bring back the Church of Christ to its original, healthy, condensed condition, and to keep only such regulations as date from the time of the Apostles. All the works of men their ceremonies and traditions, shall soon be totally destroyed; the Lord Jesus shall alone be exalted, and His Word shall stand for ever.”

Like Janov, John Hus (c. 1369-1415) preached against the decadence and degradation that came to Bohemia as rich and poor refugees fled plague-infested areas. Hus lectured against si-

mony, indulgences and clerical corruption. Again like Janov, Hus urged a return to an “original” Christianity, a return to the Christianity of the original apostles marked by humility, poverty and suffering. Here’s how Hus put it as he wrote from imprisonment in Constance on heresy charges on Saint Fabin’s eve (January 19), 1415:

“To the People of Bohemia,
May the grace and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you, so that, being delivered from sin, you may walk in grace, increase in modesty and virtue, and enjoy, after this life, life eternal! My well-beloved, I conjure you all who live according to God’s law, disdain not to occupy yourselves with the salvation of souls: be careful, when listening to the word of God, that you are not deceived by false apostles, who do not condemn sins, but who excuse them: they flatter the priests: they do not shew to the people their transgressions: they glorify themselves, extol their works and exalt their own virtue; but they deign not to imitate Jesus Christ in his humility, in his poverty, in his cross, in his sufferings.

…”

Yes, men should suffer but the length and depth of that suffering — along with any hope of eternal life — was only in the hands God, not the Church. God, alone decided, and it was for that reason that Hus condemned the practice of indulgences. As Martin Luther would write in his preface to a book containing the letters of John Hus written during Hus’ exile and imprisonment:

“It was to oppose such impieties, calculated as they were to disgust even a brute animal, that John Huss, preacher of the Word of God at the chapel of Bethlehem at Prague, put himself forward. He denied that any such power was given to the Roman pontiff, who, he boldly declared, might be mistaken in that as well as many other things. Having then taken the great liberty of inculcating that the pope can err (a heresy then considered far more frightful than to deny Jesus Christ), he was constrained by violence to confirm what he had maintained in saying, that an impious pope was not a pious one. All then were in wild commotion, like so many wild boars, and they gnashed their teeth, knit their brows, bristled up their coat, and, at last, rushing precipitately on him, delivered him cruelly and wickedly to the flames.”

At the Council of Constance, Hus was tried, condemned and burned at the stake for heresy (July 6, 1415). Hus’ religiously-inspired courage before and during his execution caused even a future Pope to remark that Hus went to his death as a man “invited to a banquet.”

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Not content with killing Hus, the Council of Constance also executed Hus’ friend Jerome of Prague and ordered that John Wycliffe’s writings were to be burned and his body was to be dug up and cast out of consecrated ground (which was done under Bishop Robert Fleming of Lincoln in 1428). The Council of Constance also “settled” the Western Schism by uniting the papacy under Martin V. He was only a subdeacon, and so was successively made deacon, priest, bishop and then pope. His coronation took place 21 November, 1417 and he closed the council on 22 April, 1418. Martin V then immediately declined invitations to Avignon and returned to Italy (but only very slowly to Rome) thereby “restoring to the See of Peter its ancient rights and prestige in Christendom”.38

While Martin embarked on rebuilding projects,39 he failed to address the list of abuses of the Church that had been assembled at the end of the Council of Constance. Among these evils listed by the Church itself as needing immediate reform by the new pope were benefices, dispensations, tithes, and indulgences.40 This battle cry for reform was also unheard by a series of Martin’s successors including: Nicholas V, a great patron of Renaissance artists who was accused of neglecting his duties for his grand building projects; Alexander VI, the corrupt “Borgia pope”; Julius II, the warrior-pope who indulged his papacy with magnificent palaces and hired such artists as Bramante, Raphael, and Michelangelo;41 and Leo X, the pope who wasn’t even a priest who declared “God has given us the papacy, let us enjoy it”.42

The excesses of Alexander VI are legendary and, perhaps not surprisingly, Alexander’s actions gave rise to the excesses of an Italian reformer named Girolamo Savonarola. In August, 1490, Savonarola began his sermons in the pulpit of San Marco in Florence with a radical interpretation of the Apocalypse. All Florence thronged to hear him and his influence grew over the people. Savonarola began with a strict reform of the monastery of San Marco itself. San Marco and other monasteries of Tuscany were separated from the Lombard Congregation of the Dominican Order and were formed in 1493 with papal approval into an independent congregation. Monastic life was reformed by rigid observance of the original Rule. Savonarola, who was the vicar-general of the new congregation, set the example of a strict life of self-mortification; his cell was cramped, his clothing coarse, his food crude and minimal. But his preaching was exceptional and he was considered by his followers to be a prophet.43

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In short order, Savonaralo helped establish a theocratic form of government in Florence with Christ considered to be the king of the city. Savonarola’s exhortations against material goods and ostentatious displays of wealth gave rise to the now-infamous “Bonfire of the Vanities”. This was not just one bonfire — nor was Savonarola the first to popularize the idea (note the bonfires created earlier by Bernardine of Siena and Hans Böhm of Niklashausen) — but the size and scope of Savonarola’s bonfires still burn across history.

Here’s how a follower of Savonarola named Burlamacchi described the ritual of the Bonfire of the Vanities according to English historian Herbert Lucas:

“(W)hen we read the description of them, given in all simplicity by his devoted follower Burlamacchi, it is difficult to repress a smile. We read of a solemn procession in which there walked more than five thousand boys, many of them “in the form of beautiful angels,” others carrying alms-boxes, followed by the religious of the different Orders, the secular clergy, and then the laity, men, women, and girls, all in their order. “So great was the fervour of that day that not children and women alone, but also men of station and position . . . laying aside all human respect, robed themselves in white garments like the children, and danced and sang before the ‘Tabernacle’ (i.e. the image of our Saviour, which was carried in the procession) like David before the ark . . . crying out loud with the children ‘Viva Gesu Cristo, Re nostro!’” In this order-the procession, after visiting S. Giovanni and the Duomo, returned at last to S. Marco, whence it had set forth. There all the Friars came forth from the convent, vested in albis, “each one wearing a garland on his head, and they formed in a great circle round the entire Piazza, dancing and singing Psalms.”

The dancing continued until Savonarola was excommunicated by the pope and burned at the stake for heresy in 1497. But, before he could be executed, a group of leading citizens who supported Savonarola wrote to the Pope:

“Most Holy Father, we are deeply afflicted to have incurred the ban of the Church, not only because of the respect always entertained by our Republic for the Holy Keys, but because we see that a most innocent man has been wrongfully and maliciously accused to your Holiness. We deem this Prior to be a good and pious man, and thoroughly versed in the Christian faith. He has laboured many years for the welfare of our people, and no fault has ever been detected either in his life or his doctrine. Wherefore we fervently implore your Holiness, in your paternal and divine charity, to use your own judgment in this matter, and remove the weight of your ban not only from Father Girolamo Savonarola, but from all those who may have incurred it. Your Holiness could do no greater kindness to the Republic, especially in this time of pestilence, in which bans are of grave peril to
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men’s souls.”

The pestilence these leading citizens of Florence reported was an outbreak of the Black Death. In his explanatory notes on his 2008 edition of Savonarola’s *The Truth Made Manifest in the Triumph of the Cross*, historian James E. Dainty described the situation during this time:

“The grinding poverty of many led to famine and made the city a breeding ground for the plague. The hospitals were often full. Peasants sometimes sank down exhausted by the roadside, or died in the street. At one point, there were fifty to sixty deaths each day and a general panic set in so that the wealthy citizens fled to their country houses.”

Dainty went on to say that one of the key charges that led to Savonarola being burned at the stake by the Church was that, because of the ravages of the plague, “he impoverished the city by refusing to ever turn away a beggar.”

**Conclusion: Late Medieval Reformers**

Wycliffe. Groot. Kempis. Janov. Hus. Savonarola. While the Black Death isn’t the cause of their reforms, the preternatural threads of piety and pestilence weave these reformers together. These religious leaders set the stage for the reform to come. But, it would take a new thread — a thread entwined with gold and shoeaces — to tie the steps of these new reformers to their earth-changing paths to come.

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Imagine if your neighborhood or your town were overrun by beggars. That’s frightening enough, but now imagine you’ve heard stories that those beggars are part of a nefarious network — a secret network of religious fanatics planning a revolt. You might even be in favor of their goals, but you are deeply frightened that a revolt planned by fanatical beggars could very possibly result in your death and the destruction for your community.

That was the situation in parts of Germany in the half-century prior to 1517 according to historian Thomas Martin Lindsay. The story begins with the recently mentioned Hans Böhm. According to Lindsay:

“During the last years of this memorable Burgundian war a strange movement arose in the very centre of Germany .... A young man, Hans Böhm (Bbheim, Bohaim), belonging to the very lowest class of society, below the peasant, who wandered from one country festival or church ale to another, and played on the small drum or on the dudelsack (rude bagpipes), ... was suddenly awakened to a sense of spiritual things by the discourse of a wandering Franciscan. ... (Böhm) had visions of the Blessed Virgin, who appeared to him in the guise of a lady dressed in white, called him to be a preacher, and promised him further revelations, which he received from time to time. His home was the village of Helmstadt in the Tauber valley; and the most sacred spot he knew was a chapel dedicated to the Virgin at the small village of Niklashausen on the Tauber. The chapel had been granted an indulgence, and was the scene of small pilgrimages. Hans Bohm appeared suddenly on the Sunday in Mid-Lent (March 24th, 1476), solemnly burnt his rude drum and bagpipes before the crowd of people, and declared that he had hitherto ministered to the sins and vanities of the villagers, but that henceforth he was going to be a preacher of grace . ... He related his visions, and the people believed him. It was a period when an epidemic of pilgrimage was sweeping over Europe, and the pilgrims spread the news of the prophet far and wide. Crowds came to hear him from the neighbouring valleys. His fame spread to more distant parts, and chroniclers declare that on some days

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he preached to audiences of from twenty to thirty thousand persons.”

Twenty to thirty thousand people (or even one-half that amount assuming historical exaggeration) is a life-changing number of people to bring to a small village in a single day. But come they did and Böhm told them that — there in the humble Tauber River Valley in Germany — they stood on the holiest spot on earth. Holier than the cathedral in Würzburg. Holier than the Vatican in Rome. According to Böhm, that’s what the Blessed Virgin had personally told him and honoring her was what true religion was all about. For good measure, Böhm also denounced priests as “worse than Jews”, the Emperor as a miscreant, and all princes, overlords and taxgatherers as vile oppressors of the poor. In a move that would presage the people-led transfer of religious power from the central authority of Rome to local authority in Germany, Böhm would then bless his followers. According to Lindsay:

“When his sermon was finished the crowd of devotees knelt round the “holy youth,” and he, blessing them, pardoned their sins in God’s name. Then the crowd surged round him, tearing at his clothes to get some scrap of cloth to take home and worship as a relic; and the Niklashausen chapel became rich with the offerings of the thousands of pilgrims.”

The end of Hans Böhm came as no surprise. The Bishop of Würzburg, hearing tales of an armed revolt being planned by Böhm, had Böhm captured, tried as a heretic and burned at the stake. Witnesses reported that, as he burned, Böhm sang a folk-hymn in praise of the Blessed Virgin.

The rise and fall of Hans Böhm, less than a peasant but for many more than a pope, was far from trivial. As Lindsay concluded (emphasis mine):

“The memory of Hans Bohm lived among the common people, peasants and artisans; for the lower classes of Würzburg and the neighbouring towns had been followers of the movement. A religious social movement, purely German, had come into being, and was not destined to die soon. The effects of Hans Böhm’s teaching appear in almost all subsequent peasant and artisan revolts. Even Sebastian Brand takes the Niklashausen pilgrims as his type of those enthusiasts who are not contented with the revelations of the Old and New Testaments, but must seek a special prophet of their own:

“Man weis doch aus der Schrift so viel,
Aus altem und aus neuem Bunde,
Es braucht nicht wieder neuer Kunde.
Dennoch wallfahrten sie zur Klausen
Des Sackpfeifers von Nicklashausen.”
(In Scripture one can still draw so much from the Old and the New Testament,
Scripture doesn’t need to re-stock for new customers.
Nevertheless they make pilgrimages to the hermitage of
The bagpiper from Nicklaushausen.)

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3 Lindsay, Thomas Martin. A history of the reformation. New York: C. Scribner’s Sons. 1906. pp. 102 (English translation by author)
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It wasn’t long before the peasant revolts came: At Kempten in 1491-1492. In Elsass in 1493. In Kempten again in 1501. In Untergrombach and along the Neckar and down the Rhine in 1502. The Germans had a proverb that said a German peasant was so poor that he had to tie his shoes with string. This tied shoe (Bundschuh) and the Bundschuh banner became the emblem of these revolts (though the title and imagery were appropriated from previous 15th century rebellions).

One leader of the loose-knit Bundschuh League was Joss Fritz, a former soldier (landsknecht). Fritz won over to his side a veritable army of beggars, strolling musicians, and vagrants. This army of beggars secretly carried his messages, summoned his confederates to hidden places in the woods, and acted as foot soldiers in a rebellion led “under the guidance of the Holy Spirit”. As they descended upon towns and villages throughout the area, this army of beggars prepared, were then wiped out by the authorities, and then prepared again all with religious fervor.4

While these Bundschuh rebellions were stamped out almost as soon as each flared up, the Bundschuh fervor for reform continued. According to Lindsay, between the years 1503 and 1517 this religiously-based social revolution was “permanently established in the southern districts of the Empire from Elsass in the west to Carinthia and the Steiermarck in the east”.

These frequent rebellions — and others like them — scared princes, landlords, and magistrates all over Europe5 and these “mad men with strange folly” certainly frightened the Church itself. Prominent reformers within the clergy, such as Dean Colet in his famous Convocation sermon of 1509, called for reform:6

“In these times also we experience much opposition from the laity, but they are not so opposed to us as we are to ourselves. Nor does their opposition do us so much hurt as the opposition of our own wicked lives, which are opposed to God and to Christ; for He said, “He that is not with me is against me.” We are troubled in these days too also by heretics — men mad with strange folly — but this heresy of theirs is not so pestilential and pernicious to us and the people as the vicious and depraved lives of the clergy .... Wherefore do you fathers, you priests

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and all of you of the clergy, awake at length, and rise up from this your sleep in this forgetful world: and being awake, at length listen to Paul calling unto you, “Be ye not conformed to this world. But be ye reformed in the newness of your minds.”

The call for reform came from all sides and the idea of reformation burned within the minds of countless people throughout Germany and beyond, but it was through the thoughts of a single monk that the Protestant Reformation found its champion.

Martin Luther (1483-1546) had already earned degrees in law at the University of Erfurt when in 1505 he was caught in a storm and apparently struck by lightning. To fulfill a pledge he made in extremis to St. Ann, Luther joined the Augustinian order in Erfurt where he lived a strict, hermetic life. When Luther traveled to Rome in 1510 as an ordained priest, he was extremely distressed by the trade in relics and indulgences and the impious worldliness of the Roman church. Luther returned to Germany where he lectured on the Bible. From Romans 1:17, Luther found insight into his theory of Justification by Faith:

“For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, “The just shall live by faith.”

But Luther believed that one did not choose to have faith. In fact, he was convinced that man did not really choose anything at all. According to Luther, man had no free will and his salvation was predestined by God — a situation Luther found particularly comforting. Luther termed this “Sola Fide” (Only Faith) and in Luther’s construct humans were sinful and not free to reform their lives by their own will. Only God decided who was to be saved and, therefore, no individual efforts of piety — and no Church-led works of piety — could change that.

At the same time, Luther believed that humans had to do good works to keep the flesh walking “in the spirit”. According to Luther: “Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh.” However, as Luther wrote in his commentary on Galatians, walking in the spirit was vital but it did nothing to get you into heaven. Man could not be justified by works (following God’s law to love our neighbor as ourselves) because there was not a single man on earth who could truly follow God’s law as required:

“Verse 16. But I say, walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the works of the

8 Landry, Stan M. The Reformation in Germany, University of Arizona, Online presentation. 18 October 2010. Lecture notes.
9 Landry, Stan M. The Reformation in Germany, University of Arizona, Online presentation. 18 October 2010. Lecture notes.
11 Romans 1:17 NKJV
12 Landry, Stan M. The Reformation in Germany, University of Arizona, Online presentation. 18 October 2010. Lecture notes.
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flesh. ... Although Paul speaketh here expressly and plainly enough, yet hath he little prevailed; for the schoolmen, not understanding this place of Paul, “Love is the fulfilling of the law,” have gathered out of it after this manner: If love be the fulfilling of the law, it followeth then that love is righteousness; therefore, if we love, we be righteous. These profound clerks do argue from the word to the work, from doctrine or precepts, to life, after this sort: The law hath commanded love, therefore, the work of love followeth out of hand. But this is a foolish consequence, to draw an argument from precepts, and to ground the conclusion upon works. True it is that we ought to fulfil the law, and to be justified through the fulfilling thereof; but sin hindereth us. Indeed, the law prescribeth and commandeth that we should love God with all our heart, &c., and that we should love our neighbour as ourselves: but it followeth not, this is written, therefore, it is done: the law commandeth love, therefore, we love. There is not one man to be found upon the whole earth, which so loveth God and his neighbour as the law requireth.”

While examining Galatians 16 and 17, Luther also took the opportunity to comment on the issue of “celibacy” of the clergy. His remarks give a dramatic insight into how personal the theological arguments had become:

“The Papists dreamed that this commandment belongeth only to their clergymen, and that the apostle exhorted them to live chastely, by subduing the flesh with watching, fasting, labour, &c., and then they should not fulfil the concupiscence of the flesh, that is to say, carnal lust. ... If (Saint) Jerome felt in himself such flames of fleshly lust, who lived in the barren wilderness with bread and water, what do our holy belly-gods, the clergymen, feel, think ye, who so stuff and stretch themselves with all kinds of dainty fare, that it is marvel their bellies burst not?”

Those holy belly-gods had other issues that Luther sought to reform as well. Later writers have generally broken his concerns into three ideas: Sola Fide, Sola Scriptura and the Priesthood of All Believers. Having already briefly touched on Sola Fide, let’s examine Luther’s doctrine of Sola Scriptura.

Sola Scriptura referred to Luther’s idea that the Scriptures were the sole authority for Christians. Other sources — like Apostolic tradition, the works of the church fathers, and the decrees of Church councils — had no value if these sources were not based on scripture. This belief made it imperative that individual Christians be allowed to read the Scriptures in a language they could understand so, while in hiding at Wartburg Castle, Luther translated the New Testament from Greek and Latin into German. By 1534 he would complete the translation of the Old Testament as well. For Luther, the Bible was a living book where individual Christians could hold a two-way conversation with God. As Lindsay wrote:

15. Landry, Stan M. The Reformation in Germany, University of Arizona, Online presentation. 18 October 2010. Lecture notes.
16. Landry, Stan M. The Reformation in Germany, University of Arizona, Online presentation. 18 October 2010. Lecture notes.
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“All the Reformers of the sixteenth century, whether Luther, Zwingli, or Calvin, believed that in the Scriptures God spoke to them in the same way as He had done in earlier days to His prophets and Apostles. They believed that if the common people had the Scriptures in a language which they could understand, they could hear God speaking to them directly, and could go to Him for comfort, warning, or instruction; and their description of what they meant by the Holy Scriptures is simply another way of saying that all believers can have access to the very presence of God. The Scriptures were therefore for them a personal rather than a dogmatic revelation. They record the experience of a fellowship with God enjoyed by His saints in past ages, which may still be shared in by the faithful. In Bible history as the Reformers conceived it, we hear two voices—the voice of God speaking love to man, and the voice of the renewed man answering in faith to God. This communion is no dead thing belonging to a bygone past; it may be shared here and now.”

Lindsay also cited the Catholic response to the idea of Sola Scriptura as argued by Henri-Dominique Lacordaire (who notably re-established the Dominican Order in France in 1850). Examining Sola Scriptura, Reverend Father Lacordaire protested (as translated by Lindsay):

“What kind of a religion is that which saves men by aid of a book? God has given the book, but He has not guaranteed your private interpretation of it. What guarantee have you that your thoughts do not shove aside God’s ideas? The heathen carves himself a god out of wood or marble; the Protestant carves his out of the Bible. If there be a true religion on earth, it must be of the most serene and unmistakable authority.”

According to Lacordaire, that unmistakable authority was the Catholic Church who — unlike the Protestant Church — provided a unified belief by declaring firm boundaries:

“Au contraire, la liberté protestante est une liberté sans rivages, ennemie de toute unité. Le protestant n’a pas un seul dogme pour centre, un seul dogme pour point d’arrêt ; son unité c’est lui : c’est-à-dire quelque chose d’essentiellement variable, un nuage, un flot. L’individualité même ne lui donne pas l’unité ; il est seul sans pouvoir être un; Dieu est un sans pouvoir être seul, et l’Église aussi.”

(On the contrary, Protestant liberty is liberty without a shore, the enemy of everything united. The Protestant does not have a singular dogma at its center, one singular dogma as a stopping point; its unity is itself. It’s to say that it is an essentially variable thing, a cloud, a tide. One’s own individuality does not give oneself unity; one is alone without the power of being one; God is without power if He is alone, the Church as well.)

Of course, Luther strongly believed that the Protestant Church did, indeed, have a center. That center was the treasure of the Holy Gospel. As he wrote in The 95 Theses which he famous-

17 Lindsay, Thomas Martin. A history of the reformation. New York: C. Scribner’s Sons. 1906. p. 453
18 Lindsay, Thomas Martin. A history of the reformation. New York: C. Scribner’s Sons. 1906. p. 457
20 English translation by author.
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ly posted on the door of the Wittenberg church on the eve of All Saints in 1517:

“62. The true treasure of the Church is the Holy Gospel of the glory and grace of God.
63. This treasure, however, is deservedly most hateful, because it makes the first to be last.
64. While the treasure of indulgences is deservedly most acceptable, because it makes the last to be first.
65. Hence the treasures of the Gospel are nets, wherewith of old they fished for the men of riches.
66. The treasures of indulgences are nets, wherewith they now fish for the riches of men.”

Luther published his 95 Theses as a call for academic debate on the subject of indulgences. As a university professor, Luther was justified in calling for this debate but more than a bit naive about the possible response to his actions. Church fundraising by selling indulgences — pious donations made by Christians against the hope of mercy in the afterlife — was already big business in northern Germany.

In 1514 Albrecht of Brandenburg was required by the Pope to pay a considerable fee to be elevated to the Archbishopric of Mainz. Albrecht borrowed the money from the Fuggers of Augsburg, Germany, Germany’s principal banking firm. Albrecht agreed to pay 50 percent of the monies raised from the preaching of indulgences to pay off his considerable debt. The rest of the money (or at least most of it) was to be sent to the Vatican in Rome.

The Fuggers were not to be trifled with. They not only controlled the economic destiny of Albrecht, this now “noble” family also held the notes of popes and emperors. As Belfort Bax wrote:

“(In) 1504, Jacob and his brothers had been ennobled by the Emperor Maximilian, Jacob himself being made Imperial Councillor. Leo X. further constituted him Count Palatine and Eques Aureatus. In 1509, Jacob advanced Maximilian as much as 170,000 ducats as a subsidy towards the cost of the Italian War. Subsequently, on the election of Charles V. to the Imperial dignity, he contributed 300,000 ducats to the expenses involved. On one occasion, when he entertained Charles V. as a guest in his palace on the Weinmarkt in Augsburg, he burnt the overdue “acceptances” of the Emperor on a large fire of cinnamon, at that time one of the most costly spices.”
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Many German merchants and nobles were not pleased with this arrangement, and not just for religious reasons. These merchants and nobles also strongly opposed so much money being physically sent out of Germany. Europe was experiencing an economic crisis at this time, specifically a crisis in coinage. According to historian Skip Knox, Europe in 1500 had a rather limited stock of bullion: 3500 tons of gold and 37,500 tons of silver. From 1500 to 1650 there was about a 5% increase in the gold stock and a 50% increase in silver (mostly from the New World, new silver mines in Europe, and from the gold trade with Africa). Despite the influx of bullion, prices rose even faster and there was a shortage of coins. In many local areas there would literally not be enough coinage to transact large-scale business. A fleet might arrive and find willing buyers, yet no one would be able to obtain enough gold or silver coinage to make the purchase. More than once, trade fairs had to be cancelled because of a shortage of coins. Merchants were at great risk from the coinage shortage as the situation could catch a merchant flat-footed and bankrupt him. In response to this danger, the Fuggers — and other merchant families — kept boxes of coins as a private reserve bank in their family homes.

Jacob Streider, in his history of the Fugger banking dynasty, noted the extreme danger of sending mass amounts of coinage out of the German economy:

"From the economic point of view, the following strong evidence could be levied against the indulgence, even when it was used in accordance with the purpose of the Church, without any abuse. As a result of the large share of the See in the proceeds of the indulgences (33 1/3 to 50 percent), it was looked upon as bringing about a very dangerous export of gold from Germany. This amounted to a bleeding of German economic life, all the more undesirable as other states, including Spain, France, and even England, had strictly protected themselves against such a loss."

It is not difficult to imagine the disgust of many coin-constrained German merchants and nobles when the Dominican friar Johannes Tetzel marketed his very successful sale of indulgences by singing the tune:

"As the coin into the coffer rings, the soul from purgatory springs!"

Or the disgust of Luther when he warned of the danger of sending gold to the Pope at the expense of the poor in Theses 86:

"86. Again; why does not the Pope, whose riches are at this day more ample than those..."
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of the wealthiest of the wealthy, build the one Basilica of St. Peter with his own money, rather than with that of poor believers?"

Or the even greater disgust of Luther when in 1520 he warned the nobility of the danger of giving the Pope gold in exchange for “lead” in his “Open Letter to the Christian Nobility of the German Nation”:

“Nay, the pope leads you away from the gifts of God, which you have without pay, to his gifts, which you must buy; and he gives you lead for gold, hide for meat, the string for the purse, wax for honey, words for goods, the letter for the spirit. You see this before your very eyes, but you are unwilling to notice it. If you are to ride to heaven on his wax and parchment, your chariot will soon go to pieces, and you will fall into hell, not in God’s name!”

In his open letter Luther was responding directly to the transfer of wealth to Rome and metaphorically to the papal bull issued by Pope Leo X in 1520 entitled “Exsurge Domine” (Rise up Lord!). This bull condemned Luther for heresy and instructed him to recant. Luther refused and was excommunicated in 1521. In the same year, Charles V ordered Luther to the Diet of Worms to testify about his heretical views. He was interrogated by Johannes Eck, a Catholic theologian, but refused to recant his attacks on the abuses of the church. From Worms, Luther fled. Charles V outlawed Luther’s writings and called for his arrest. Luther was intercepted by Friedrich the Wise, a Saxon prince, and spirited away to Friedrich’s Wartburg Castle for Luther’s own protection. Friedrich was one of a number of German princes who supported Luther and one of many who were angry that so much money was leaving Germany and going to Rome.

Luther’s “Open Letter to the Christian Nobility of the German Nation” (along with his essays “The Babylonian captivity of the church” and “A treatise on Christian liberty”, all written in 1520) articulated a doctrine of The Priesthood of All Believers and made it a popular Protestant motto.

The Priesthood of All Believers suggests that every Christian has the right to direct access to God — without the intercession of clergy. Thus, every Christian was a sort of priest and had no need to confess one’s sins or ask for forgiveness from anyone other than God. This — along with Luther’s concept of the invisible versus the visible church — redefined the very idea of “Church” from an ecclesiastical hierarchy to a community of all believers.

Following his belief in the Priesthood of All Believers, Luther rejected some sacraments almost immediately because, if everyone were a priest, any Christian could perform the rites of the faith. Ordination was out by 1521 (there should be no priests), Extreme Unction was quickly rejected as lacking any foundation in Scripture. Penance was thrown out for the same reason. Confirmation was kept as a rite, not a sacrament. And marriage, while admittedly a part of Christian life, was declared not sacramental.

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That left baptism and communion. Luther regarded the Mass as an abomination. He stripped out most of the ritual, made both bread and wine available to all believers, and developed a belief in consubstantiation in 1524 that held, according to historian Skip Knox: “the bread remained bread, the wine remained wine, and the body and blood of Christ were present.”

Luther made almost no changes to baptism but denied any notion of re-baptism. In fact, Luther wrote strenuously against the Anabaptists in his book on the sacraments calling their position “wholly presumptuous.” Also presumptuous to Luther was the idea of (most) saints. According to Luther, saints were not saints by their own will but saints solely because God made them that way.

Conclusion: The Reformation in Germany

At the dawn of the Reformation in Germany, a visionary street musician inspired tens of thousands of Germans with the belief that their land was the holiest spot on earth. Hans Böhm may have created his story out of whole cloth, but his martyrdom led an army of beggars to weave the peasantry together with simple shoelaces. The Bundschuh League religiously refused to give up the fight and, through their tenacity, they frightened princes, landlords, and magistrates all over Europe for generations. German princes and merchants — on edge after over 50 years of conflict — saw the fabric of their society tearing apart as they witnessed their hard-fought gold and silver springing into Roman coffers. Germans of every description knew that Germany needed a champion but few expected that champion to appear in the humble robes of Martin Luther. The Reformation had begun, but — as its message spread over the continent — the threads of this coming period would be frequently soaked in blood and consumed by flame.

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There should be no beggars ... according to Martin Luther

According to Luther, begging by the able-bodied was harmful and costly and needed to be stamped out. In an address to the Christian nobility Luther declared: "This unrestricted universal begging is harmful to the common people. I have figured out that each of the five or six mendicant orders visits the same place more than six or seven times every year. In addition to these there are the usual beggars, the ‘ambassador’ beggars, and the panhandlers. This adds to sixty times a year a town is laid under tribute! This is over and above what the secular authorities demand in the way of taxes and assessments."1

Historian Carter Lindberg reported that a solution created to solve this problem — endorsed by Luther himself in recently discovered notes — was a “community chest” for the poor administered by the town council at Wittenberg. As described under the Wittenberg Order and later extended in The Beutelordnung, begging was to be absolutely prohibited and the poor were to be categorized by need.2 According to historian Thomas Safley, the consequences of this ranking of the poor were deadly: "(A)uthorities sought to discriminate according to the morality of a poor person’s behavior. Assistance became tied to standards of comportment in Catholic and Protestant communities alike. The poor were required to submit obediently to local political authority, to conform piously to local religious practice, and to labor industriously in their own support. The immoral poor — the rebellious, the impious, and the indolent — were excluded from poor relief or subjected to social discipline. Catholic apologists claimed that, by requiring authenticity, residency, and legitimacy, Protestant restrictions drastically reduced the numbers of deserving poor."3

Historian Madeleine Gray asserted that these prohibitions also took away one of the primary sources of income for the poor: praying. Gray contended: "The prayers of the poor were considered to be particularly effective. All kinds of poor relief, from almshouses and hospitals to the distribution of food and clothes at funerals, were based on the assumption that the poor would pray for the souls of the dead and that their prayers would be answered. … Many of the reformers had hoped that, once the offerings of the devout were not being diverted to unnecessary monks and nuns … the money would become available to help the poor. Unfortunately, in most cases, this did not happen. Much of the casual provision of help for the poor also dried up, since the poor could no longer be paid for their prayers. In Zwickau, for example, donations to the Reiche Almosen, the voluntary fund for poor relief, declined considerably after the advent of Lutheranism."4

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There should be no Jews¹ ... the anti-semitism of Martin Luther

No discussion of Martin Luther would be complete — especially an academic religious discussion one generation after the Holocaust — without a somber mention of Luther’s virulent anti-semitism and its disastrous effects on the Jews of the world.² Here’s how the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada officially described the situation at their Fifth Biannual Convention in 1995:

“To the Jewish Community in Canada
A Statement by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada

The treatment which Christian believers have accorded Jews on many occasions over the centuries is a tragedy and a cause for shame. Very few Christian communities have escaped the contagion of anti-Judaism and its modern successor, anti-Semitism. Lutherans belonging to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada carry a special burden in this matter because of the anti-Semitic statements made by Martin Luther and because of the suffering inflicted on Jews during the Holocaust in countries and places where the Lutheran Church is strongly represented.

The Lutheran communion of faith is linked by name and heritage to the memory of Martin Luther, teacher and reformer. … Luther proclaimed a gospel for people as they really are, as we ourselves are, bidding us to trust a grace sufficient to reach our deepest shame and address the most tragic truths of our time.

In that spirit of truth-telling, we who bear his name and heritage must acknowledge with pain the anti-Judaic diatribes contained in Luther’s later writings. We reject this violent invective as did many of his companions in the sixteenth century, and we are moved to deep and abiding sorrow at its tragic effects on later generations of Jews.”³

The truth-telling continued at this Lutheran convention when Rabbi David Levy, the national chair of the Canadian Jewish Conference Committee on Religious and Inter-religious Affairs, rose to address the crowd. Rabbi Levy’s response was applauded by the group and later published in the official publication of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, “The Canadian Lutheran”. Rabbi Levy declared in part:

“From an early age, all 15th and 16th century Christians were indoctrinated with Jew hatred. Everybody hated the Jews; there simply was no option. Nor were there any exceptions. There were no other intellectual options. … Everybody hated the Jews. Let us stop describing Luther as a disenchanted idealist and instead discuss the consequences of hatred.

My second point is inspired by reference to the Holocaust in the ELCIC document.

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I would suggest, as have others, that the Holocaust is the most important Christian occurrence since the Reformation.

Franklin Littell has said: “The murder of six million Jews by baptized Christians, from whom membership in good standing was not (and has not yet been) withdrawn, raises the most insistent question about the credibility of Christianity.” …

If the Holocaust is that important a Christian occurrence, and if, as there appears to be, there is a unique connection between the writings of Martin Luther and the writings of Adolf Hitler, and, as others have argued, between the policies suggested in Luther’s later writings and the policies adopted by the Third Reich, and in light of the fact that in 1933 the Nazis reprinted Luther’s diatribe, On The Jews and Their Lies, then perhaps the Lutheran community bears a special obligation to see that the Holocaust appears on the Christian agenda.”

“On the Jews and Their Lies” is a pamphlet written by Luther and published in 1542. Its statements are so heinous that the Missouri Synod of the American Lutheran Church felt obligated to officially and publicly distance itself from ALL of Luther’s personal writings. In 1983 the Synod declared:

“It is widely but falsely assumed that Luther’s personal writings and opinions have some official status among us (thus, sometimes implying the responsibility of contemporary Lutheranism for those statements, if not complicity in them).”

What did “On the Jews and Their Lies” state? Heinrich Graetz in “The History of the Jews” published in 1894 detailed some of the charges:

“It is incomprehensible that Luther, who had taken the part of the Jews so strongly in the heat of the Reformation, could repeat all the false tales about the poisoning of the springs, the murder of Christian children, and the use of human blood. He also maintained, in agreement with Eck, from whom in other respects he was so widely divided, that the Jews were too prosperous in Germany, and in consequence had become insolent. “What is to be done with this wicked, accursed race, which can no longer be tolerated?” asked Luther, and he gave an answer to the question which shows equal want of charity and wisdom.

First of all the reformer of Wittenberg recommended that the synagogues be reduced to ashes, “to the honor of God and of Christianity.” Next, Christians were to destroy the houses of the Jews, and drive them all under one roof, or into a stable like gypsies. All prayer-books and copies of the Talmud and the Old Testament were to be taken from them by force (as Luther’s opponents, the Dominicans, had advised), and even praying and the use of God’s name were to be forbidden under penalty of death. Their rabbis were to be forbidden to teach. The authorities were to prohibit the Jews from traveling, and to bar the roads against them, so that they must stay at home. Luther advised that their money be taken from them, and that this confiscated wealth be employed to establish a fund to maintain those Jews who

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should embrace Christianity. The authorities were to compel able-bodied Jews and Jewesses to forced labor, and to keep them strictly employed with the flail, the axe, the spade, the distaff and spindle, so that they might earn their bread in the sweat of their brow, and not live in idleness, feasting, and splendor. Christians were not to show any tender mercy to Jews. ...

Graetz concluded this section by citing a speech made by Luther just three days before Luther’s death from an apoplectic stroke on February 18th, 1546:

Shortly before his death he exhorted his hearers in a sermon to drive out the Jews: “Besides all this you still hare the Jews, who do great evil in the land. If they could kill us all, they would gladly do so, aye, and often do it, especially those who profess to be physicians—they know all that is known about medicine in Germany; they can give poison to a man of which he will die in an hour, or in ten or twenty years; they thoroughly understand this art. I say to you lastly, as a countryman, if the Jews refuse to be converted, we ought not to suffer them, or bear with them any longer."

In the conclusion of their statement regarding Luther and his anti-semitism, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada noted that 1995 marked the fiftieth anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau and other Nazi death camps. They also noted that 1995 marked the fiftieth anniversary of the execution of Dietrich Bonhoeffer who courageously opposed the Nazi regime. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada then pledged:

“In adopting this statement we honour the memory of those people who have been victims of a racist regime. Grieving the complicity of our own tradition within this history of hatred, we affirm our fervent wish to live our faith in Jesus Christ in love and full respect for the Jewish people. Anti-Semitism is an affront to the Gospel, a contradiction of its central teaching, and a violation of our hope and calling. We pledge this church to oppose the deadly working of such bigotry in our own circles and in the society around us.”

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“Ich denk was ich will, und was mich begluecket,
Doch alles in der Still, und wie es sich schicket.
Mein Wunsch und Begehren kann niemand verwehren,
es bleibet dabei: Die Gedanken sind frei.”

“(I think as I please, And this gives me pleasure,
My conscience decrees, This right I must treasure.
My thoughts will not cater to duke or dictator,
No man can deny: My thoughts are free!”

~ From “My Thoughts Are Free” (“Die Gedanken Sind Frei”) an old German folk song traditionally believed to have been written during the Peasants’ War of 1524–1526.

Thanks to the writings of Martin Luther, the thoughts of many peasants and their sympathizers in Germany were indeed set free. Luther’s comments on the Priesthood of All Believers led many German Christians to believe that they were under no one’s authority save God himself. Freedom was at hand and in the hands of many of these peasants were the actual printed words of Luther — printed words which spread with the speed and power of “an unquenchable flame.”

Just as the internet revolution has transformed our time, the advent of the printing press changed everything for the promoters of the Reformation. While the printing press had been around for over 50 years, Martin Luther was the world’s first best-selling pamphleteer. According to historian Louise Holborn, “one-third of a million copies of (Luther’s) works were spread throughout Germany between 1517 and 1520.” According to Holborn, Luther’s pamphlets were cheap, easy to carry, easy to hide, and easily reprinted by competing printers hoping to cash in on Luther’s popularity. A revolution in religious communication had been born.

In addition to Luther’s pamphlets, an extraordinary industry of “graphic” pamphleteers grew up following the decisions made at the Diet of Worms. As Bax wrote:

“The Reichstag of Worms, by cutting off all possibility of reconciliation, rather gave further edge to the popular revolutionary side of the movement than otherwise. The whole progress of the change in public feeling is plainly traceable in the mass of ephemeral literature that has come down to us from this period, broadsides, pamphlets, satires, folksongs, and the rest. The anonymous literature to which we more especially refer is distinguished by its coarse brutality and humour, even in the writings of the Reformers, which were themselves in no case

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remarkable for the suavity of their polemic.”

According to Bax, the theme of these pamphlets matched the attacks launched by Luther, namely “The rapacity of the clergy in general, the idleness and lasciviousness of the monks, the pomp and luxury of the prince-prelates, the inconsistencies of Church traditions and practices with Scripture ....” The pamphlets were written in German and most of them prominently featured a woodcut on the front illustrating the attack or attacks being made. This potent combination of graphic pamphlets along with Luther’s own pamphlets allowed literate, semi-literate, AND illiterate Germans to join in the attacks. This breakthrough use of mass media soon resulted in mass rebellion and mass death.

The Peasants’ War (1524-1526) was a revolt of approximately 300,000 German peasants, farmers, merchants, and townspeople. According to Bax, the stage was set by the previous Bundschuh rebellions:

“(T)he peasant revolts ... had for the half-century preceding the Reformation been growing in frequency and importance, but it needed nevertheless the sudden impulse, the powerful jar given by a Luther in 1517 ... to crystallise the mass of fluid discontent and social unrest in its various forms and give it definite direction.”

One definite direction for the rebels was provided by George Metzler, an innkeeper from the town of Balenberg. Metzler’s wine-room had hosted many secretive meetings of insurgents from around the region and Metzler was recognized by the group as a zealous organizer and agitator. On April 2nd, 1525, Metzler resurrected the imagery of the Bundschuh to raise a “beast (that) never dieth”. Bax described the fateful moment:

“As soon as the Swabians had begun to move, Metzler bound a peasant’s shoe (the Bundschuh) to a pole and carried it about the country, preceded by a man beating a drum. In a short time he had 2000 men around his “shoe”. ... In front of it was carried the “ Twelve Articles,” which all were required to swear to and to sign. Princes, bishops and nobles had the alternative offered them of loss of property or life, or of entrance into the Evangelical Brotherhood. The two Counts of Hohenlohe, the most considerable feudal potentates of the neighbourhood, received the challenge in question in the name of the “United Contingent”. On their scornfully replying that they were ignorant to what order of animal the “United Contingent” might belong, Hipler is reported to have given the following rejoinder:

“It is an animal that usually feedeth on roots and wild herbs, but which when driven by hunger sometimes consumeth priests, bishops and fat citizens. It is very old, but very strange it is that the older it becometh, by so much doth it wax in strength, even as with wine. The beast doth ail at times, but it never dieth. At times, too, it forsaketh the land of its birth for foreign parts, but early or late it

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returneth home again."

The Counts of Hohenlohe got the message. They met the delegates of the “United Contingent” — now numbering over 8,000 enraged members — in the open air of the Schupfer Valley. They were compelled to swear to the Twelve Articles and were admitted, still living, into the Evangelical Brotherhood.9

Bax points to the Twelve Articles as the expression of “undoubtedly the ideas and aspirations of the average man throughout Germany who took part in the movement.”10 As such, it is vitally important to look at the actual articles themselves. A careful examination will demonstrate that the articles drafted by these Swabian Peasants were not simply as Friedrich Engels declared “A Christian excuse for the disobedience or even revolt of the entire peasantry.”11 Instead, The Twelve Articles of the Swabian Peasants were a call for reforms that were noteworthy for their moderation.12

**The Twelve Articles of the Swabian Peasants**

(summarized and edited by author)

1. The pastor should be elected/deposed locally.
   “... power and authority for the whole community to choose and elect its own pastor, and also to have the power to depose him should he conduct himself improperly. The same elected pastor shall preach the holy Gospel to us purely and clearly, without any human additions to doctrines and commandments.”

2. The tithe should benefit the local community, especially the poor.
   “We wish this tithe in future to be collected and received by our churchwarden, elected by the community. From it he will give the pastor who is elected by the entire community his adequate and sufficient sustenance for himself and his dependants, according to the judgment of the whole community. The remainder shall be distributed to the needy poor present in the same village …”

3. Serfs should be released from serfdom.
   “We have no doubt that, as true and genuine Christians, you will gladly release us from serfdom, or else show us from the Gospel that we are serfs.”

4. The poor should be allowed to hunt and fish on now-prohibited lands.
   “It has hitherto been the custom that no poor man has been empowered or permitted to catch game, wildfowl, or fish in flowing water, which we consider quite improper and unbrotherly, indeed selfish and contrary to the Word of God. In some places the lords keep game in defiance of our wishes and to our great detriment, for we must suffer the dumb animals wantonly and unnecessarily to devour our crops …”

5. The poor should be allowed to cut wood on now-prohibited lands.
   “We are also aggrieved about woodcutting.”

6. The peasants should be released from overwork.
   “The sixth concerns our grievous burden of labor services, which are increased

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from day to day in amount and variety."

7 The peasants will willingly serve a lord, but only for a proper wage.

“Seventh, in future we will not allow a lord to oppress us further. … But if the lord requires services, the peasant should willingly serve his lord before others, but at a time and day which is not to the disadvantage of the peasant, and for a proper wage.

8 Peasants should pay fair rents.

“Eighth, we are aggrieved, especially the many of us who have farms, that these cannot bear the rents, whereby the peasants lose their property and are ruined. The lords should have honorable men inspect these properties and fix a fair rent, so that the peasant does not work for nothing, for every laborer is worthy of his hire.”

9 Laws should provide fair punishment of peasants.

“Ninth, we are aggrieved about cases of felony, where new laws are constantly being passed, for punishments are not imposed according to the facts of the case, but sometimes out of ill-will, sometimes out of partiality.”

10 Community meadows should be returned to the community where possible.

“Tenth, we are aggrieved that some have appropriated meadows or arable that once belonged to the community. We wish to restore these to common ownership, unless they have been properly purchased […]”

11 Widows and orphans should not be robbed of their property.

“Eleventh, we wish to have the custom called heriot [a tribute or service rendered to a feudal lord on the death of a tenant] totally abolished, for we shall never tolerate or permit widows and orphans to be shamefully deprived and robbed of their property, contrary to God and to honor….”

12 All of this should be done according to Scripture.

“Twelfth, it is our conclusion and final opinion that if one or more of the articles presented here be not in accordance with the Word of God (which we would doubt), and such articles be demonstrated to us to be incompatible with the Word of God, then we will abandon them, when it is explained to us on the basis of Scripture. … Similarly, if further articles are found in Scripture to be in truth contrary to God and a burden to our neighbor, we shall reserve the right to have them included. We will exercise and apply Christian doctrine in all its aspects. for which we shall pray to the Lord God, who alone (and no one else) can give it to us. The peace of Christ be with us all.”

As reasonable as these demands were, the demands made by peasant leader and itinerant preacher Thomas Müntzer were not. However, Müntzer’s early career gives little indication

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of the carnage to come. Müntzer earned an MA degree and completed Bacculareus Biblicus studies at Leipzig and Frankfurt. He was ordained in 1513, was appointed as a priest in 1514, served as a provost between 1516 and 1517, and defended the need for reforms against Franciscans at Jüterbog in 1519. The first Catholic polemic to use the word “Lutheran” listed Müntzer as a member. In 1520 — with the support of Luther — he received the preachership at Zwickau. It was at Zwickau that things began to change.

Müntzer’s ardent preaching and his popularity among the struggling weavers resulted in an outbreak of iconoclasm and a splintering of the community. Müntzer was dismissed from Zwickau in April 1521. He became a pastor at the small town of Alstätt in 1523 where he married a former nun and there in 1523 he completed the first fully German liturgy. He began experiencing prophetic visions of the coming apocalypse and preached his Sermon to the Princes interpreting Daniel 2:44 and declaring the kingdom of God that would soon take over all earthly kingdoms. The local nobility became enraged and Müntzer fled for his life from Alstätt. In February 1525 Müntzer returned to Mühlhausen and helped establish a temporary Christian theocracy there. On the 15th of May 1525 Müntzer led a group of 8,000 peasants in the Battle of Frankenhausen assuming God and the heavenly host would join his side. God failed to appear and the peasants were annihilated. Müntzer was captured, tortured and then beheaded. 

Luther, himself, was also the target of the peasants’ anger. As he traveled from Eisleben to Wittenberg during this period, Luther was met with jeers and derision. When he preached, the Müntzerites would drown out his voice by ringing bells. They would also yell at him and throw copies of The Twelve Articles at his head. In response, Luther’s rage “broke all bounds”. He waited a few days to confirm that the cause of the peasants was hopeless and then he took the side of the authorities by publishing his pamphlet entitled “Against the Murderous and Thievish Bands of Peasants”. As Bax described:

“He (Luther) lets himself loose on the side of the oppressors with a bestial ferocity. “Crush them [the peasants],” he writes, “strangle them and pierce them, in secret places and in sight of men, he who can, even as one would strike dead a mad dog.”

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According to Bax, the authorities were emboldened by Luther and were strengthened by reenforcements ordered by the Council of the Swabian league. The combined forces crushed the peasants in battle after battle frequently roasting the captured leaders alive. By the end of the various battles of the Peasants’ War over 100,000 peasants had been killed.

At this point in the Reformation, the situation was dramatically unstable and many questions remained: Who was in charge of the reform movement, the peasants or Luther? Was Luther responsible for the rebellion? How would the authorities respond to the Lutherans? How would the Catholic Church respond? The rise of the Reformation in Switzerland and the emergence of the Anabaptists would further cloud the issue.

Huldrych Zwingli (1484-1531) was the author of the Swiss Reformation and the “father of Reformed Protestantism.” Zwingli, following in the vein of Dutch humanist Desiderius Erasmus of Rotterdam, began to preach against clerical corruption and call for reform of the Church. In 1519 Zwingli was invited to Zürich to preach at Grossmünster, one of the three major churches in Zürich at the time and a church, by tradition, that was founded by Charlemagne. While there, he began reading Luther and convinced the city magistrates to ban indulgences. Regarding the other pressing religious issues of the day, Zwingli affirmed the primacy of Scripture, argued for clerical marriage, and called for the removal of idols and icons from churches.

But this was no simple call for external reform. As stated by the Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia:

“The clearest evidence of Zwingli’s deepened insight and commitment is a letter written in late July 1520 to Oswald Myconius, then serving as a teacher in hyper-Catholic Lucerne. Zwingli gathers together all the New Testament references to suffering as the fate of Jesus’ disciples. He contemplates seriously the possibility of Luther’s being put to death and his own banishment, yet there is no turning back and no opportunistic search for halfway measures. “Born in blood, the church can be restored in no other way but by blood.” Though he did

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not yet draw from this insight all the logically possible consequences, Zwingli’s view of the church as a persecuted little flock in a hostile world was new and explosive.\(^\text{22}\)

In 1523 Zwingli published the Sixty-Seven Articles to openly detail his explosive beliefs. Here, in edited form, are some of his conclusions:

"I. All who say that the Gospel is invalid without the confirmation of the Church err and slander God. …

V. Therefore all who consider other teachings equal to or higher than the Gospel err, and do not know what the Gospel is.

ABOUT THE POPE.

XVII. That Christ is the only eternal high priest, from which it follows that those who have called themselves high priests have opposed the honor and power of Christ, yes, cast it out.

ABOUT THE MASS.

XVIII. That Christ, having sacrificed himself once, is to eternity a certain and valid sacrifice for the sins of all faithful, from which it follows that the mass is not a sacrifice, but is a remembrance of the sacrifice and assurance of the salvation which Christ has given us.

XIX. That Christ is the only mediator between God and us.

ABOUT THE INTERCESSION OF THE SAINTS.

XX. That God desires to give us all things in his name, whence it follows that outside of this life we need no mediator except himself.

XXI. That when we pray for each other on earth, we do so in such manner that we believe that all things are given to us through Christ alone.

ABOUT GOOD WORKS.

XXII. That Christ is our justice, from which follows that our works in so far as they are good, so far they are of Christ, but in so far as they are ours, they are neither right nor good.

CONCERNING CLERICAL PROPERTY.

XXIII. That Christ scorns the property and pomp of this world, whence it follows that those who attract wealth to themselves in his name slander him terribly when they make him a pretext for their avarice and willfulness.

ABOUT THE MARRIAGE OF ECCLESIASTS.

XXVIII. That all which God has allowed or not forbidden is righteous, hence marriage is permitted to all human beings.

ABOUT REMITTANCE OF SIN.

LV. Whoever pretends to remit to a penitent being any sin would not be a vicar of God or St. Peter, but of the devil.

ABOUT THE PRIESTHOOD.

LXI. About the form of consecration which the priests have received recent times.

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the Scriptures know nothing.
LXII. Furthermore, they [the Scriptures] recognize no priests except those who proclaim the word of God.23

In summary, Zwingli affirmed the primacy of Scripture, called for the removal of the Pope, declared that the eucharist was only a commemoration and not actually the body and blood of Christ, that humans had no need of intercessory prayers or mediators (and, therefore, they had no need for priests), that good works had nothing to do with getting into heaven, that the current Church was pompous and corrupt, that clergy had the right to marry, that indulgences were frauds perpetrated by the devil, and that all other priests who believed otherwise were not priests at all.

By 1525, Zwingli was able to establish a pro-Reformation majority in the council. To complete this task, Zwingli eliminated the last Catholic reaction within the city in October of 1526 by executing the elderly leader Jakob Grebel (the father of Conrad Grebel referenced below) on the very questionable charge of having received illegal stipends from foreign rulers.24 Zwingli now headed what was literally a Protestant theocracy.25 In this capacity he made plans to destroy the Swiss Confederacy and set up a new union dominated by Zürich and Bern, as well as an anti-Hapsburg alliance stretching from Venice to Denmark, led by Zürich and including France.26

However, Zwingli’s plans were not to be. As detailed by the Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia:

“In 1529 Zürich was ready for a war to reshape the Confederacy, and in fact seized most of northeastern Switzerland from the Abbot of St. Gall, but the First War of Cappel ended in a truce without a battle. The second phase of the war found Zürich disunited and ill-prepared when it broke out in 1531. Zwingli accompanied the city’s troops to the battlefield of Cappel, where his life, the battle, the war, and all hope of extending the Reformation to more of Switzerland were lost.”27

Zwingli and over 500 of his followers perished during the battle. Zwingli’s body was drawn and quartered and then the pieces of his body were burned and the ashes were desecrated.28

Despite the loss of the Second War of Cappel and the death of Zwingli, the Protestant Reformation continued in Switzerland, especially in Zürich. However, well before Zwingli’s bloody demise, dissentent voices had been calling for a change in direction of the movement. One of the primary dissidents was Conrad Grebel. Grebel and his followers strongly disapproved of the merging of state and religious functions arguing that the Bible had been subordinated to

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the city magistrates. In addition, Grebel argued for adult baptism and performed the first adult baptism in Reformation times on the night of January 21st, 1525. Zwingli decried the actions of these Anabaptists (“re-baptizers”) and declared they “do everything for the sake of contention” and that “their activity is nothing but heresy, that is sectarianism and partisanship”. The city leaders expelled Grebel from Zürich and then Grebel and his followers established Zollikon, the first Anabaptist settlement.29/30

Like many new movements, members of the Anabaptist movement shared a diversity of beliefs. Some of the beliefs held in common, however, were adult baptism (the adult must then stop sinning), revelation as an important source of authority (in opposition to Sola Scriptura), a committed preference for separation of church and state (Christians should not take public office or deal in politics), pacifism, multiple degrees of church discipline including open punishment before the entire church (referred to as “The Ban”), and community selection of spiritual leaders based on their piety. Because of their beliefs, the Anabaptists were decried by Protestants and Catholics alike. In fact, the Anabaptists were also reviled by many of their own members after the Münster Rebellion of 1534-1535.31/32/33

In the Münster Rebellion, Jan of Leiden tried to turn society upside down in expectation of the coming apocalypse. Jan was a follower of Melchior Hoffman. Hoffman was a traveling fur trader and preacher who was prophesying the end of the world from his prison cell in Strassburg. Meanwhile, in the Low Countries, some of Hoffman’s disciples (including Jan) announced that divine revelation had unmistakably declared that Münster was the New Jerusalem so hundreds of fervent Dutch Anabaptists gave up their homes and traveled to greet the end of the world in Westphalia. Through sheer force of numbers, the Anabaptists took over the city. Throughout 1534 and 1535 any citizen in Münster who refused baptism was threatened with expulsion or execution. Jan of Leiden, now the self-declared King of Münster, even executed one of his own sixteen (some say twenty-two) wives because she had become impertinent. As historian Patrick Collinson described:

“At last, with the assistance of Phillip of Hesse, the city was taken. King Jan and

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other leaders were tortured with red-hot tongs and executed, and their bodies were hung in cages suspended from the church tower, where their bones remained well into the age of Enlightenment. The cages are still there.34

Unlike the Münsterites, some Anabaptists did their best to avoid violence. For example, unlearned hatmaker Jakob Hutter and his “Hutterites” established themselves in Tyrol by creating communal settlements. Hutter was later also burned at the stake — giving a “great sermon through his death” — in Innsbruck in 1536 for his efforts.35

Up to this point, Charles V had done little to offend the Lutherans as he needed the help of all the German States for his battles with Frances I and the Turks. But, when the Treaty of Crespy was signed in 1544, Charles secretly began to prepare for war to reassert his control over all of Germany. Charles allied with the Pope (who provided men and money) and convinced the Elector of Brandenburg, the Elector of Palatine, and other Lutheran princes to remain neutral. However, the German princes of the Schmalkaldic League refused his overtures and they, too, prepared secretly for war.

Before the war broke out, Luther died. Luther had journeyed to Eisleben where he had gone to settle a family dispute over mining rights with the Counts of Mansfeld. Shortly after the negotiations ended, Luther experienced chest pains. He died early the next morning, February 18th, 1546, of a stroke. In 1537 Luther had written a letter to his friend John Eck where he had wished for his epitaph to read:

Viuus eram pestis, mortuus ero mors tua, Papa36
(Living I was your plague, O Pope, dying I will be your death.)

For the Lutheran princes, the plague of war began a few months later. Charles won the first phase of the war, but lost the second. The final phase of the Schmalkaldic War was decided with the Religious Peace of Augsburg. According to historian James Sime:

“This Peace freed the Protestants from the jurisdiction of the prelates, allowed them to keep the ecclesiastical property that had been seized, and gave to the government of each State the right to set up either the Catholic or Protestant religion. A State might tolerate both religions if it chose; but each prince received the right to drive out those who did not agree with him in religion. The treaty also provided that if a spiritual prince became a Protestant he should at once have to give up his office and its revenues.”37

Excluded from the Religious Peace of Augsburg were the Anabaptists and other heretical sects. This exclusion still angered the Anabaptists as late as the last century. Writing in the 1953 edition of the Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia, Anabaptist writer Christian Neff protested:

“The Reformed, i.e., all followers of Zwingli and Calvin (called Sacramentarians) and the Anabaptists and all the “sects damned” by Recesses of the Imperial Diet were excluded from this “religious peace.” … (The Peace) applied only to Luther-
ans and Catholics. Thus the reprehensible, disastrous principle of cuius regio eius religio was elevated to the rank of imperial law. Especially detrimental to Protestantism was the “ecclesiastical reservation,” whereby a Catholic ruler who was also a bishop or other church official would lose his church office and all secular power as well as the income accruing from his land if he transferred to Protestantism. In any case his subjects would remain Catholic.  

Calvinists were the followers of French reformer Jean Calvin (1509-1564). Calvin, following the wishes of his father, was originally trained as a humanist lawyer. He broke from the Catholic Church around 1530 and fled from Paris to the safety of Basel, Switzerland after Protestants were violently threatened in France. In 1536 in Basel, Calvin published the first edition of his noted work *Institutes of Christian Religion*. Calvin, however, did not view himself as a man of theology, he saw himself as a man of action. As historian William Bouwsma wrote:

“Like other Renaissance humanists, Calvin believed that his own time was caught up in a spiritual and moral crisis whose resolution required his own most ardent efforts. … Calvin did not conceive of his task in life as the exposition of a “theology” for the ages. He had more urgent matters to attend to.”

Calvin supported the doctrine of Sola Scriptura but insisted that religious truth — if it indeed were to be THE truth — must be immutable. Scripture, wrote Calvin, is the only source that can give us a “clear view of the true God.” While we might not understand Scripture, Calvin said “this must be blamed on the dullness and slowness of our senses: blind and weak-sighted men must not accuse the sun because they cannot gaze upon it.” The problem with the papal church in Rome was that the Church looked at Scripture with a “wax nose” that could be twisted and turned in any direction or formed to any shape. The result? The Church’s interpretation of Scripture “takes away every certainty.” And that certainty is precisely what Calvin sought.

Calvin did not preach transubstantiation or consubstantiation and believed the Eucharist to be commemorative but he had strong opinions about how and with whom the Eucharist was to be commemorated. As Bouwsma described:

“(Calvin) argued for communion in both kinds as a recognition of the full com-
munity of the faithful. The close connection between the sacrament and the spiritual unity of the church explains why the Lord’s Supper is restricted to those who have made peace with each other. It also helps to explain Calvin’s unsuccessful advocacy of communion at every service in the Genevan church. The way in which the sacrament was celebrated in the Roman church offended his sense of community. Private masses, in which “one person withdraws and gulps alone and there is no sharing among the faithful,” seemed to him a mockery of communion. He compared the almost inaudible “muttering” of the celebrant of a mass to the spell of a sorcerer.”

Calvin was a devout believer in predestination, but his doctrine of predestination began with his doctrine of providence where it was not just mercy that was freely given by God. As Calvin wrote:

“When whenever any adversity occurs its causes are sought in the world, so that almost nobody considers the hand that strikes. When the year’s harvest is bad, we consult astrology and attribute it to the conjunction of the stars. … The dangers and adversities that surround us are God’s weapons, nor do they happen to anyone by chance but are directed by his hand. So it happens that he not only incites enemies against us, that he infects the air with deadly pestilence and finally brings forth catastrophe from all the elements.”

Calvin posited his related doctrine of predestination as a mystery, but, for Calvin, this was a mystery with eternally harsh implications. Calvin wrote:

“As God by the effectual working of his call to the elect perfects the salvation to which by his eternal plan he has destined them, so he has his judgments against the reprobate, by which he executes his plan for them. What of those, then, whom he created for dishonor in life and destruction in death, to become the instruments of his wrath and examples of severity? That they may come to their end, he sometimes deprives them of the capacity to hear his word; at other times he blinds and stuns them by the preaching of it.”

Calvin saw himself as a member of a community of Protestant exegetes all indebted to Erasmus. As such, he was generally respectful of his fellow community members, including Zwingli. Calvin wrote:

“Since in this life we cannot hope to achieve a permanent agreement in our understanding of every passage of Scripture, however desirable that would be, we must not be carried away by the lust of novelty, nor be pushed into scurrility or impelled by hatred or titillated by ambition, but only do what is necessary and depart from the opinions of earlier exegetes only when it is beneficial.”

However, as a man of action, Calvin felt compelled to do more than explain Scripture. Like Swingli, Calvin felt ordained to act to realize his conception of God as legislateur et roy (legislator and king). For Calvin, God’s kingdom — an orderly and precise kingdom — was to begin on

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earth:

“God has consecrated the entire earth through the precious blood of his son to the end that we may inhabit it and live under his reign. ... We remain unworthy to look upon heaven until there is harmony and unanimity in religion, till God is purely worshipped by all, and all the world is reformed.”

For Calvin, the reformation of God’s kingdom on earth was to begin in Geneva. In Geneva, Calvin helped to create a theocratic style of city government. He divided the civil administration among pastors, exposition of doctrine among teachers, moral discipline of the laity among elders, social work among deacons, and ecclesiastical justice among a court composed of all types. However, Calvin’s harsh world/eternal view and his extraordinary need for order was not received well among some of the people of Geneva. As Bouwsma wrote:

“It is scarcely remarkable that Calvin, made so anxious by disorder, was unable to purge himself of attitudes that were, in him, sometimes more rigid than those of the papal church, and that he who had so vigorously denounced the “tyranny” of Rome was sometimes perceived as the tyrant of Geneva.”

Just when it looked like Calvin might lose control of the city council, his fortunes were restored by the very popular burning at the stake of noted Spanish heretic (Miguel) Servetus. Servetus had denied the doctrine of the Trinity and had been sentenced to death in absentia for his views. Still a wanted fugitive, Servetus appeared at a sermon being given by Calvin and Calvin had him arrested. While Calvin appealed for a less gruesome form of death, Servetus was burned at the stake for heresy on October 27th, 1553 by a fire fueled in part by Servetus’ own heretical writings.

While this Spanish heretic received harsh treatment at the hands of the Calvinists, future Calvinists were destined to receive equally deadly treatment at the hands of the French during the French Wars of Religion. During the sixteenth century, Catholic France was almost in a perpetual state of war with the French followers of Calvin (known as Huguenots). The wars were (mostly) ended in 1598 when King Henry IV issued the Edict of Nantes granting French Calvinists their civil rights and their right to worship. However, this end did not come in time for the victims of the bloody St. Bartholomew’s Day Massacre.
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The St. Bartholomew’s Day Massacre began in with an attack on Gaspard de Coligny. Coligny was a French nobleman and admiral and a leader of the Huguenots. Coligny and other Calvinists nobles were invited to the wedding in August 1572 in Paris of the Catholic Princess Margarite de Valois to the Protestant Henry of Navarre. While there, Coligny was shot in a failed assassination attempt. Fearing a coup in reaction to Coligny’s shooting, authorities ordered a first strike against Coligny and the Huguenots. In all, over 10,000 people may have been slaughtered — mostly Calvinist men, women and children — in Paris and throughout the provinces. When the Pope heard of the massacre, he is reported to have rewarded the messenger with a thousand pieces of gold, offered a solemn thanksgiving at the College of Cardinals, and struck a model in honor of the divinely inspired event.53

Echoing so many of the horrors that occurred as the Reformation spread across the continent, this first-hand account of the savage execution of Coligny brings this chapter to a close: “After (Coligny’s) body had been treated to all sorts of insults, they threw it into a neighboring stable, and finally cut off his head, which they sent to Rome. They also shamefully mutilated him, and dragged his body through the streets to the bank of the Seine …. As some children were in the act of throwing the body into the river, it was dragged out and placed upon the gibbet of Montfaucon, where it hung by the feet in chains of iron; and then they built a fire beneath, by which he was burned without being consumed; so that he was, so to speak, tortured with all the elements, since he was killed upon the earth, thrown into the water, placed upon the fire, and finally put to hang in the air.”54

Conclusion: The Reformation on the Continent

The threads of the Reformation as it spread across the continent were soaked in blood and consumed by flame. In The Peasants’ War, over 100,000 were killed in bloody battle after bloody battle. The leaders were then burned at the stake. Thousands of the followers of Thomas Müntzer were massacred at the Battle of Frankenhausen. Müntzer was then captured, tortured and beheaded. Zwingli and his army of believers met a similar fate. Over 500 were killed during the Second War of Kappel and Zwingli himself was drawn, quartered, and burned. During the Münster Rebellion, thousands of peasants were killed. In a particularly gruesome spectacle, the leaders of the rebellion were tortured and executed and their bodies were then publicly hung — for centuries — in iron cages hanging from the steeple of St. Lambert’s Church. And in France, Coligny and the Huguenots were massacred and over 10,000 men, women and children were slaughtered. Coligny himself was murdered, beheaded, dragged, drowned, hung and then burned. In many ways, the very fabric of the Reformation was ripped almost beyond repair. It is that fabric that would be rewoven with threads of poorest wool and richest gold as the Reformation spread to England.

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**There should be no beggars ... according to John Calvin**

According to Calvin, begging absolutely had to be prohibited. In fact, the single most crucial problem to be solved by social reformers like Calvin was that of vagrants and beggars.¹

One way Calvin sought to solve that problem was by making begging completely illegal and then to police areas where beggars were likely to gather. As historian Jeanine Olson explained:

"John Calvin and other reformers viewed charity as a response to God’s love and to the neighbor’s needs. The old Catholic incentive of giving alms to the poor to merit eternal reward was undermined by the new Protestant emphasis on justification by faith. … There were practical constraints as well. In Geneva, for instance, the alternatives to almsgiving were limited by the city’s ban on begging and system of policing near the church doors where beggars were likely to accumulate."²

Another way to limit vagrants and beggars was to restrict any aid to only the “deserving” poor. Olson described this mechanism:

"Welfare recipients) were expected to be worthy of that aid — that is, honest, upright, God-fearing people in Geneva to live according to the “Reform of the Word.” They were to appreciate whatever aid was offered to them, and they were to help themselves and other needy people, such as orphans, as much as they could. Failure to meet these expectations could get them into trouble. They could be suspended from the welfare rolls or terminated."³

What happened to those who were kicked off the welfare rolls? According to a contemporary attack made by an Augustinian monk, the poor would be forced out of society, or worse:

"What else can one expect, (Augustinian monk Villavicencio) asks, from such heretics as Luther … and Calvin? Since these heretics have broken with the Bride of Christ, it is not surprising that they are pushing the true, living representatives of Christ, the poor, out of society and wanting to imprison the poor “like wild animals in cages."⁴

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“When as king Henry rul’d this land,
He had a queen, I understand;
Lord Seymour’s daughter fair and bright,
King Henry’s comfort and delight:
Yet death, by his remorseless pow’r,
Did blast the bloom of this sweet flow’r;
O mourn, mourn, mourn, fair ladies;
Jane your queen, the flower of England’s dead.”

~ From the “Crown Garland of Golden Roses” an English folk ballad
believed to have been written during the time of Henry VIII

While the fabric of the Reformation was being stretched and torn on the European continent, the incipient threads of the English Reformation were being richly displayed on the Field of the Cloth of Gold.

During the summer of 1520, Henry VIII of England and Frances I of France battled on a field near Calais. But this battle didn’t involve blood, it was defined — and is duly noted in history — for its flowing Cloth of Gold. As the young kings met from June 7th to June 24th, they attempted to impress each other as Frances tried valiantly to keep Henry from being more impressed with the new Holy Roman Emperor, Charles V. No expense was spared. A “palace” of golden cloth was erected measuring 328 feet on each side. The posts were overlaid with gold. The roofs of the chambers were sprinkled with gold. From every window hung tapestries of silk and gold. The dishes and candlesticks were made of gold. Much of the clothing was adorned with gold. Even the desks were covered in gold.

Despite the spectacle, Henry and Frances were not to be allies. Henry, led by advisor Cardinal Thomas Wolsey, would later join forces with Charles V. However, Henry and Frances were not alone at the Field of the Cloth of Gold. In fact, they had a lot of company: company that would soon create large problems for France and whose brethren would cause great problems for England as well. As historian J. S. Brewer described:

“Multitudes from the French frontiers, or the populous cities of Flanders, indifferent to the political significance of the scene, swarmed from their dingy homes to gaze on kings, queens, knights, and ladies dressed in their utmost splendor. Beggars, itinerant minstrels, venders of provisions and small luxuries, mixed with wagoners, ploughmen, laborers, and the motley troop of camp-followers, crowded round, or stretched themselves beneath the summer’s sun on bundles of straw and grass, in drunken idleness. … No less than ten thousand of this poor vagrant crew were compelled to turn back, by a proclamation (from the King).”

This explosive mixture of the impossibly wealthy living side by side with the invisible poor

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is a recurrent theme of the Reformation in England.

Eleven years before the Field of the Cloth of Gold Henry had married Catherine of Aragon, the youngest child of King Ferdinand II of Aragon and Queen Isabella I of Castile. While Catherine and Henry had a four-year-old daughter at this time (Princess Mary), Catherine had yet to provide Henry with a male heir. This was troubling but, soon to be of far greater concern to Henry, was the dramatic rise of Martin Luther.

In May of 1521 Henry was irritated and alarmed by Luther’s “The Captivity of the Church in Babylon.” In response, Henry addressed a letter to the Emperor and to Louis the Elector Palatine, requesting them to silence Luther, and stamp out his teaching. Not long afterwards, with the able assistance of a team of prelates, Henry wrote the “Defense of the Seven Sacraments against Doctor Martin Luther,” in which he believed he “triumphantly refuted every false statement and defective argument of his adversary.”

What Henry should have been paying more attention to were the words he would use to attack Luther. Words very much like these would be used to attack Henry in the schismatic years to come. When writing against Luther, Henry wrote:

“This petty doctor, this grotesque saint, this pretender to learning, in the pride of his self-constituted authority, spurns the most venerable doctors the world has known, the most exalted saints, and the most distinguished biblical scholars. What profit, can come of a contest with Luther, who is of nobody’s opinion, who does not understand himself, who denies what he has once affirmed, and affirms what he has already denied? He is a shameless scribbler, who sets himself above all laws, despises our venerable teachers, and, in the fullness of his pride, ridicules the learning of the age; who insults the majesty of pontiffs, outrages traditions, dogmas, manners, canons, faith, and the Church herself, which, he professes, exists nowhere outside of two or three innovators, of whom he has constituted himself the leader.”

Henry’s polemic earned him the title of “Defender of the Faith” (Defensor Fidei) from Pope Clement. This would be the high-water mark of theological relations between Henry and Rome. The low water mark for Henry’s marital reations with Catherine was still to come.

Nearly a decade passed and Catherine still had not produced a male heir. On Henry’s behalf, Wolsey appealed to the Pope for an annulment of Henry and Catherine’s marriage. A royal divorce sanctioned by the Pope was certainly not unheard of. Two months before Wolsey began his secret negotiations, Henry’s sister Margaret, Queen of Scotland, had been granted one.

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However, Henry’s wife — who did not want a divorce — was the aunt of the Emperor Charles V and this Emperor had just sacked Rome and now held Pope Clement as a prisoner.5/6

Wolsey’s attempts failed, perhaps intentionally. In an infamous episode of court intrigue, Anne Boleyn (soon to be Henry’s second wife) was convinced that Wolsey had been treacherous and worked behind the scenes to have him stripped of power. This backstage history is the inspiration for Act III Scene 2 in Shakespeare’s Henry VIII. In the scene, a packet of papers belonging to Wolsey falls into the hands of Henry. The papers detail how Wolsey has used his position to amass great wealth at the expense of all sides. Henry eloquently (and obliquely) confronts the Cardinal, hands him the incriminating papers, and exits. Wolsey realizes what the papers detail and then addresses the audience:

“… ’Tis so;
This paper has undone me: ‘tis the account
Of all that world of wealth I have drawn together
For mine own ends; indeed, to gain the popedom,
And fee my friends in Rome. O negligence!
Fit for a fool to fall by: what cross devil
Made me put this main secret in the packet
I sent the king? Is there no way to cure this?
No new device to beat this from his brains?
I know ’twill stir him strongly; yet I know
A way, if it take right, in spite of fortune
Will bring me off again. What’s this? ‘To the Pope’!
The letter, as I live, with all the business
I writ to’s holiness. Nay then, farewell!
I have touch’d the highest point of all my greatness;
And, from that full meridian of my glory,
I haste now to my setting: I shall fall
Like a bright exhalation in the evening,
And no man see me more.”7

In the real world of Henry VIII, Wolsey was stripped of his offices and property and accused of treason. When Wosley was finally ordered to London to face charges in 1530, he had no doubt of the fate that awaited him. On his way there, Wolsey became ill near Leicester Abbey where he told the monks, “I am come, I am come to leave my bones among you.” Wolsey died

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during the next morning exclaiming in his last hours, “If I had served God as diligently as I have done the King, He would not have given me over in my grey hairs.”

While the divorce trials and tribulations played out on the stage of the impossibly wealthy, the invisible poor in the audience made their feelings known. As Pollard described:

“The divorce had been from the beginning, and remained to the end, a stumbling-block to the people. Catherine received ovations wherever she went, while the utmost efforts of the King could scarcely protect Anne Boleyn from popular insult. The people were moved, not only by a creditable feeling that Henry’s first wife was an injured woman, but by the fear lest a breach with Charles should destroy their trade in wool, on which, said the imperial ambassador, half the realm depended for sustenance.”

The situation with the populace degraded to such a point that the Grand Chancellor of Charles V, Mercurino Gattinara, boasted that the imperialists could force Henry from his kingdom within three months. Gattinara based his hopes on a widely expected general revolt among Henry’s own subjects. Gattarina, Charles and Clement moved to take advantage of the hoped for rebellion.

In the closing days of July 1529, a courier came to Henry from Rome with dispatches announcing the alliance of Pope Clement and Charles. The dispatches also contained the formal revocation issued by the Papal Court of the divorce suit between Henry and the Charles’ aunt. Also in 1529, Charles V and Ferdinand presented a petition to the Pope declaring that the English Parliament should be forbidden to even discuss the question of divorce. This gave Henry, an astute political tactician, the opening he needed. On August 9th, 1529 Henry summoned the English Parliament with the expressed intention to irrevocably break the chains that bound Rome and England together. It was a risky move for a threatened king, but a brilliant move for a ruthless warrior. As Pollard wrote:

“There were few Englishmen who would not resent the petition presented to the Pope in 1529 by Charles V and Ferdinand that the English Parliament should be forbidden to discuss the question of divorce. By summoning Parliament, Henry opened the floodgates of anti-papal and anti-sacerdotal feelings which Wolsey had long kept shut; and the unpopular divorce became merely a cross-current in the main stream which flowed in Henry’s favour.”

Henry had kicked open the doors of the English Reformation. Before this time the Church of England had been a semi-independent part of the political community owing half of its allegiance to the Pope and half to the King. The decisions by Parliament created something altogether different. A new national identity, an identity that Shakespeare would later describe as: “This blessed plot, this earth, this realm, this England.” Here’s how Pollard described this watershed moment:

“The rising spirit of nationality could brook no divided allegiance; and the uni-

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versal gave way to the national idea. There was to be no imperium in imperio, but “one body politic,” with one Supreme Head. Henry VII is reported by Chapuys as saying that he was King, Emperor and Pope, all in one, so far as England was concerned. The Church was to be nationalised; it was to compromise its universal character, and to become the Church of England....

In 1532 Henry elevated Thomas Cranmer to the highest ecclesiastical position in the land by making Cranmer the Archbishop of Canterbury. Cranmer then moved to nullify Henry’s marriage to Catherine making it possible for Henry to marry his mistress, Anne Boleyn. Cranmer had previously been the Boleyn’s family chaplain.) Henry’s attraction to Boleyn was a mystery to many. As a contemporary Venetian court visitor wrote:

“Madame Anne is not one of the handsomest women in the world. She is of middling stature, swarthy complexion, long neck, wide mouth, bosom not much raised, and in fact has nothing but the King’s great appetite, and her eyes, which are black and beautiful.”

Anne Boleyn may have had the King’s appetite, but that appetite had begun to be sated previously. As Pollard revealed:

“The actual sentence of divorce in 1533 was precipitated not by Henry’s passion for Anne, but by the desire that her child should be legitimate. She was pregnant before Henry was married to her or divorced from Catherine.”

Anne gave birth to a daughter who would later become Elizabeth I of England, however Anne produced no male heir. Henry had her tried for high treason and Anne was beheaded in 1536. Henry then married Jane Seymour. Seymour died of postnatal complications in 1537 after giving birth to Henry’s only legitimate male heir, Edward VI. Edward was the last of the future Tudor sovereigns (Edward VI, Mary, and Elizabeth) to be born.

The issues occasioned by Henry’s divorce proceedings convinced Henry that some dramatic changes needed to be made. Using the praemunire that had been incurred by Wosley, the entire clergy of England was fined 100,000 pounds for Wosley having acted as the agent of a foreign power (namely the papacy). This was hotly discussed by the clergy at the Convo-
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cation of Canterbury in 1532\textsuperscript{19} as they debated what would become known as the Act for the Submission of the Clergy and Restraint of Appeals (which was later passed by Parliament in 1534). As historian Richard Watson Dixon described, the Act gave the monarch exceptional new powers at the expense of the Church:

“This was the ‘Act for the Submission of the Clergy, and Restraint of Appeals.’ It was ordained that the Clergy, according to their Submission, were neither to execute their old canons or constitutions, nor make new ones, without the assent and license of the King, on pain of imprisonment and fine at the royal pleasure: that their Convocations were only to be assembled by the authority of the King’s writ: that the King should have power to nominate Two and Thirty persons, sixteen of the spirituality and sixteen of the temporyality, to revise the canons, ordinances, and constitutions provincial; and that in the meantime such of the canons which were not contrariant to the laws of the realm, nor prejudicial to the prerogative royal, should still be used and executed as heretofore.”\textsuperscript{20}

While the English people were generally supportive of the legislation,\textsuperscript{21} an act of another kind — a gruesome kind — garnered the enraged attention of the populace. A topic of heated debate among the clergy attending the Convocation of Canterbury was the case of a Gloucestershire squire of the name of Tracy. Squire Tracy had recently died and his will unwittingly launched an English inquisition into its contents. As Dixon detailed the evolving controversy:

“Tracy, who died about 1530, left a long testament, filled with texts of Scripture, to the general effect that he would bestow no part of his goods for what any man should say or do to help his soul: that all were but petitioners in receiving of grace, but none able to give influence of grace: that he trusted only in the promises of the Gospel: that he left the burying of his body to his executors only: and that the manner in which he bestowed his goods was to be accepted as the fruits of faith; his merit not consisting in the good bestowal of them, but in faith, since a good work made not a good man, but a good man a good work, and it was faith which made a man good and righteous. With these words the dying saint left his earthly substance to his wife and his son.”

The incident of Squire Tracy again points to the fact that the English church was still set in its ways during the time of Henry. The decisions made at the Convocation may have prepared the stage for the religious changes to come, but the clergy still viewed themselves as part of the long established order. In fact, for his heretical Lutheran views, Squire Tracy was condemned for heresy and his body was ordered to be dug up and thrown out of consecrated ground. According to Dixon:

“The body was raised; but the zeal of the Vicar-general of Worcester led him beyond his commission; and Tracy, after lying in the grave two years, was burned at the stake. From the silence of their enemies it may be presumed that the clergy


\textsuperscript{21} Landry, Stan M. \textit{The Reformation in England}, University of Arizona, Online presentation. 25 October 2010. Lecture notes.
made no effort to detain the goods of the heretic; but they had better have left him alone altogether. The nation was shocked by the indecent spectacle ....”

The invisible poor became visible again as they publicly protested the desecration of Tracy’s remains. The situation grew to a point where the King himself was forced to get involved and the Vicar-general was made to pay a rather massive fine of over 300 pounds for his actions.

At approximately the same time, the population began to agitate due to the pronouncements of Elizabeth Barton, known as the Holy Maid of Kent. Barton was a servant girl in Kent who had come to the attention of the highest levels of the English Church due to her supposedly spiritually induced fits and trances. Believers came to Kent to witness her utterances “of marvellous holiness in rebuke of sin and vice” and many left offerings at the chapel. Things continued along profitably until the Holy Maid began attacking the King. As Dixon noted:

“The poor girl was persuaded to continue by simulation the contortions and ejaculations which owed their origin to infirmity: she became a professed nun, and the complete tool of a gang of designing monks and friars. The thing succeeded: her fame spread, and her utterances acquired a character which was gravely assumed to imperil the safety of the King and the peace of the realm. Among other things she declared that the King should not survive his second marriage a month, or six months, that in the reputation of Almighty God he should not be a King a day nor an hour, and should die a villain’s death.”

Elizabeth Barton was convicted of treason and hanged at the Tyburn gallows in 1534. Many of her followers were incensed by her death and some even called for her sainthood. Others — including some in Parliament — believed Barton’s communications were part of a rebellious plot led by Catherine and the Princess Mary and they diligently watched for the popular uprising to come. In fact, these members of Parliament were convinced that “a number of ‘spiritual and religious’ persons, were to endeavour, by preaching and other means, to kindle an insurrection.”

As the real or imaginary threads of rebellion reached their way from the clergy to the common people, Henry moved to secure his authority over the church with the Act of Supremacy (1534) and The Treasons Act (1534). The first severed all ties with Rome and made the English monarch the singular head of the Church of England. The latter made it illegal to refer to the king as a heretic or usurper and called for the death penalty for those who dared to try. Henry also took other exceptional steps to forestall rebellion and solidify his position. As detailed by the Catholic Encyclopedia of 1910:

“In the course of the next year the breach with Rome was completed. Parliament did all that was required of it. Annates, Peter’s Pence, and other payments to Rome were finally abolished. An Act of Succession entailed the crown on the

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children of Anne Boleyn, and an oath was drawn up to be exacted of every person of lawful age. It was the refusal to take this oath, the preamble of which declared Henry's marriage with Catherine null from the beginning, which sent (St. Thomas) More and (St. John) Fisher to the Tower, and eventually to the block. ²²⁷

When a number of Carthusian monks, Brigittines, and Observant Franciscans also refused to swear by this oath, they were hanged. Fourteen Dutch Anabaptists — prohibited by belief to swear to any oath — were burned at the stake. Henry then extended his control even further by instructing his chief advisor, Thomas Cromwell to shut down approximately 300 Catholic monasteries and convents and to seize their land and properties (1535).²²⁸

One weapon Henry's agents used to shut down the monasteries was called The Black Book. According to historian Arthur Innes, agents of the King would infiltrate monasteries and convents and then collect long lists of sordid information:

"(Henry's agents) set about their task of inquiry with the obvious intention of accumulating all the hostile evidence available and ignoring what was favourable. They had neither time nor inclination to think of sifting and weighing it, and they displayed a most unholy glee in the collection of unsavoury scandals. In six months they completed their work of visitation, accompanied by illuminating memoranda to Cromwell, the whole of the results being recorded in a report called the Black Book."²²⁹

Parliament received the Black Book eagerly and the suppression of the monasteries was approved. This time, however, the invisible poor demanded to be seen. Angered by the confiscation and outraged by the use of the Black Book as supposed evidence, fifty to sixty thousand peasants soon rose up in protest in Lincolnshire. According to Vaughan:

"The first sign of disorder was at Louth, in Lincolnshire, where, on the arrival of some of Cromwell's commissioners, the people rose, and soon became a multitude in arms. The furies in this movement were the priests, and the recently-ejected monks. But a large portion of the gentry became committed, willingly or unwillingly, to the enterprise. At the end of the third day from their rising at Louth, the men of Lincolnshire had reduced their demands on the government to a series of written articles. These were — that the religious houses should be restored; that the subsidy lately imposed should not be raised; that the first-fruits and tenths should be no more paid to the crown; that the meddling with tenures according to the 'Statute of Uses' should be abandoned; that low blood should have no place in the privy council; and that the heretic bishops — meaning Cranmer, Latimer, and such men — should cease to be bishops, and be brought to due punishment. At a meeting in a field near Horncastle, where these articles were agreed to by acclamation, the chancellor of the diocese, who had been dragged from his sick bed, was exhibited on horseback. On seeing him, the 'par-

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sons and vicars’ greeted him with yells and groans, and amidst their cries of Kill him! kill him! the poor man was drawn from his horse, and, while upon his knees imploring mercy, was beaten to death with staves. His clothes were torn from his person and appropriated by the murderers. … Within a week, the infection of the revolt had so seized upon the people, that the men assembled are said to have amounted to between fifty and sixty thousand.”

Within a week the insurrection in Lincolnshire was quelled, but the “country remained full of sullen disaffection.” Almost immediately, all of Yorkshire was reported to be up in arms and Cromwell received a dispatch to flee for his life. Nine thousand rebels, led by Robert Aske, a London barrister from a good Yorkshire family, had begun a “Pilgrimage of Grace” to restore expelled monks and nuns to their houses. As the pilgrimage continued, the number of followers grew larger and larger:

“The subsequent success of the rising was so great that the royal leaders, the Duke of Norfolk and Earl of Shrewsbury, opened negotiations with the insurgents at Doncaster, where Aske had assembled between thirty and forty thousand men. As a result of this, Henry authorized Norfolk to promise a general pardon and a Parliament to be held at York within a year. Aske then dismissed his followers, trusting in the king’s promises.”

Henry did not keep his promises. After new uprisings began in Cumberland and Westmoreland, the three leaders of the Yorkshire Rising were convicted of treason and, in turn, beheaded, hung in chains and “dragged upon a hurdle through the streets of York to perish on the gallows.” The decapitated rebellion was then easily suppressed and peasants throughout Yorkshire, Cumberland and Westmoreland were massacred in retaliation.

Cromwell survived the uprisings, shuttered the monasteries, and turned his attention to the spread of the Protestant Reformation in England. Cromwell looked to the German Reformation for guidance but his Lutheran focus caused Henry to fight back for his own traditional beliefs. In 1539 Henry issued The Act of Six Articles as an affirmation of the longstanding faith practices of the Church in England. The Act of Six Articles called for affirming the truth of 1) transubstantiation, 2) the reasonableness of withholding the chalice from the laity during communion, 3) celibacy of the priesthood, 4) observance of vows of chastity, 5) validity of private masses and 6) the importance of auricular confession. Penalties under the Act included fines, imprisonment and, even, death. Cromwell attempted to block the enactment of the Act, but Parliament stepped in to make sure its provisions were duly enforced.

Cromwell, however, continued his Protestant ministrations. He had hoped to return the Church of England to the path of Protestantism by arranging a marriage for Henry with the German-noblewoman Anne of Cleves. The hastily arranged marriage was never consumated

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reportedly because Anne looked nothing like the flattering portrait painted of her by Hans Holbein the Younger. Henry had viewed the portrait, accepted the match, but when Henry saw Anne in real life "Henry’s aesthetic susceptibilities received a painful shock." After the marriage was annulled, Cromwell’s opponents used this opportunity to accuse Cromwell of treason. He was beheaded on Tower Hill on July 28th, 1540. Henry would later regret his decision to have Cromwell killed but not all historians have been as kind. As Innes wrote:

“Pity and sympathy are wasted upon Cromwell; with what measure he meted, it was measured to him again. But no king ever had more loyal servants than Wolsey and Cromwell, no king ever repaid such services more basely, more cynically than bluff King Hal.”

With Cromwell out of the way, Henry moved quickly to enforce his religious decrees. The mood of the monarchy had changed, as Pollard described:

“Two days after Cromwell’s death, a vivid illustration was given of the spirit which was henceforth to dominate the Government. Six men were executed at the same time; three were priests, condemned to be hanged as traitors for denying the royal supremacy; three were heretics, condemned to be burnt for impugning the Catholic faith. And yet there was no peace. Henry, who had succeeded in so much, had, with the full concurrence of the majority of his people, entered upon a task in which he was foredoomed to failure. Not all the whips with six strings, not all the fires at Smithfield, could compel that unity and concord in opinion which Henry so much desired, but which he had unwittingly done so much to destroy. He might denounce the diversities of belief to which his opening of the Bible in English churches had given rise; but men, who had caught a glimpse of hidden verities, could not all be forced to deny the things which they had seen. The most lasting result of Henry’s repressive tyranny was the stimulus it gave to reform in the reign of his son …”

Henry’s successor was his nine-year-old son, Edward VI. It was during the reign of Edward that the Book of Common Prayer was published by Cranmer. While Henry ruled, the Church of England continued to use liturgies in Latin just as it always had. Cranmer’s issuance of the Book of Common Prayer in 1549 and the revised — and much more Protestant version in 1552 — set the stage for protests. As church historian Leighton Pullan wrote:

“The changes made were in an unmistakably Protestant direction, and included an omission of the more direct prayers for the dead, of passages which implied

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the Real Presence of the Body and Blood of our Lord in the Sacrament, of the apostolic custom of anointing the sick with prayers for their recovery, and of the traditional ornaments of the churches and the clergy. ... The result was disastrous. The conservative party, who disliked these hasty changes, identified themselves more closely with Rome, and were able to taunt the reformers with heresy and vacillation.\(^\text{40}\)

The Prayer Book Rebellion of 1549 began in Cornwall. At this time, England was at war with France and Scotland and few soldiers were available to protect the crown. The peasants were already angry: the harvest had failed the year before, there were mass food shortages, any food that was available was very costly, and starvation was rampant. Despite the deprivations, landlords continued to forcibly make the peasants pay rent. Historian Steve Arman described the results:

“With the introduction of the new Prayer Book in 1549, when priests began to say the Mass in English, there were riots in many villages. In Devon and Cornwall, opposition to the new prayer book turned into full scale rebellion. ... Eventually, the rebels from towns and villages across Devon and Cornwall, led by their priests, began to march toward London. ... This was as dangerous a moment for the Tudors as during the Pilgrimage of Grace in 1536.”

Simultaneous revolts erupted in Norfolk and Yorkshire\(^\text{41}\) and the situation looked dire for the boy king. Edward VI was saved by the timely arrival of soldiers returning from France and Scotland. The peasants had no cannon or cavalry and over 5,000 were quickly massacred by the returning royal forces.\(^\text{42}\)

The path of the Protestant Reformation in England took an abrupt turn in 1553 when Edward, still only fifteen, fell terminally ill with tuberculosis. It was well known that Edward’s successor would be Princess Mary, the still very Catholic daughter of Henry VIII and Catherine of Aragon. In response, the Protestant Duke of Northumberland moved to have Lady Jane Grey, a 17-year-old descendant of Henry VII, proclaimed queen upon Edward’s death. All the court and politicians accepted Lady Jane Grey as their queen as Edward himself had signed a deathbed letter of succession naming her as the next monarch.\(^\text{43}\) However, Mary Tudor protested the coronation and Mary Tudor’s half-sister, Elizabeth — a Protestant — also refused to support the Duke of Northumberland’s plan. The peasantry and others supported Mary Tudor, advanced on London, beheaded the Duke, and Lady Jane Grey — who had ruled just 13 unlucky days — was imprisoned in the Tower of London as a traitor.\(^\text{44}\)

Mary Tudor was crowned as Mary I on July 19th, 1553. She immediately began to shift England back to Roman Catholicism but her religious path was temporarily blocked during Wyatt’s Rebellion in 1554. While her immediate treatment of Protestants appeared to bode well

for religious relations, the situation was thrown into chaos when Mary announced her planned wedding to Philip of Spain. Pollard does an admirable job of explaining this complex time in his 1903 history of the Tudors:

“... (E)scape (for Protestants) was comparatively easy even for ‘Hot Gospellers’ so long as they had taken no active part in the ‘rebellion’ of Lady Jane Grey. But this fair promise soon withered away; the threatened marriage of Mary with Philip of Spain revived all those apprehensions upon which Henry VIII had played so successfully when he pleaded the necessity of a male heir to the throne as a justification for his divorce from Catherine of Aragon. No Queen had ever wielded the English sceptre in peace; one only had tried to seize it—the Empress Matilda—and the effects of that attempt had been such as to make Englishmen shrink from the prospect of its repetition. It was a popular impression in England, based on the experience of four centuries, that women were excluded from the English throne, as they were from that of France. If a woman succeeded, she must either marry or she would leave the kingdom without heirs; if she married, she must wed either an English noble or a foreign prince. If she chose an English noble, she would provoke a repetition of those jealousies which had led to the Wars of the Roses; and if she preferred a foreign prince, she might endanger the nation’s independence. By marriage, Brittany had been merged in France; by marriage, the Netherlands had been brought under the yoke of Spain, with results soon to be luridly illustrated; by marriage, Hungary had come under the sway of the same Hapsburg family, had been torn by civil war and left a prey to the Turk. Was it so groundless a fear that by marriage to a Hapsburg, Mary might entail upon England the disasters that had attended similar unions in other countries? So the prospect of a Spanish marriage evoked a storm of protest which no religious reaction could produce, and only a total want of preparation robbed Wyatt’s rebellion of the success to which it so nearly attained.”

Under the leadership of Sir Thomas Wyatt of Kent and three others, a plan was launched to raise rebellions of the hard-pressed Protestant peasantry in Kent, Herefordshire, Devon and Liecestershire. The Protestant armies would then converge on London, depose Mary, and install her half-sister Elizabeth as queen. In addition, a fleet of French ships would be launched to prevent Philip of Spain from reaching England and claiming the crown.

The rebellion failed and the results were disastrous for the Protestants as Pollard described:

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“It was probably well for England that the rising did fail, for the capture of Lon-
don by the insurgents would almost certainly have been followed by a religious
civil war, which might have devastated England for a generation, like the wars of
religion in France. But the results of the failure were bad enough. The rebellion
gave Mary and her episcopal advisers an excuse for maintaining that treason
was a natural development of heresy, and that there could be no peace until the
heretics had been extirpated. Then began the bloodiest persecution with which
England has ever been cursed; neither old nor young, man nor woman, bishop
nor parish priest was spared, unless he would abjure his faith, or seek safety in
craven silence and cowardly compliance with the powers that were.” 47

The results were also deadly for Lady Jane Grey who Mary then ordered to be behead-
ed on the private green of the Tower of London.48 More Protestant deaths continued as Mary
moved to quash all remnants of the rebellion. As Birchall wrote: “Gibbets were erected all over
London at all crossways and in all thoroughfares the eye was met with the hideous spectacle of
hanging men.”49

Mary did not stop there. In her quest to reestablish Catholicism in England, “Bloody Mary”
had over 300 Protestants executed including 284 who were burned at the stake. Among those
Protestant martyrs was Thomas Cranmer. His death — and the deaths of many others — would
later be described in Foxe’s Book of Martyrs:

“Then was an iron chain tied about Cranmer. When they perceived him to be
more steadfast than that he could be moved from his sentence, they command-
ed the fire to be set unto him. And when the wood was kindled, and the fire
began to burn near him, stretching out his arm, he put his right hand into the
flame, which he held so steadfast and immovable (saving that once with the
same hand he wiped his face), that all men might see his hand burned before
his body was touched. His body did abide the burning with such steadfastness,
that he seemed to move no more than the stake to which he was bound; his eyes
were lifted up into heaven, and he repeated ‘his unworthy right hand,’ so long as
his voice would suffer him; and using often the words of Stephen, ‘Lord Jesus,
receive my spirit,’ in the greatness of the flame, he gave up the ghost.” 50

Foxe’s Book of Martyrs was originally published in 1563 and would have a dramatic ef-
fect on the future course of religion in England and America. As historian Douglas Campbell
explained:

“When one recollects that until the appearance of the Pilgrim’s Progress the com-
mon people had almost no other reading matter except the Bible and Fox’s Book
of Martyrs, we can understand the deep impression that this book produced;
and how it served to mold the national character. Those who could read for
themselves learned the full details of all the atrocities performed on the Protes-
tant reformers; the illiterate could see the rude illustrations of the various instru-

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ements of torture, the rack, the gridiron, the boiling oil, and then the holy ones breathing out their souls amid the flames. Take a people just awakening to a new intellectual and religious life; let several generations of them, from childhood to old age, pore over such a book, and its stories become traditions as individual and almost as potent as songs and customs on a nation’s life.”

The gruesome deaths of so many Protestants forced many English Protestants to flee to the continent — primarily Geneva — where these religious refugees were strongly influenced by Calvinist beliefs. Similarly, John Knox fled Scotland when Mary Tudor’s cousin, the Catholic Mary Queen of Scots, ascended to the Scottish throne. Knox would be instrumental in establishing Presbyterianism in Scotland when he would return and help to overthrow Mary Queen of Scots during the reign of Elizabeth I.

After five contentious regnal years, Mary Tudor died on November 17th, 1558 and Elizabeth I ascended to the throne. Given all that had transpired, Elizabeth was primarily interested in the stability of England. Theologically, she favored a moderate form of Protestantism. Ecclesiastically, Elizabeth preferred Catholic hierarchy. Her beliefs would coalesce through the decisions of the Elizabethan Religious Settlement.

The Elizabethan Religious Settlement was Elizabeth I’s response to the religious divisions that were tearing her country apart. Working with Parliament, Elizabeth enacted The Act of Supremacy of 1559 which re-established the Church of England’s independence from Rome. In the Act, Parliament conferred on Elizabeth the title of Supreme Governor of the Church of England. The second part of the settlement, the Act of Uniformity of 1559, described the form the English church would now take. This Act also re-established Cranmer’s Book of Common Prayer. In addition, Cranmer’s Thirty-Nine Articles were adopted by Elizabeth as the official statement of faith of the Anglican Church in 1563.

The Thirty-Nine Articles would be put to use to also suppress a movement that Elizabeth felt threatened her Religious Settlement. The Puritans and their Calvinist leanings had become a problem for Elizabeth. She thought of Calvinism as “the doctrine of John Knox, whom she had never forgiven for his scorn of women rulers.” In addition, she detested the dogmatic nature

There should be no beggars ... according to Elizabeth I

Until the time of Henry VIII, the poor subsisted entirely on private benevolence — but this did not include begging. By royal law, the “able-bodied” poor had not been allowed to beg since 1348 (23rd Edward Ill 1348 made it a crime to give alms to any able-bodied beggar). By common law, the poor were to be provided for by “parsons, rector of the church, and parishioners, so that none should die for default of sustenance.” However, this was not compulsory and corruption was rife. Charitably put:

“The gentle exhortation of the ministers and the charitable persuasions of the bishops were inadequate to raise the necessary sums for the relief of the poor.”

A large part of the problem may have been Elizabethan attitudes toward the poor. One Elizabethan writer (historian William Harrison) is quoted as writing:

“With us the poor is commonly divided into three sorts — so that some are poor by impotency, as the fatherless child, the aged, blind and lame, and the diseased person that is judged to be incurable; the second are poor by casualty, as the wounded soldier, the decayed householder, and the sick person visited with grievous and painful diseases; the third consisteth of thriftless poor, as the rioter that hath consumed all, the vagabond that will abide nowhere, but runneth up and down from place to place (as it were seeking work and finding none), and finally the rogue and strumpet, which are not possible to be divided in sunder, but run to and fro over all the realm, chiefly keeping the champaign soils in summer, to avoid the scorching heat, and the woodland grounds in winter, to eschew the blustering winds. For the first two sorts, the poor by impotency and the poor by casualty, there is order taken throughout every parish in the realm, that weekly collection shall be made for their help and sustentation, to the end that they should not scatter abroad, and by begging here and there, annoy both town and country.”

While weekly collections for the poor were certainly taken, weekly dispersions to the poor were far from certain. In response to this corruption, a law was passed in 1563 (5th Elizabeth, cap. 3, 1563) declaring that persons who collected for the poor — and failed to give out the required share to the poor — could be sent to jail.

In addition, a novel twist was added. In Elizabethan times of great need, the legally sanctioned profession of begging — Beggars with Badges — was established. To wit:

“Where a parish had more poor than it could relieve, the justices were empowered to license persons (wearing badges) to beg within the county.”

of Puritanism even more than that of the Catholic Church. For Elizabeth, this was not a time for balance. For Elizabeth, this was a time to act. As historians Will and Ariel Durant wrote:

“She encouraged bishops to trouble the troublemakers. Archbishop Parker suppressed their publications, silenced them in the churches, and obstructed their assemblies. Puritan clergymen had organized groups for the public discussion of Scriptural passages; Elizabeth bade Parker put an end to these “prophesying”; he did. His successor, Edmund Grindal, tried to protect the Puritans; Elizabeth suspended him; and when he died (1583) she advanced to the Canterbury see her new chaplain, John Whitgift, who dedicated himself to the silencing of the Puritans. He demanded of all English clergymen an oath accepting the Thirty-Nine Articles, the Prayer Book, and the Queen’s religious supremacy; he subpoenaed all objectors before the High Commission Court; and there they were subjected to such detailed and insistent inquiry into their conduct and belief that Cecil compared the procedure to the Spanish Inquisition.”

Of course, nobody expects the Spanish Inquisition, not even the Puritans. It would be this type of persecution in 1633 that would earn the famous and infamous Archbishop of Canterbury William Laud the Puritan sobriquet “the fore-runner of the Antichrist.” Under King Charles I, Laud helped to suppress Puritanism in England. The goal of Charles and Laud was to force Scottish Presbyterians closer to Anglicanism. Their result was the English Civil War and the advent of Oliver Cromwell. Charles I and Laud were captured and executed and the Crown would lay vacant during the English Interregnum until the monarchy was restored under the Catholic Charles II in 1660. His successor, James II, was also Catholic and the English people feared the establishment of a Catholic dynasty and the re-establishment of Catholicism in England.

To protect their religious rights — and their property rights — the Protestants rebelled during the Glorious Revolution (1688). English Parliamentarians along with an invading army led by Dutch stadtholder William of Orange expelled James II (deliberately allowing James to escape to France) bringing William of Orange and his wife to the Crown as William III and Mary II of England. Under William, the Act of Toleration (1689) would be passed with
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The avowed goal to “unite their Majesties Protestant Subjects in Interest and Affection.”63 The act gave religious non-conformists, namely Protestants, their religious freedom. Catholics, however, would not receive their religious freedom (albeit incompletely) until the Roman Catholic Relief Act of 1829.64/65

Conclusion: The Reformation in England

The Field of the Cloth of Gold is both reality and metaphor for the Reformation in England. Henry VIII and the English monarchs of the Reformation were impossibly rich and they used their golden wealth for power as they wove the word of God to their needs. The peasants of the Reformation were impossibly poor and they used their woolen threads for survival as they wove their spiritual needs to the word of God. While the English Reformation started from the top down, the recurrent popular rebellions ensured that, stitch by meager stitch, the very fabric of English society was being rewoven from the bottom up. It is that theme — the theme of a new spiritual fabric being rewoven starting at the bottom — that exemplifies the Catholic Reformation which will be examined in the next chapter.

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"Para estar bien seguros, debemos sostener lo siguiente:
lo que ante mis ojos aparece como blanco, debo considerarlo negro,
si la jerarquía de la Iglesia lo considera así."¹

(In order to be truly secure, we are obliged to affirm the following:
that which before my eyes appears white, I am obliged to regard as black,
if the hierarchy of the Church regards it so.)²

~ Saint Ignatius of Loyola³

In the “perfect society”⁴ of the Catholic Church there is no doubt about who is at the bottom of the chain of command. As the Catholic Encyclopedia clearly states:

“The laity are the members of this society who remain where they were placed by baptism, while the clergy, even if only tonsured, have been raised by ordination to a higher class, and placed in the sacred hierarchy.”⁵

Fortunately for those in the sacred hierarchy, those at the bottom were called to reform the Church during a time of great corruption at the top.

The year was 1497. The papacy had been purchased by Alexander VI, the infamous Borgia Pope. As historian Philip Schaff noted:

“Alexander VI, whom we have before known as Cardinal Rodrigo Borgia, has the notorious distinction of being the most corrupt of the popes of the Renaissance period. Even in the judgment of Catholic historians, his dissoluteness knew no restraint and his readiness to abase the papacy for his own personal ends no bounds.”⁶

It was at this dark time in the moral history of the church that Ettore Vernazza, a Genovese laymen began to shine the light of reform. In 1497 Vernazza and three of his friends founded the confraternity of The Oratory of Divine Love in Genoa. The inspiration for the Oratory came from a

² English translation by author.
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remarkable Genoese woman named Caterina Fieschi Adorno who would become St. Catherine of Genoa. Vernazza was one of her disciples and St. Catherine’s example of works of charity and, specifically, the care of the sick, was the foundational basis for the Oratory. Sometime between 1514 and 1517 a branch of the Oratory was established in Rome which noted historians have singled out as marking the “beginning of effective reform in this troubled age.”

The Oratory was able to achieve effective reform because of its humble devotion — not to position and power — but to charitable works done for the love of God. As the original Chapters (or Rule) of the Genoese Oratory pledged:

“Brethren this our fraternity is not instituted for any other reason than to root and implant in our hearts divine love, that is to say, charity, and thus it is called the Fraternity of Divine Love. And this is so because charity does not proceed from other than the gentle look of God, who, if He looks upon us, looks upon those who are humble in heart, according to the saying of the prophet: “Whom do I regard if not the lowly and the man who trembles at my word?”

The passage quoted is from Isaiah 66:2. The Oratory members would have been very familiar with the expanded context of their foundational Scripture:

“Thus says the Lord: “Heaven is My throne, And earth is My footstool. Where is the house that you will build Me? And where is the place of My rest? For all those things My hand has made, And all those things exist,” Says the Lord. “But on this one will I look: On him who is poor and of a contrite spirit, And who trembles at My word.”

The Roman Oratory group numbered approximately sixty members and included Gaetano da Thiene (who would later become St. Cajetan) and Gian Pietro Carafa (who would later reign as Pope Paul IV). In 1524, Gaetano and Carafa would join with two members of the Roman Oratory and found the important Theatine Order.

The Theatines were the first Order to use the title of “Clerks Regular.” This was to unmistakably acknowledge that the Theatines were at the near bottom of the Catholic religious hierarchy. Clerks Regular were higher than monks, but not by much, and were bound by solemn vows to a life of strict spiritual obedience. The chief object of the Theatine Order was to bring the clergy back to a moral life and to restore the laity to the practice of virtue. In addition, the Theatines zealously fought against the “errors” of Lutheranism which had already spread to Switzerland, Germany, England, and France, and were threatening Italy.

The extraordinary example of the Theatines inspired many imitators. A similar society of Clerks Regular was founded at Somascha, a secluded hamlet between Milan and Bergamo, in 1528 by Girolamo Miani (later Saint Jerome Emiliani). The Somaschans followed the lead of the

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9 Isaiah 66:1-2. NKJV.
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Theatines and focused on the care of orphans, poor, and sick.13

In 1530 in Milan, the Order of Barnabites was founded by three Italian noblemen: St. Anton Maria Zaccaria (canonized by Leo XIII), Ven. Barthélemy Ferrari, and Ven. Jacopo Morigia. While the Barnabites were also designated as Clerks Regular, the group insisted that their place at the bottom of the hierarchy be acknowledged. Instead of calling themselves a religious “order,” the Barnabites referred to themselves only as “the Congregation.”14 According to the Catholic Encyclopedia, the duties of The Barnabites were solemn and multi-faceted:

“The members of the order make, in addition to the three regular vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, a vow never to strive for any office or position of dignity, or to accept such otherwise than under a command of the Holy See. The scope of their special vocation, besides preaching in general, catechizing, hearing confessions, giving missions, ministrations in hospitals and prisons, and the education of youth, includes also a particular devotion to the thorough study and exposition of St. Paul’s Epistles.”15

In 1535 in in a small house near the Church of St. Afra in Brescia, St. Angela Merici founded The Ursulines. The Ursulines were a group of religious women dedicated to the sole purpose of educating young girls. The educational purpose of the Ursulines was derived from a vision experienced by St. Angela Merici in which it was revealed to her that “she was to found an association of virgins who were to devote their lives to the religious training of young girls.”16 Decades after their founding, the Ursulines were officially made the first teaching order of women established in the Church.17 The Ursulines were moved up from the bottom of the Church hierarchy in 1572 when St. Charles Borromeo, Cardinal Archbishop of Milan, obtained for the congregation the status of a monastic order with enclosure.18

Unlike the Ursulines, Carlo Borromeo (1538-1584) knew nothing about starting at the bottom. Borromeo’s father was Count Giberto Borromeo, who, about 1530, married Margherita de Medici. Medici’s younger brother

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was Giovanni Angelo, who became Cardinal de’ Medici and then became Pope Pius IV in 1559. Given his connections at the top of the Church hierarchy, it comes as no surprise that Borromeo became Archbishop of Milan. What is surprising is that Borromeo also became one of the Fathers of the Catholic Reformation. Indeed, in a time noted for ecclesiastical impiety, Borromeo set quite the contrary example for Catholic leaders. For example, Borromeo is responsible for:

— Founding the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine “in order that the children might be carefully and systematically instructed.”

This confraternity was the beginning of what is now known as Sunday school.

— Stringently reforming his own diocese both in spiritual and temporal affairs as detailed in his “Acta Ecclesiae Mediolanensis”.

— Reforming, at great personal risk, areas of the Swiss church. As described in the Catholic Encyclopedia:

“In October, 1567, Charles started to visit three Swiss valleys, Levantina, Bregno, and La Riviera. In most parts, indeed, there was much to reform. The clergy especially were in many cases so lax and careless, and even living scandalous lives, that the people had grown to be equally negligent and sinful. The hardships of this journey were great; Charles travelled on a mule, but sometimes on foot, over most difficult and even dangerous ground. His labours bore great fruit, and a new spirit was put into both clergy and laity.”

(One fruit of his Swiss journey was a failed assassination attempt by clergy who had no interest in being reformed.)

— Personally leading the reform of the Order of the Humiliati. Unfortunately, some members of the Humiliati had no interest in being reformed so they, too, tried and failed to assassinate Borromeo.

— And Borromeo is also responsible for personally saving thousands of peasants from starvation. According to the Catholic Encyclopedia:

“(In 1571), owing to the short harvest, the whole province suffered from a terrible famine, during which Charles worked with unceasing toil to help the starving, relieving at his own expense as many as 3000 daily for three months. His example induced others to help, the governor, especially, giving large alms.”

In addition to his reform efforts, Borromeo was also a key player at The Council of Trent (1545-1563), the church council most associated with the Catholic Reformation. Borromeo was also a patron of the Jesuits — and a thorn in their side — as The Society of Jesus expanded into Lombardy.

The Society of Jesus, known as the Jesuits, were the vanguard of the Catholic Reformation. Founded by the Spaniard Ignatius of Loyola in 1534, the original intention of the movement was simply to be a group of laymen who imitated the life of Christ. As the Catholic Ency-

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clopeda explained:

“... Ignatius Loyola, the founder, began his self-reform, and the enlistment of followers, entirely prepossessed with the idea of the imitation of Christ, and without any plan for a religious order or purpose of attending to the needs of the days. Unexpectedly prevented from carrying out this idea, he offered his services and those of his followers to the pope, “Christ upon Earth”, who at once employed him in such works as were most pressing at the moment.”

The Vicar of Christ found an abundance of pressing work for the Jesuits. Through their “ostentatious devotion” to the desires of the papacy:

— The Jesuits engaged fervently in missionary work among the pagans of India, Japan, China, Canada, and Central and South America. This contributed to mitigating the spread of Protestantism in those areas.

— They were charged with establishing schools, seminar- ies and universities throughout Europe and the New World.

— And the Jesuits were to become the main instruments of the Counter-Reformation including the reconquest of southern and western Germany and Austria for the Church, and the preservation of the Catholic faith in France and other countries. Aiding the Jesuits in this reconquest were the Catholic monarchs in Spain, southern Germany and Central Europe. In addition, the Inquisition also helped to root out Protestants and other heretics.

From the bottom (or near bottom) up, a series of reform movements had begun to reshape the Catholic Church. Indeed, much that was commendable had happened in the Church in a single generation:

1497 The Oratory of Divine Love
1524 The Theatines
1528 The Somaschan
1530 The Barnabites
1534 The Jesuits
1535 The Ursulines

In addition to reformers working from the bottom, an informal group of distinguished ladies, humanists, and cardinals drawn, by and large, from the highest levels of Italian society met frequently to discuss theology and the reform of the Church. One of these groups was headed by Gasparo Contarini in Venice. According to historian Andrew Pettegree:

“Scholars have long recognized that the most important figure of Italian religious reform during the 1530s and early 1540s was the Venetian Gasparo Contarini, a...”

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humanist patrician.”

Because of Contarini’s noted zeal for reform, Pope Paul III made Contarini — a layman — a Cardinal on May 21, 1535 in one of the first acts of his papacy. Paul then called Contarini and the leaders among the Catholic reformers to Rome. On January 30, 1536, a Bull was read in the Consistory for the reform of many of the papal offices. In the summer of 1536, Paul appointed a commission of nine to report on the pressing issue of reform within the Catholic Church. As historian Acton wrote, the commission’s report (the “Consilium deleutorum cardinalium et aliorum praelatorum de emendanda ecelesia” - 1537) was truly damning:

“The great principle to which they return again and again is that laws ought not to be dispensed with save for grave cause, and that even then no money should be taken for dispensation. To the system of money payments they trace the chief evils of the Roman Court. Everything could be obtained for money, however hurtful it might be to the general welfare of the Church. The report does not confine itself to the evils at the fountain-head. The whole Church was infected with corruption. Unfit persons were habitually ordained and admitted to benefices. Pensions and charges were imposed upon the revenues of benefices which made it impossible for the holder to live an honest life. Expectatives and reservations had a demoralising effect. Residence was generally neglected by the Bishops and clergy; and exemptions from the authority of the Ordinary enabled leaders of scandalous lives to persist in their wickedness. The regular clergy were no better than the seculars. Scandals were frequent in the religious Houses; and the privileges of the Orders enabled unfit persons to hear confessions. The Cardinals were as bad as the Bishops with regard to residence, and accumulated offices in their persons. Indulgences were excessive in number, and superstitious practices were too often encouraged. Much evil had followed from the granting of marriage dispensation; and absolutions for the sin of simony could be obtained for a mere song. In Rome itself the services were slovenly conducted and the whole priesthood was sordid. Loose women were openly received even in the houses of Cardinals. Unbelief grew apace, and unnecessary disputations on trivial points disturbed the faith of the vulgar. It was the duty of the Mother and Mistress of all Churches to lead the way in the amending of these evils...”

Even worse, this embarrassing report was leaked to the Protestant opposition and widely circulated as a justification for the Protestants’ continued attacks on Rome. Those attacks continued at a new Diet of Worms in 1545, a national assembly called prior to the opening of the Council of Trent. At the Diet, however, the Protestant attacks were deflected by the pro-Roman efforts of Charles V. As historian Acton revealed:

“In October, 1545, accordingly, after the conclusion of the Diet of Worms, (Charles V) requested the Pope to open the Council as quickly as possible at Trent; and informed him that the religious negotiations at the Diet were not seriously in-

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tended, and that their only purpose was to deceive the Protestants until his military preparations were ready and he should be able to crush them.”

The Council of Trent was formally opened on December 13, 1545. The attendance at the opening ceremony was meager. Besides three Papal Legates and Cardinal Madruzzo, only four Archbishops, twenty Bishops, five Generals of Orders, and a small number of theologians were present. Paul III — who called the Council — was not even there.

Paul had a multitude of reasons for his absence. He was an old man, nearly eighty, and had little interest in such a lengthy journey. It was better for the papacy to avoid being directly involved in the inevitable struggles which would flare up at the Council. Paul had grown tired of the constant cries for reform. And he had three competent legates who would keep in close communication and had been ordered to take no decisive action without the approval of the Pope.31

But Paul was also reluctant because the conciliar movement was still strong during the 16th century and popes — as they had been for centuries — were reluctant to call any councils which might confer any more authority to the Cardinals at the expense of the papacy.32

Given his conciliar reluctance, Paul put into motion his private plan for the Council of Trent. As Acton reported:

“In his instructions to the Legates, Paul III clearly laid down that reform was only a secondary and less important cause of the convocation of the Council. Its principal work was to be the definition of dogma. It was for this latter purpose that Paul III had consented to summon the Council. By proclaiming anew the old dogmas, reconciliation with the Protestants would be rendered impossible; and — before any reforms hostile to the papal interests could be undertaken — it would probably be possible to bring the Council to an end.”33

Despite continued pushes for reform by the Spanish Bishops, Paul’s plan bore fruit. During the first period of the council (1545-1547) the dogmatic breaks with the Lutherans were made abundantly apparent. The council decided that — contrary to Sola Scriptura — Scripture (as contained in the Latin Vulgate) and apostolic tradition held equal authority. The council also is-

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sued 33 refutations of the doctrine of Sola Fide and re-affirmed that all seven sacraments were vital.\textsuperscript{34}

In addition, the Council moved to stop anyone from using that favorite Protestant device — the printing press. According to the official decrees of the Council of Trent:

“And wishing also, as is just, to impose a restraint in this matter upon printers, who now, without restraint, that is, thinking that whatsoever they please is allowable, print, without the license of ecclesiastical superiors, the said books of sacred Scripture, and the annotations and expositions upon them of all persons indifferently, with the press, often unnamed, often even fictitious, and what is more grievous still, without the author's name; and also indiscriminately keep for sale books of this kind printed elsewhere; [this synod] ordains and decrees, that, henceforth, the sacred Scripture, and especially the aforesaid old and vulgate edition, be printed in the most correct manner possible; and that it shall not be lawful for any one to print, or cause to be printed, any books whatever, on sacred matters, without the name of the author; nor to sell them in future, or even to keep them by them, unless they shall have been first examined, and approved of by the ordinary; under pain of the anathema …”\textsuperscript{35}

The work of the council was only half done when a minor outbreak of the plague in Trent gave the Roman representatives a pretext to call for an adjournment to Bologna.\textsuperscript{36} As Acton revealed, Paul looked to move the Council to the friendlier confines of Italy in order to avoid being forced to make unwanted reforms:

“While affairs were thus proceeding in the Council, the Emperor was obtaining a series of successes in Germany which alarmed the Pope. Paul III had no desire to see Charles too powerful, and was afraid that he might come in person to Italy and insist on far-reaching reforms. He therefore determined to authorise the Legates to transfer the Council to Bologna.”\textsuperscript{37}

Fifteen prelates, allied to Charles V, refused to leave Trent. Charles then demanded the return of the council to German territory, but Paul III refused and on April 21st, 1547 the council was postponed indefinitely.\textsuperscript{38} The impasse was broken by the death of Paul two years later. As the Catholic Encyclopedia explained:

“Paul’s end came rather suddenly. After the assassination of Pier Luigi (the Pope’s son), he had struggled to retain Piacenza and Parma for the Church and had deprived Ottavio, Pier Luigi’s son and Charles’s son-in-law, of these duchies. Ottavio, relying on the emperor’s benevolence, refused obedience; it broke the old man’s heart, when he learned that his favourite grandson, Cardinal Farnese, was a party to the transaction. He fell into a violent fever and died at the Quirinal, at

\textsuperscript{34} Landry, Stan M. The Catholic Reformation, University of Arizona, Online presentation. 1 November 2010. Lecture notes.
\textsuperscript{35} Council of Trent. Translated by Theodore Buckley. The canons and decrees of the council of Trent: Literally translated into English. With supplement. London: George Routledge and Co. 1851. p. 19
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the age of eighty-two (10 November 1549).”

Paul and Charles battled each other mostly to a draw during this first period with the “losers” of the sessions — from the Roman perspective — being the Lutherans and their allies. According to Acton, the winners of the first period were the Jesuits. The representatives of the Society of Jesus had been personally coached by Ignatius and his plan achieved significant — and lasting — success. As Acton wrote:

“Ignatius was of opinion that the Council was not of very high importance; but he wished his Society to receive favourable notice there. Laynez and Salmeron had received very careful instructions as to their behaviour in the Council. They were to use every opportunity for preaching and carrying on pastoral work. Dogmatics, however, were to be avoided in the pulpit, and no excessive asceticism that might be repellent was to be practised. ... In the meetings of the Council they were to speak with moderation and avoid giving offence: but they were to oppose anything approaching to the new views. ... The politic instructions of Ignatius, which Laynez and Salmeron faithfully carried out, were eminently successful. The Jesuits were exempted from the general prohibition of preaching during the Council, and soon obtained considerable influence with the Spanish Bishops.”

After the death of Paul, Cardinal del Monte was elevated to the papacy as Julius III. Julius was significantly more flexible than Paul and immediately agreed to return the Council to Trent. However, before the second period of the Council of Trent could begin, violent conciliar differences erupted. The controversy centered on the title to be given to the council. As the Catholic Encyclopedia explained:

“The question was whether there should be added to the title “Holy Council of Trent” (Sacrosancta tridentina synodus) the words “representing the Church universal” (universalem ecclesiam repreesentans). ... However, such a title, although justified in itself, appeared dangerous to the (papal) legates and other members of the council on account of its bearing on the Councils of Constance and Basle, as it might be taken to express the superiority of the ecumenical council over the pope.”

In exchange for a guarantee from Charles that papal authority would remain intact, Julius even consented to grant the Lutherans a hearing at the council. That conciliation came to naught as the council — dealing primarily with the issue of the Eucharist — strongly reaffirmed the doctrine of transubstantiation as a

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direct refutation of the Lutheran position. Julius himself presided over the second period and approved the following introduction to the decree:

“The sacred and holy, ecumenical and general Synod of Trent ... that it might set forth the true and ancient doctrine touching faith and the sacraments, and that it might provide a remedy for all the heresies, and the other most grievous troubles with which the Church of God is now most miserably agitated, and rent into many and various parts; yet, even from the outset, this especially has been the object of its desires, that it might pluck up by the roots those tares of execrable errors and schisms, which the enemy hath, in these our calamitous times, sown in the doctrine of the faith, in the use and worship of the sacred and holy Eucharist, which our Saviour, notwithstanding, left in His Church as a symbol of that unity and charity in which He would fain have all Christians be mutually joined and united together.”

The inflexibility of the council’s positions were due in no small part to the Jesuits who opposed any dogmatic compromise with the Protestants. On the contrary, the Jesuits continued to strengthen their position within the Church by calling for a return to Catholic fundamental beliefs. That fundamentalist fervor was to be cut short, however. The second period of the Council of Trent ended abruptly when Maurice of Saxony defeated forces of Charles V and marched into the southern German states. As the Catholic Encyclopedia reported:

“On account of the treacherous attack made by Maurice of Saxony on Charles V, the city of Trent and the members of the council were placed in danger; consequently, at the sixteenth session (23 April, 1552) a decree suspending the council for two years was promulgated. However, a considerably longer period of time elapsed before it could resume its sessions.”

The final session of the Council of Trent was called by Pope Pius IV and continued to be marked by Jesuit intransigence. However, progress was made on several fronts:

• The very profitable masses for the dead were deemed valid and would be allowed to continue.
• The very profitable sale of indulgences was affirmed, but not for the benefit of sins one might commit in the future.
• The very profitable veneration of the saints would be allowed to continue.
• The very profitable prayers for the dead were also affirmed.
• And the existence of Purgatory which undergirded the profitability of each of the previous areas was affirmed.

In a pro-Jesuit move, the council also decided that a seminary must exist in every diocese to teach the clergy and Borromeo was put in charge of a committee to create the basis for that education thus creating the first official catechism of the Catholic Church. This was part of a general decree on reform (in twenty-one chapters) connected with the administration of eccle-

43 Landry, Stan M. *The Catholic Reformation*, University of Arizona, Online presentation. 1 November 2010. Lecture notes.
45 Landry, Stan M. *The Catholic Reformation*, University of Arizona, Online presentation. 1 November 2010. Lecture notes.
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In 1546 the papal bull Benedictus Deus compelled the decrees to be enforced worldwide. This apparently, was all the reformation the Roman Church in toto was willing to consider as the next church council would not occur for 323 years.47/48/49/50

Conclusion: The Catholic Reformation

At the beginning of the Catholic Reformation and at the end, the authority of the papacy remained intact. Reforms that did not diminish the Vicar of Christ were allowed. Reforms that would have weakened the Holy See, were dismissed. A constant parade of Catholic reformers worked to reweave the fabric of the Church from below. They included Vernazza, Adorno, Gaetano, Carafa, Miani, Zaccaria, Ferrari, Mirigia, Merici, Borromeo, Loyola, and Contarini. The actual number of these reformers and their followers was exceptionally small. Yet, these spiritual servants would carry the holy water of reform for the leaders of the Church for centuries to come. It is that thread — the thread of the lowest carrying the spiritual burdens of the highest — that we will consider as we explore Christianity in the New World.

48 Landry, Stan M. *The Catholic Reformation*, University of Arizona, Online presentation. 1 November 2010. Lecture notes.
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**There should be no beggars ... according to the Council of Trent**

For centuries, the Catholic Church had allowed — and even encouraged — mendicant (begging) priests. In fact, the Jesuits themselves were originally founded as a mendicant order.1 This changed at the Council of Trent. While Orders were allowed to remain as mendicants, individual priests would no longer be able to continue the practice. According to historian Hubert Jedin:

“Now one of the trials of the pious man down to the end of the Middle Ages had been the sight of the horde of beggar-priests—priests without any benefice at all, driven to live by their wits out of the general benevolence of the laity. As well as founding the seminary system, Trent forbade bishops to ordain candidates who could never be of service, and also all who were not able, at their ordination, to bring legal proof that they were in peaceful possession of a benefice the income of which was enough to support them.”

This decision ran contrary to centuries of Christian practice where the prayers of the mendicant priests — and also the prayers of the begging poor — were considered to have special powers. The decree of the Council of Trent read:

`CHAPTER X.`

“*It shall not be lawful for chapters of churches, when a see is vacant, to grant, whether by ordinance of common law, or by virtue of any privilege or custom soever, a license for ordination, or letters dimissory, or “reverend,” as some call them, within a year from the day of that vacancy, to any one who is not straitened, by occasion of some ecclesiastical benefice received, or about to be received. If it shall be otherwise, the contravening chapter shall be subjected to an ecclesiastical interdict . . . .”`

The issue of “beggars” also came up as the decrees of the Council of Trent were being enforced. In 1565, Philip of Spain sent nine Spanish Inquisitors to enforce the decrees of the Council of Trent in the Netherlands. In response, over 300 nobles marched on Brussels to let the Regent Margaret know that enforcing the decrees of Trent would result in a general rebellion. The nobles were greeted with contempt by Margaret and her advisors who called the nobles “Les gueux” (the beggars). In response, the nobles proudly accepted the title, began to dress like beggars, adopted a beggar’s sack as their emblem, and led a Protestant rebellion against their Catholic rulers. Their rallying cry went:

“Par le sel, par le pain, et par le besache,
Les gueux ne changeront pas, quoy qu’un se fache.”

(By salt, by bread, and by the bag of a beggar,
(The Beggars will never change, despite the fury of another.))

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4. English translation by author.
It was the dawn of the sixteenth century and Christopher Columbus was poised to embark on his voyages of discovery. While the existence of the New World was still uncertain, Columbus nevertheless knew exactly what his voyages would mean for all of humanity. As historian David Stannard described, Columbus was certain his coming discoveries would initiate the end of the world:

“It was through the exploration of (ancient) sources … in addition to lengthy conversations with Franciscan monks who were convinced the end was near, that Columbus figured out to his satisfaction precisely when the Second Coming would occur. He did this through a kind of simplistic biblical numerology he had worked out, but he also knew it from he historical signs that were all around him. … Thus, the obstinate resistance of the Jews to conversion, like the alarming successes of the Muslims in Turkey, were only part of God’s great plan …”

In fact, once Columbus returned from his first voyages, he was even more certain of God’s plan. Stannard wrote:

“(Columbus) began compiling what he called his Libro de las Profecías — his Book of Prophecy; a scrapbook of hundreds of quotations from Scripture, from early Christian writers, and from classical authors, all purporting to demonstrate that the end of time was but a century and a half away (and) that the Jews and infidels and heathens throughout the entire world soon would be either destroyed or converted to Christ …. Indeed, for a time, he thought he had discovered — with the Lord’s guidance, of course — King Solomon’s mines, and it was this gold that would launch the crusade that would bring on the end of the world.”

2 English translation by author
Christianity in the New World

Columbus was not alone in thinking that the Jews, infidels and heathens of the world — those on the lowest spiritual strata — needed to be either destroyed or converted to Christ. One of the pillars of the Catholic Reformation, Gian Pietro Carafa, the co-founder of the Theatine Order, issued the bull *Cum Nimis Absurdum* when he became Pope Paul IV in 1555. The bull infamously set penalties for Jews who refused to convert to Christianity. As historian William Story wrote:

“(Paul IV) prohibited Jewish physicians from practising among Christians; he disabled them from carrying on any trade or handicraft, and from the purchase and sale of merchandize; he imposed upon them heavy tributes, and prohibited them from all commerce with Christians. Even the title of Don, to which some of the highest Spanish Jews were entitled, he disallowed. Perfectly to separate them from all other classes, he ordered that they should not enter the city without bearing a badge of Hebraism; the men a yellow hat and the women a yellow veil; for, he says, “it is truly too shameless and unseemly that Jews, whose guilt has precipitated them into eternal slavery, under the pretext of receiving Christian compassion, should insolently assume to dwell among Christians and take Christian servants, and even to purchase houses, without bearing a badge.” Hitherto, certain Jews had for a long period been silently permitted to reside within the walls of the city, despite all the laws to the contrary, though for the most part they congregated together on the further side of the Tiber to avoid close contact with a people who hated and despised them; but Caraffa now imprisoned them within the narrow limits between the Ponte Quattro Capi and the Piazza del Pianto, now known as the Ghetto, though it formerly bore the name of the Vicus Judaeorum. But Ghetto is its true name— the place of ban— the place for outcasts—as deeply they must have felt when, on the 26th of July, 1556, they were driven sorrowing into this pen and walled up there like beasts.”

Heathens — like the indigenous populations of the New World — received similar treatment. The Christian standard of convert, be enslaved, or die was carried by Columbus and others across the seas. As Stannard described:

“(Columbus) was also a man with sufficient intolerance and contempt for all who did not look or behave or believe as he did, that he thought nothing of enslaving or killing such people simply because they were not like him. He was, to repeat, a secular personification of what more than a thousand years of Christian culture had wrought. As such, the fact that he launched a campaign of horrific violence against the natives of Hispaniola is not something that should surprise anyone. Indeed, it would be surprising if he had NOT inaugurated such carnage.”

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Christianity in the New World

The formalization of this Christian threat to convert, be enslaved, or die, is contained in “El Requerimiento.” El Requerimiento (The Requirement) was a speech written by Catholic theologians in 1513. It was specifically created to be read at first point of contact between Catholic conquerors and indigenous peoples. This letter dictated that the conquerors were servants and messengers from God and that the Europeans now had “lordship” over the native peoples. The indigenous population was then given a choice: they were to willingly convert to Christianity or not.7 If they chose not to willingly become Christians, the consequences were made clear:

“But, if you do not do this, or when doing this make wicked delays, I affirm to you that, with the help of God, we will forcefully enter against you, and we will make war against you everywhere and in every way we can, and we will subject you to the yoke and obedience of the Church and of their Majesties, and we will take your people and your wives and your children, and we will make them all slaves...”8

El Requerimiento was in force as Spanish explorer Hernan Cortés began his conquests of the New World.9 Cortés is regarded by some historians as the central figure of the Spanish Conquista. In addition, the Catholic Church holds Cortés up as a shining example of Christian conversions fostered by El Requerimiento. As Fray Gerónimo de Mendieta wrote:

“The same year that (Martin) Luther was born in Eisleben, Hernan Cortez was born in Medellin, the first to disturb the world and put under the devil’s banner many faithful ones whose fathers and grandfathers for long years were Catholics, and the second to bring into the pale of the Church infinite multitudes who for numberless years had been under the power of Satan wrapped up in vice and blind with idolatry.”10

Cortés’ initial attempts at conversion did not go so well. During his voyage in 1519, his first as the leader of an expedition, Cortés sailed along the shore of the Yucatan and entered the Tabasco River. There he landed on an island called Punta de los Palmares. The natives did not take well to conversion. According to various sources, eight hundred to a thousand natives were killed in the first engagement. In official dispatches, Cortés claimed forty thousand natives were massacred in battle and Bartolomé de las Casas gave thirty thousand as the number “cruelly slaughtered.”11

Things brightened considerably for Cortés when he met with the Aztec Emperor Moctezuma II. Historian John Wesley Butler gave the details in his history of Mexico:

“All these, however, were trifles beside the gold, the bright, glittering gold and the silver which were not disclosed. First there was a disk of the yellow metal, representing the sun with its rays, as large as a carriage wheel, ten spans in diameter, ornamented in semi-relief, and valued at thirty-eight hundred pesos de oro. A companion disk of solid silver, of the same size, and equally ornamented,

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7 Landry, Stan M. Christianity in the New World, University of Arizona, Online presentation. 1 November 2010. Lecture notes.
9 Landry, Stan M. Christianity in the New World, University of Arizona, Online presentation. 1 November 2010. Lecture notes.
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represented the moon. Then there were thirty golden ducks, well fashioned; a number of other pieces in form of dogs, lions, monkeys, and other animals; ten collars, a necklace, with over one hundred pendant stones; called emeralds and rubies by the Spaniards; twelve arrows, a bow with cord stretched, two staves, each five palms in length; fans, bracelets, and other pieces, all of fine gold. ... 12

Some scholars estimate that due to the result of forced conversion, slavery, hunger and disease the indigenous population declined from 16 million to about 1 million inhabitants. 13 This treatment of the indigenous people of the New World continued despite the issuance of a 1537 bull by Paul III, Sublimus Dei. While the bull called for native peoples to be treated as humans and forbade their enslavement, 14 the enforcement of Sublimus Dei was gutted the following year. As Paulist Regis Duffy wrote:

"Pressured by the Spanish king, Emperor Charles V, Paul issued another bull the following year, revoking the censures and penalties imposed on those who defied Sublimus Dei." 15

The real-world approach to the issue of slavery by Paul III is also discoverable in decisions he made after Sublimus Dei. In 1545, Paul revoked an ancient statute that had given slaves the right to declare their freedom under the Emperor’s statue on the Capitol. Some historians claim Paul made the decision to protect Rome from a horde of homeless beggars, other historians assert that the decision was made because of a shortage of slaves. Whatever the rationale, Paul’s 1545 decree re-affirmed the right of Romans to publicly buy and sell slaves — including Christian slaves. 16/17 Paul was ecumenical in his approach to slavery, however. In 1548 he authorized the purchase and enslavement of infidels (Muslims) in the Papal states. 18

One of the true critics of slavery and the Spanish conquest was Spanish Dominican priest de las Casas. De las Casas had accompanied Columbus on his third journey to the New World and had witnessed stunning atrocities against the native peoples. Fearing for God’s judgment against the Spanish, de las Casas sent to King Philip II in 1542 his account entitled “Brevísima relación de la destrucción de las Indias” (A Short Account of the Destruction of the Indies). 19 De las Casas would later debate Spanish theologian

14 Landry, Stan M. Christianity in the New World, University of Arizona, Online presentation. 1 November 2010. Lecture notes.
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Juan de Sepulveda at the Valladolid Debates (1550-1551)²⁰ but his strongest arguments are still found in the report he wrote for the king. In his description of the destruction of Hispaniola, de las Casas wrote:

"The Spaniards first assaulted the innocent Sheep, so qualified by the Almighty, as is premention'd, like most cruel Tygers, Wolves and Lions hunger-starv'd, studying nothing, for the space of Forty Years, after their first landing, but the Massacre of these Wretches, whom they have so inhumanely and barbarously butcher'd and harass'd with several kinds of Torments, never before known, or heard (of which you shall have some account in the following Discourse) that of Three Millions of Persons, which lived in Hispaniola itself, there is at present but the inconsiderable remnant of scarce Three Hundred. ... In this Isle, which, as we have said, the Spaniards first attempted, the bloody slaughter and destruction of Men first began: for they violently forced away Women and Children to make them Slaves, and ill-treated them, consuming and wasting their Food, which they had purchased with great sweat, toil, and yet remained dissatisfied too, which every one according to his strength and ability, and that was very inconsiderable (for they provided no other Food than what was absolutely necessary to support Nature without superfluity, freely bestow'd on them, and one individual Spaniard consumed more Victuals in one day, than would serve to maintain Three Families a Month, every one consisting of Ten Persons. Now being oppressed by such evil usage, and afflicted with such greate Torments and violent Entertainment they began to understand that such Men as those had not their Mission from Heaven …"²¹

As a result of forced conversion, slavery, and hunger, the native population of slaves dwindled so the conquerors began importing African slaves to replace them. The overwhelming majority of these African slaves were transported to Brazil, an area ceded to Portuguese control under the 1494 Treaty of Tordesillas. The Church’s approach to African slavery was, at best, inconsistent allowing slavery to expand enormously. By 1675 more slaves had already arrived in Brazil than would ever reach British North America and from 1676 until 1851 over 3,000,000 additional African slaves went to Brazil.²²

The Church’s variable position on slavery can be seen by statements made at different times by different clerics holding the position of the Archbishop of Bahia. Bahia, founded in 1551 as a permanent sugar colony, was the epicenter of the Brazilian slave trade. In 1707 the then Archbishop of Bahia, Sebastião Monteiro da Vide, promulgated a set of conditions for the treatment of slaves in Bahia. The conditions encouraged slave owners to: convert their slaves, not have them work on Sundays and other holy days, allow them to marry, and ensure that slaves were buried appropriately. For priests, the Archbishop of Bahia’s instructions detailed that slaves were to be taught church doctrine and prayers in their own languages. That was

²⁰ Landry, Stan M. Christianity in the New World, University of Arizona, Online presentation. 1 November 2010. Lecture notes.
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in 1707. By the end of that century, things had changed. In 1794, a friar in Bahia had been teaching churchgoers that slavery was against God’s law and that the current policies regarding slavery were inhumane. The Archbishop of Bahia stepped in to resolve the situation. As this letter from the Governor of Bahia to the Portuguese Secretary of State reveals, the Church had come down unequivocably on the side of slavery and on the side of the treatment meted out by slaveholders.23 The letter read:

“… The priest, Friar Joseph of Bologna … has unwisely and indiscreetly followed an opinion in respect to slavery which, if propagated and adopted, would disturb the consciences of this city’s inhabitants and bring further results disastrous to the preservation and welfare of this colony. … He convinced himself that slavery was illegitimate and contrary to religion . . . . To avoid the spread of such a pernicious doctrine, the Archbishop (of Bahia) immediately ordered him to suspend his confessions (and) deport him in the same ship … and that the captain not allow him to go ashore … ”24

The need for slaves in Spanish colonies grew from an economic system originally created under the Patronato Real. The Patronato Real are a series of edicts and treaties from the late 15th and early 16th centuries that established the working relationship between the Spanish monarchy and the Catholic Church in the New World. Under the Patronato Real, the Spanish crown was given authority over the Church in the Americas including the right to appoint bishops. In exchange, the crown agreed to build churches, collect tithes, and govern the secular clergy.25 The system that grew up to support the economic realities of the Patronato Real was called the Encomienda.

According to historian Lesley Simpson, the Encomienda began when the conquerors’ need for slaves outgrew the affordable supply:

“Along with the necessity of obtaining food went the hardly less pressing urge to mine gold. In both these activities laborers in large numbers were required, for the Spanish colonists, whatever their status may have been at home, were extraordinarily averse to working with their hands. Were they not all hidalgos (a member of the minor nobility in Spain)? Slaves were expensive and there were never enough of them. So, upon one pretext or another, the natives were forced to work for their conquerors. Such were the conditions out of which evolved the much debated encomienda system.”27

It was the excesses of the Encomienda that brought attempts at reform from the Franciscans, Dominicans, Augustinians, and, notably, the Jesuits. These orders ministered to the indigenous people in separate doctrinas, or parishes set aside specifically for native peoples.28 The Jesuits, however, developed their own response to the abuses of the Encomienda. Historian

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28 Landry, Stan M. \textit{Christianity in the New World}, University of Arizona, Online presentation. 1 November 2010. Lecture notes.
Adalberto López described the enabling conditions for what would become the Jesuit “Reduc-cciones”:

“The Jesuits were shocked by the way the Paraguayans were treating the Indians, and without hesitation they set about to change the situation. … P. Marcial de Lorenzana, one of the first Jesuits to arrive in Paraguay, spoke vehemently against the abuses of the encomenderos and against the encomienda system itself. … Because of the outspoken criticism of the encomienda by the Jesuits in Paraguay, the settlers, who had at first welcomed the Fathers and given the lands in Asunción, soon turned against the. The Jesuits were called the enemies of Paraguay, were refused charity, and found it difficult to get food.”

The Jesuit Reductions were mission areas under the complete control of the Jesuits. Usually independent of the colonial government and even the colonial church, the Reductions used the protected labor of the native peoples to become Jesuit centers of power and wealth. Most of the Reductions were located in what is now Paraguay, Brazil and Argentina. These areas were immediately opposed by the local encomenderos and were repeatedly targeted by slave traders.

As the Reductions grew and took away native laborers, the colonial economy suffered. In addition, the spread of European diseases among the indigenous population further aggravated the labor shortage. An epidemic in 1559 killed over 10,000 natives. Other epidemics in 1605, 1606, 1615, 1619, 1654, 169, and 1702 killed thousands more. The final victim of these colonial calamities would be the Jesuit Order itself which was forced to disband in the 1770’s.

One longstanding result of the Jesuit Reductions in Paraguay was the establishment of Guarani, an indigenous language, as one of two official languages in the nation. The educational efforts of the Jesuits created both a spoken and written form and formality to Guarani. This allowed the language to be promoted as the official native Paraguayan language during the

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30 Landry, Stan M. *Christianity in the New World*, University of Arizona, Online presentation. 1 November 2010. Lecture notes.


33 Landry, Stan M. *Christianity in the New World*, University of Arizona, Online presentation. 1 November 2010. Lecture notes.
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nationalist War of the Triple Alliance (1864-1870). The author of this paper worked in Paraguay during the 1970’s and provided medical services in both Spanish and Guaraní. In 2010, thanks to the efforts of the Jesuits, Guaraní is still spoken and understood by 90% of the Paraguayan population.

Another result of this Jesuit-inspired blending of Spanish and Guaraní culture is the syncretic approach to religion still found in Paraguay. For example, even today Paraguayans pray to the Virgin Mary to keep Luisón away from their loved one. Luisón is a half man, half wolf creature from an ancient indigenous religion associated with death and the night.

Other examples of syncretic worship, though usually rejected by the Catholic Church, can be found throughout Latin America. In Mexico City, a mixture of local belief and Catholic belief helped give rise to the Shrine of the Virgin of Guadalupe. Except for the Vatican, the shrine is visited by more people — over six million pilgrims arrive each year — than any other religious site in the Christian world. This story of syncretic belief is now an official part of Catholic tradition. As described by the Catholic Encyclopedia:

“Oral and written, Indian and Spanish, the account is unwavering. To a neophyte, fifty five years old, named Juan Diego, who was hurrying down Tepeyac hill to hear Mass in Mexico City, on Saturday, 9 December, 1531, the Blessed Virgin appeared and sent him to Bishop Zumárraga to have a temple built where she stood. She was at the same place that evening and Sunday evening to get the bishop’s answer. He had not immediately believed the messenger; having cross-questioned him and had him watched, he finally bade him ask a sign of the lady who said she was the mother of the true God. The neophyte agreed so readily to ask any sign desired, that the bishop was impressed and left the sign to the apparition. Juan was occupied all Monday with Bernardino, an uncle, who seemed dying of fever. Indian specifics failed; so at daybreak on Tuesday, 12 December, the grieved nephew was running to the St. James’s convent for a priest. To avoid the apparition and untimely message to the bishop, he slipped round where the well chapel now stands. But the Blessed Virgin crossed down to meet him and said: “What road is this thou tak-
est son?" A tender dialogue ensued. Reassuring Juan about his uncle whom at that instant she cured, appearing to him also and calling herself Holy Mary of Guadalupe she bade him go again to the bishop. Without hesitating he joyously asked the sign. She told him to go up to the rocks and gather roses. He knew it was neither the time nor the place for roses, but he went and found them. Gathering many into the lap of his tilma a long cloak or wrapper used by Mexican Indians he came back. The Holy Mother, rearranging the roses, bade him keep them untouched and unseen till he reached the bishop. Having got to the presence of Zumárraga, Juan offered the sign. As he unfolded his cloak the roses fell out, and he was startled to see the bishop and his attendants kneeling before him: the life size figure of the Virgin Mother, just as he had described her, was glowing on the poor tilma. A great mural decoration in the renovated basilica commemorates the scene. The picture was venerated, guarded in the bishop's chapel, and soon after carried processionally to the preliminary shrine.39

Other syncretic appearances of the Virgin Mary were not so well received. In 1711 an indigenous woman named Dominica López experienced visions of the Virgin Mary. The Virgin told López that, by paying homage to her, the local people would be blessed with maize, beans and children.40 The Catholic Church accused Lopéz of being a Mayan shaman and had her put to death.41 In 1712, the Virgin appeared to a thirteen-year-old girl in Cancuc. When the Catholic Church refused to recognize the appearance of the Virgin, a peasant revolt broke out. The peasants declared that Cancuc was the New Jerusalem and that the Ladinos were “Jews” as they had persecuted the mother of Jesus. After a series of bloody battles, the indigenous rebels were defeated by Spanish troops.42

Conclusion: Christianity in the New World

As Christianity moved to the New World, it was the lowest strata of society that would carry the spiritual burden for the highest. Catholic theologians believed that the conversion of the Jews and the heathen population would pave the way for the Second Coming of Christ. Explorers like Columbus who consulted these theologians agreed with them. But Columbus took it even further and asserted that the mountains of gold to be found in the New World — and to be mined by native slaves — would pay for the great crusade that would usher in this Christian New World. And conquerors like Cortés took the Spanish Requirement of convert, be enslaved or die to its ultimate end and prepared the way for Christ by genocide. Some, however, fought for the lowest, the least and the lost. De las Casas, Joseph of Bologna, the Jesuit Reductionists, and others did what they could. However, the combined power of the Spaniards, the Portuguese and the Roman Church brought forth an apocalypse, but this real-world apocalypse was reserved for the indigenous peoples of the New World.

41 Landry, Stan M. Christianity in the New World, University of Arizona, Online presentation. 1 November 2010. Lecture notes.
There should be no beggars ... according to the Spanish Conquerors

Bartolomé de las Casas saw the indigenous peoples of the New World being reduced to the status of slaves and beggars. He argued vehemently for reform and those reforms were, putting it charitably, not enthusiastically received by the Catholic Church. As recently as 1901 the Catholic Encyclopedia wrote:

“...with their amendments of 1543 and 1544, were a surprise and a source of much concern, especially in America. They did not abolish servitude, but they limited it in such a manner that the original settlers (Conquistadores) saw before them utter ruin by the eventual loss of their estates. The newly acquired territories belonged to the Crown. Those who had suffered unspeakable hardships, exposures, and sacrifices to secure this new continent for Spain had a right to expect compensation for themselves and their descendants. That expectation was now suddenly threatened with disappointment. Not only this, but the Indians obtained such favours that, as long as Spanish rule lasted in America, the reproach was justly made to the mother country that a native enjoyed more privileges than a creole. A storm of indignation broke out in America against the new code, and against Las Casas as its promoter.”

In response to the firestorm of protests by the Conquistadores, much of the enforcement of the New Laws was stopped. In fact, half of the agencies established to enforce the laws openly sided with the Conquistadores. In response, de las Casas published in 1552 the report he had previously sent privately sent to the Spanish Crown. As the Catholic Encyclopedia described:

“The laws of the Indies were gradually modified so as to afford the necessary protection to the natives without injuring too much the interests of the settlers. But the bitterness of Las Casas grew with age. In 1552 there appeared in print his “Brevísima Relacion de la Destructión de las Indias”, a most injudicious book, glaringly partial, based upon testimony often very impeachable and always highly colored.”

De las Casas “A Short Account of the Destruction of the Indies” was widely distributed and became a popular propaganda piece for the Protestants. Latin translations of the work were published in Frankfurt in 1598, Oppenheim in 1614, and Heidelberg in 1664. French translations were issued in Antwerp in 1579, Amsterdam in 1620 and 1698, Rouen in 1630, Lyons in 1642, and Paris in 1697 and 1822. Italian translations were published in Venice in 1630, 1643, and 1645; a German translation appeared in 1599, and Dutch translations were published in Amsterdam in 1610, 1621, and 1663. An English version was published in London in 1699.
Christianity in the New World

De las Casas “A Short Account of the Destruction of the Indies” begins by describing the indigenous people as obedient, loyal and submissive:

“Now this infinite multitude of Men are by the Creation of God innocently simple, altogether void of and averse to all manner of Craft, Subtlety and Malice, and most Obedient and Loyal Subjects to their Native Sovereigns; and behave themselves very patiently, submissively and quietly towards the Spaniards, to whom they are subservient and subject; so that finally they live without the least thirst after revenge, laying aside all litigiousness, Commotion and hatred. ...”

De las Casas then details a litany of atrocities against the native peoples as these men, women and children literally became beggars for their very lives:

“Which the Spaniards no sooner perceived, but they, mounted on generous Steeds, well weapon’d with Lances and Swords, begin to exercise their bloody Butcheries and Strategems, and overrunning their Cities and Towns, spar’d no Age, or Sex, nay not so much as Women with Child, but ripping up their Bellies, tore them alive in pieces. They laid Wagers among themselves, who should with a Sword at one blow cut, or divide a Man in two; or which of them should decollate or behead a Man, with the greatest dexterity; nay farther, which should sheath his Sword in the Bowels of a Man with the quickest dispatch and expedition.

“They snatcht young Babes from the Mothers Breasts, and then dasht out the brains of those innocents against the Rocks; others they cast into Rivers scoffing and jeering them, and call’d upon their Bodies when falling with derision, the true testimony of their Cruelty, to come to them, and inhumanely exposing others to their Merciless Swords, together with the Mothers that gave them Life. ...”

“In the Year 1509, the Spaniards sailed to the Islands of St. John and Jamaica (resembling Gardensa and Bee-hives) with the same purpose and design they proposed to themselves in the Isle of Hispaniola, perpetrating innumerable Robberies and Villanies as before; whereunto they added unheard of Cruelties by Murdering, Burning, Roasting, and Exposing Men to be torn to pieces by Dogs; and Finally by afflicting and harassing them with un-exampled Oppressions and torments in the Mines, they spoiled and unpeopled this Contrey of these Innocents. These two Isles containing six hundred thousand at least, though at this day there are scarce two hundred men to be found in either of them, the remainder perishing without the knowledge of Christian Faith or Sacrament.”

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Introduction to Part Two

“At Epworth, in Lincolnshire, the town where I was born, a beggar came to a house in the market-place, and begged a morsel of bread, saying she was very hungry. The master bid her be gone, for a lazy jade. She called at a second, and begged a little small beer, saying she was very thirsty. She had much the same answer. At a third door she begged a little water; saying she was very faint. But this man also was too conscientious to encourage common beggars. The boys, seeing a ragged creature turned from door to door, began to pelt her with snow-balls. She looked up, lay down, and died!

Would you wish to be the man who refused that poor wretch a morsel of bread, or a cup of water?”

~ John Wesley, Sermon 112: The Rich Man and Lazarus
Birmingham, England, March 25, 1788

Christianity in the Modern World can be compared to a brightly woven patchwork quilt sewn by an abundance of weavers using a breathtaking array of cloth and threads. This section will follow the sewing of that quilt as it passes through the upraised hands of the Revivalists, the active minds of the Enlightenment, the bloody fingers of the Revolutionaries, the peaceful thoughts of the Pietists, the footsteps of the Missionaries, and the voices of the Modernists. In doing so, Part Two of this book will track the development of the post-Reformation Roman Catholic Church as it continues to explore the Catholic Reformation through the Second Vatican Council.

This section will also present a graphically-based overview of the brightly colored quilt of this period by continuing to examine the changing perception of the poor as seen by the religious community. These observations will be presented in snapshot form as graphical text boxes at appropriate points throughout the discussion.

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1 The Sermons of John Wesley, The United Methodist Church. gbgm-umc.org. Web. 18 November 2010.
Revivalism in Europe and America

“S’il se vante, je l’abaisse, s’il s’abaisse, je le vante et le contredis toujours, Jusqu’à ce qu’il comprenne qu’il est un monstre incompréhensible.”

(If he brings himself up, I bring him down. If he brings himself down, I bring him up and I always contradict him, Until he comprehends that he is an incomprehensible monster.)

~ Blaise Pascal, Pensées (published posthumously in 1670)

The battle for the internal heart and soul of modern Christianity began in the confessional. The Jesuits, flush with wealth and power from their New World system of Reductions, began to extend their theological influence as well. Fearing that the severity of the penance system scared off too many followers, the Jesuits introduced a penitential approach based on Casuistry. In short, the new Jesuit confessional was an example based system of penance aimed at protecting a penitent from a too zealous confessor. As Acton (partisanly) described:

“The kind of question (a confessor) might ask was carefully defined. He must not cast about for general information as to his penitent’s disposition, as would a physician; he must try each offence strictly on its merits, as would a magistrate. He must always lean towards the most “benign” interpretation of the law; and for his guidance casuistry ran many an ingenious coach and four through inconvenient enactments. In matters of detail most of these are harmless enough. They are chiefly concerned with proving that common peccadillos — the white lies of the lady of fashion, the “trade customs” of the shopkeeper — are not grievous sins. Nevertheless, in the opinion of Pascal, Milton, and other contemporary critics, the Casuists degraded morality. They encouraged men to take over their ideas of right and wrong ready-made from the priest, and thus save themselves the trouble of thinking. … By hook or by crook get the sinner to confession, and the whole work was done. However bad his natural character, the magical words of absolution would make him a new man. … Meanwhile a movement was springing up, which aspired to cut down at the root of the whole Jesuit conception of religion. This was the revival known as Jansenism.”

The Jansenists were Catholics with significant Protestant leanings. Based on the writings of Belgian Bishop Cornelius Jansen (published posthumously in 1640), Jansenists believed in Sola Fide, held that human beings were indelibly marked by original sin, supported predestination, and were staunchly opposed to Papal authority putting their hierarchical faith in the col-

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2. English translation by author.
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lege of cardinals. Jansenists also believed that the penitential flexibility shown by the Jesuits allowed men to make their own religion. As Acton wrote:

“Jansen’s real object was to teach men that they cannot make their own religion for themselves. Left to their undisciplined fancy, they were straying on every side; some were experimenting with the geometrical God of Descartes, others with some Ultramontane “girdle of St Margaret.” Jansen answered that they cannot choose how, or when, they will be pious: they must wait till their Maker touches their heart, and tells them what He would have them do. “Those who really long for God,” said Pascal, “long also to approach Him only by means He has Himself ordained.”

As a model for this type of heart touching conversion, the Jansenists turned to the example of Saul of Tarsus. As Acton described:

“Jansen’s doctrine of conversion softened the grimness of his predestinarianism. A man might be unregenerate to-day; but to-morrow it might please God to convert him — as once He converted St. Paul, “model of all penitents.”

This model of conversion — a model based on a personal God reaching down to touch the internal heart and soul of an individual human — would become a hallmark belief of Revivalism in Europe and America. One such revival movement, Quietism, took that internal approach almost to its limits.

Quietism was originally developed by Spanish Miguel de Molinos. From his writings, especially from his “Dux spiritualis” (1675), sixty-eight propositions were extracted and condemned by Innocent XI in 1687. The primary reason for the condemnation is found in the first proposition which, according to the Catholic Encyclopedia, declared:

“Man must annihilate his powers and this is the inward way (via interna); in fact, the desire to do anything actively is offensive to God and hence one must abandon oneself entirely to God.”

With the annihilation of one’s self, also came the elimination of any requirement for rigid Catholic dogma. Through internal prayer and internal meditation, Quietists eschewed outside influences and, instead, quietly listened while they waited for God to reach in and touch their

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5 Landry, Stan M. Revivalism in Europe and America, University of Arizona, Online presentation. 8 November 2010. Lecture notes.
souls. As Acton wrote:

“(In Quietism) the one means of approach to this Deity was the ancient via negationis. All hope and fear, all thought and action, all life and feeling, must be laid aside; the soul must enwrap itself in the “soft and savoury sleep of nothingness, wherein it receives in silence, and enjoys it knows not what.”

Apparently, silence was not golden for the Catholic Church. After condemning the inward approach of Quietism, the Church attacked Jansenism when it, too, wished to remain silent. As Acton explained:

“In 1701 an indiscreet Jansenist consulted the Sorbonne as to whether it was not enough to receive the condemnation of the Augustinus (the writings of Bishop Jansen) in “respectful silence”—that is, with the purely external deference which good citizens might show to a law that they privately believed unwise. This casual question stirred the fires of fifty years before, and soon ecclesiastical France was in a blaze. In 1703 Louis wrote to Clement XI, suggesting that they should take concerted action to put an end to Jansenism for ever. In 1705 the Pope replied with a Bull condemning “respectful silence” outright.”

Another eighteenth century church movement was established on the other side of the auditory spectrum. The Methodist Church, founded by John Wesley, sought a far louder and more active role in religion. Wesley was famous for his impassioned preaching and his intense sermons. But it was failure and fear that would give rise to what became known as the Methodist Church.

Wesley became an Anglican priest in 1728 and appeared to be destined to follow in his father’s footsteps as the rector at Epworth, England. However, when Wesley returned to his studies at Oxford, he discovered that his brother Charles and a small group of men had started a semi-monastic group within the school. The group met for systematic Bible study, mutual discipline and frequent Communion. The group’s strenuous piety was soon notorious among the other students who chided the Wesleys and their friends calling them names like “The Holy Club,” “Bible Moths,” and “Methodists.”

John became the leader of the group, passed up the opportunity to serve at Epworth, and convinced Charles and two Methodist Club members to join him on a mission to Georgia in 1735. The mission to Georgia turned out to be a disaster for the group. In fact, John ended up...
fleeing for his life after a grand jury indicted him on twelve separate counts stemming from a failed love affair. However, it is that failure and fear that Methodist historians credit with creating the Methodist Church.14

Historian Frank Banfield described what happened:

“If Wesley was a failure in Georgia, and was practically driven out by the hostility he aroused among the colonists, his stay was an important turning-point in his life. He went out a High Churchman, and returned to begin a course of activity which led to the founding of the Methodist connection. On the voyage he came first in contact with the Moravians. He and his friends fasted very strictly, Delamotte and himself, indeed, trying to support life on bread alone. They spent their time without much intermission in prayer and study. In the midst of a severe storm, Wesley was conscious of feeling fear at what seemed the approach of imminent death, while he was at the same time struck with the undisturbed calm of the Moravians. As soon as they arrived on the coast of Georgia, a Moravian pastor, Augustus Gottlieb Spangenberg, came on board, and put to Wesley some personal questions as to his religious condition. Wesley was very much shaken by them; and, on his brother Charles leaving with Ingham for Frederica, he and Delamotte went to lodge with the Germans at Savannah. To the Moravians’ influence Wesley’s “conversion” is usually attributed by the official Methodists.”15

Wesley would return to the Moravians again and again during his career and would continue to be inspired by their piety. In one of the most famous moments of his life, Wesley attended a Moravian meeting in Aldersgate Street in London where he penned the famous words “I felt my heart strangely warmed.” As Wesley described it in his journal:

“... In the evening I went very unwillingly to a society in Aldersgate Street, where one was reading Luther’s preface to the Epistle to the Romans. About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for salvation: and an assurance was given me, that he had taken away mine sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death. ... I began to pray with all my might for those who had in a more especial manner despised and persecuted me. I then testified openly to all there, what I now first felt in my heart. But it was not long before the enemy suggested, “this cannot be faith; for where is thy joy?” Then was I taught, that peace and victory over sin are essential to faith in the Captain of our salvation: but that, as to the transports of joy that usually attend the beginning of it, especially in those who have mourned deeply, God sometimes giveth, sometimes withholdeth them, according to the counsels of his own will.”16

That joy would come to Wesley as he preached to the poor in Bristol in 1739. Encouraged

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by his associate, George Whitefield, Wesley traveled to Baptist Mills and King’s Wood and was amazed when over a thousand desperate miners came to hear his “reviving” words of conversion and salvation.17 As Wesley wrote in his journal:

“Wed. 4.—At Baptist Mills, (a sort of a suburb or village about half a mile from Bristol,) I offered the grace of God to about fifteen hundred persons from these words, “I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely.” In the evening three women agreed to meet together weekly, with the same intention as those at London, viz. “To confess their faults one to another, and pray one for another, that they may be healed.” At eight, four young men agreed to meet, in pursuance of the same design. How dare any man deny this to be (as to the substance of it) a means of grace, ordained by God …”18

The fervor of the Methodist movement spread, particularly among the poor. As Charles Morris wrote:

“For half a century (Wesley) continued these out-door ministrations, at times from 10,000 to 30,000 people waiting for hours to hear him. During this time he traveled about the country 250,000 miles and preached 40,000 sermons, doing also a great quantity of literary work. His preaching was chiefly among the working classes, and his life was frequently in danger from hostile mobs; but he escaped all perils, and in his old age his journeys became triumphal processions. Few religious teachers have done so much good as Wesley, especially among the lowest classes of the poor, whom he earnestly sought to bring into the fold of Christ.”19

Whitefield would also preach to thousands over his lifetime and would be instrumental to the growth of the Methodist Movement in the American colonies. As Morris described:

“George Whitefield adopted the habit of preaching in the open air, drawing audiences so immense that it seemed impossible for any man to make himself heard by them. … For some five years he maintained the Wesleyan doctrine of Methodism, but about 1741 he adopted the Calvinistic doctrine of predestination, and a break between him and Wesley took place. Much of Whitefield’s ministrations took place in the American colonies, which he visited on seven different occasions, on some of

which he stayed for several years. He died at Newburyport, Massachusetts, in
1770, on his seventh visit.20

Whitefield has been called the greatest preacher of the “Great Awakening”21 and is noted
for calling for a moral awakening within the hearts and minds of his listeners. In his sermon
entitled “A Warning Against Worldly Ways” Whitefield asked:

“Is it becoming a minister of the Church of England to frequent those places of
public entertainment which are condemned by all serious and good men? Is it
not inconsistent with all goodness for ministers to frequent play-houses, balls,
masquerades? Would it not better become them to visit the poor of their flock,
to pray with them, and to examine how it stands with God and their souls? Would
it not be more agreeable to the temper of the blessed Jesus to be going about
doing good, than going about setting evil examples? How frequent is it for the
poor and illiterate people to be drawn away more by example than precept?
How frequent is it for them to say, “Sure there can be no crime in going to a play,
or to an ale-house,—no crime in gaming or drinking, when a minister of our own
Church does this.” This is the common talk of poor, ignorant people, who are too
willing to follow the examples of their teachers. The examples of the generality
of the clergy occasion many persons, committed to their charge, to run to the
devil’s entertainments. Good God! are these the men who are charging others
with making too great a noise about religion?”22

Wesley and Whitefield were contemporaries of Nikolaus von Zinzendorf, one of the fore-
most practitioners of eighteenth century Pietism. Wesley knew Zinzendorf well and commu-
nicated with him often.23 In his journal, Wesley wrote of the moment he first met a follower of
Zinzendorf in the Americas (Pastor Spangenberg):

“Mon. 9. I asked him many questions, both concerning himself and the church at
Hernhuth. The substance of his answers was this: — “At eighteen years old, I was
sent to the university of Jena, where I spent some years in learning languages,
and the vain philosophy, which I have now long been labouring to forget. Here it
pleased God, by some that preached his word with power, to overturn my heart.
... I began teaching some poor children. Others joining with me, we taught more
and more, till there were above thirty teachers, and above two hundred scholars.
I had now invitations to other universities. But I could not accept of any; desiring
only, if it were the will of God, to be little and unknown. I had spent some years
thus, when Professor Breithaupt, of Halle, died: being then pressed to remove
thither, I believed it was the call of God, and went. I had not been long there,
before many faults were found, both with my behaviour and preaching; and of-
fences increased more and more till, after half a year, a petition against me was
sent to the King of Prussia, who sent an order to the commander at Halle; in
pursuance whereof I was warned to leave the city in forty-eight hours. I did so,
and retired to Hernhuth to Count Zinzendorf. ... The village of Hernhuth contains
about a thousand souls, gathered out of many nations. They hold fast the disci-
pline, as well as the faith and practice, of the apostolical church. I was desired by the brethren there
last year, to conduct sixteen of them to Georgia,
where two lots of ground are assigned us; and with
them I have staid ever since.”

The Pietism practiced by Zinzendorf arose from the
seventeenth century teachings of Lutheran pastor Philip
Jacob Spener. Pietism as taught by Spener emphasized
individual piety, personal reflection, and religious inward-
ness. Pietism de-emphasized religious formalism, ritual,
and orthodox doctrine. Followers of Pietism met in small
groups for Bible study (ecclesiola in ecclesia or “little
churches within the church”), were surprisingly tolerant
of heretics and heterodox believers, did not value creedal
statements or theology, and encouraged pastors to preach
sermons that touched the hearts of their listeners.

Zinzendorf’s heart had been touched when he un-
derwent a conversion experience during his Grand Tour of
Europe. While in Dusseldorf, Zinzendorf saw a painting by
Domenici Fetit entitled “Behold the Man.” The painting portrayed the crucified Christ with the
legend, “This have I done for you - Now what will you do for me?” While looking at the painting,
Zinzendorf felt he heard Jesus speaking those very words to him. He vowed that day to dedi-
cate his life to service to Christ.

Zinzendorf followed through on his promise and, in 1722, Herrnhut was founded on Zin-
zendorf’s estate in Saxony by descendants of the Hussite Movement. Herrnhut’s foundational
story was published in J. E. Hutton’s History of the Moravian Church:

“As these wanderers from a foreign land had not been able to bring in their pock-
ets certificates of orthodoxy, and might, after all, be dangerous heretics, it oc-
curred to Zinzendorf’s canny steward, Heitz, that on the whole it would be more
fitting if they settled, not in the village itself, but at a safe and convenient dis-
tance. The Count was away; the steward was in charge; and the orthodox parish
must not be exposed to infection. As the Neissers, further, were cutlers by trade,
there was no need for them in the quiet village. If they wished to earn an hon-
est living they could do it better upon the broad high road. For these reasons,
therefore, he led the June 8th exiles to a dismal, swampy stretch of ground 1722.

24 Wesley, John. The works of the Reverend John Wesley. New York: A. M. J. Emory and B. Waugh, for the Methodist Episcopal Church, J.
Collard, printer. 1831. pp. 18-19.
19 November 2010.
26 Landry, Stan M. Revivalism in Europe and America, University of Arizona, Online presentation. 8 November 2010. Lecture notes.
about a mile from the village; and told them for the present to rest their bones in an old unfinished farmhouse. The spot itself was dreary and bleak, but the neighbouring woods of pines and beeches relieved the bareness of the scene. It was part of Zinzendorf’s estate, and lay at the top of a gentle slope, up which a long avenue now leads. It was a piece of common pasture ground, and was therefore known as the Hutberg, or Watch-Hill. ... “May God grant,” wrote (the steward) to the Count, “that your excellency may be able to build on the hill called the Hutberg a town which may not only itself abide under the Lord’s Watch (Herrnhut), but all the inhabitants of which may also continue on the Lord’s Watch, so that no silence may be there by day or night.” It was thus that Herrnhut received the name which was soon to be famous in the land; and thus that the exiles, cheered anew, resolved to build a glorious City of God.”

In Germany, the followers of Pietism were creating new cities — and creating new controversies. In France, Spain and the Netherlands, Jansenism and Quietism were creating new practices — and new controversies. In England, the Methodists were creating new fervor — and new controversies. And in America, George Whitefield led the First Great Awakening that would create a plethora of new denominations — and new controversies. This was a fecund time for Erweckungsbewegung (Germany), Le Réveil (France), Desperates (Spain), and Revivalism (England and America).

The American soil — and soul — were especially fertile ground for spiritual revival thanks in no small party to the efforts of the Separatists from Scrooby who landed at Plymouth in 1620. These were no standard-issue Puritans. In fact, this radical fringe of English Puritanism no longer had any desire to work for a purification of the English Church. Instead, the Scrooby Separatists resolved to separate themselves completely from it. Their first step was to flee from England and the influence of King James. As a nineteenth century historian wrote:

“(In) 1604, we find that Bancroft had succeeded to the Primacy of England, and James was steadily carrying out the bitter and bigoted policy of Elizabeth. And now the Puritans within the Establishment, as well as the Separatists without,
were made to feel the weight of their persecuting hands. Excommunication, with its pains and penalties, was now added to the pains of nonconformity. In a single year three hundred of the clergy were deprived of their livings; and Chamberlain says: “Our Puritans,” i.e., our nonconforming clergy, “go down on all sides.” And the same persecution was carried on, with equal vigor, against the Separatists. Bradford, in his journal, tells us how the members of the churches in the North were watched, night and day, and were imprisoned, and so kept from assembling. And “seeing,” he says, “that they were thus molested, and that there was no hope of their continuance there, by a joint consent they resolved to go into the Low Countries, where they heard there was freedom of religion for all men, as also sundry from London and other parts of the land, that had been exiled and persecuted for the same cause, were gone thither, and lived in Amsterdam and other places in that land.”

From the Low Countries the Scrooby Separatists would continue on to America. At Plymouth, the Pilgrims (as they were later named by William Bradford) would use a congregational form of worship that was separate from any central authority, was led by its own elected leaders, and was foundationally based on a believer’s own profession of faith. This same approach would later be used by the wave of over 20,000 Puritan settlers who would arrive to their “City upon a hill” in the next two decades.

The faith of the Pilgrims was repeatedly tested by adversity and came to be characterized by a strong belief in a God who would reach within the heart and soul of believers, punish them for their sins, and then comfort them as they returned to the path of righteousness. As William Bradford would later write:

“Faint not, poor soul, in God still trust,  
Fear not the things thou suffer must;  
For, whom he loves he doth chastise,  
And then all tears wipe from their eyes.”

This same conversion/punishment/redemption perspective can be found in the sermons of Jonathan Edwards, one of the leaders of the First Great Awakening. Edwards conversion experience took place in 1721 while he was meditating on 1 Timothy 1:17: “Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, to God who alone is wise, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.”

Edwards later wrote:

“As I read the words, there came into my soul, and was as it were diffused through it, a sense of the glory of the Divine Being; a new sense, quite different from anything I ever experienced before… I thought with myself, how excellent a Being that was, and how happy I should be, if I might enjoy that God, and be rapt up to him in heaven; and be as it were swallowed up in him for ever!”

31 Landry, Stan M. Revivalism in Europe and America, University of Arizona, Online presentation. 8 November 2010. Lecture notes.  
34 1 Timothy 1:17 NKJV  
Edwards most famous sermon, “Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God,” was delivered in Enfield, Connecticut on July 8th, 1741. Like other preachers of the First Great Awakening, Edwards called in his sermon for the personal conversion of his listeners. Edwards told his congregation that God was so powerful he could enter anywhere — even their hearts — and lead them to righteousness. As Edward preached:

“There is no want of power in God to cast wicked men into hell at any moment. Men's hands cannot be strong when God rises up. The strongest have no power to resist him, nor can any deliver out of his hands. — He is not only able to cast wicked men into hell, but he can most easily do it. Sometimes an earthly prince meets with a great deal of difficulty to subdue a rebel, who has found means to fortify himself, and has made himself strong by the numbers of his followers. But it is not so with God. There is no fortress that is any defence from the power of God. Though hand join in hand, and vast multitudes of God's enemies combine and associate themselves, they are easily broken in pieces. They are as great heaps of light chaff before the whirlwind; or large quantities of dry stubble before devouring flames. We find it easy to tread on and crush a worm that we see crawling on the earth; so it is easy for us to cut or singe a slender thread that any thing hangs by: thus easy is it for God, when he pleases, to cast his enemies down to hell. What are we, that we should think to stand before him, at whose rebuke the earth trembles, and before whom the rocks are thrown down?”

The First Great Awakening created a flow of congregants away from the more formalized churches (like the Church of England) and into the newer revivalist churches (like the Baptists, Methodists, and Congregationalists). The Second Great Awakening at the beginning of the nineteenth century would create a flow of believers from churches of all kinds into large outdoor tent meetings. Two of the preachers most associated with the Second Awakening were Lyman Beecher and Charles Grandison Finney.

Beecher asked believers to look inward to build a greater outward role for religion in American life. A Congregational minister, Beecher received national attention in 1806 from a sermon he gave against dueling after the death of Alexander Hamilton in a duel with Aaron Burr. As a local minister in Litchfield, Connecticut, Beecher and his wife ran a forward-thinking school for girls with a very practical and very serious curriculum. This practical approach to working religious principles into everyday life would deeply influence his children including daughter Harriet Beecher Stowe.

36 Landry, Stan M. Revivalism in Europe and America, University of Arizona, Online presentation. 8 November 2010. Lecture notes.
38 Landry, Stan M. Revivalism in Europe and America, University of Arizona, Online presentation. 8 November 2010. Lecture notes.
who would go onto write *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*. The widespread fame of this virtuous family led a contemporary to remark, “This country is inhabited by saints, sinners, and Beechers.”

While Beecher strongly believed in mixing religious belief with secular practice, he also fervently felt that some secular practices were destroying religious belief. In one of his most famous sermons, “The Sacredness of the Sabbath,” Beecher declared:

“The crisis has come. By the people of this generation, by ourselves probably, the amazing question is to be decided, whether the inheritance of our fathers shall be preserved or thrown away; whether our Sabbaths shall be a delight or a loathing; whether the taverns, on that holy day, shall be crowded with drunkards, or the sanctuary of God with humble worshippers; whether riot and profaneness shall fill our streets, and poverty our dwellings, and convicts our jails, and violence our land, or whether industry, and temperance, and righteousness shall be the stability of our times ... The rocks and hills of New England will remain till the last conflagration. But let the Sabbath be profaned with impunity, the worship of God abandoned, the government and religious instruction of children neglected, and the streams of intemperance be permitted to flow, and her glory will depart. The wall of fire will no more surround her, and the munition of rocks will no longer be her defence. If we neglect our duty, and suffer our laws and institutions to go down, we give them up forever.”

The crisis for Charles Finney (1792-1875) arose because the attractions of the outside world had created a sluggish inward world where belief was being trampled throughout the week. Finney served New York City’s Broadway Tabernacle where he employed revival techniques calculated to evoke a highly emotional response. These “New Measures” would bring new excitement to the Revival Movement itself. Finney described this outward/inward approach in one his most famous sermons entitled “What a Revival of Religion Is”:

“A “Revival of Religion” presupposes a declension. Almost all the religion in the world has been produced by revivals. God has found it necessary to take advantage of the excitability there is in mankind, to produce powerful excitements among them, before he can lead them to obey. Men are so spiritually sluggish, there are so many things to lead their minds off from religion, and to oppose the influence of the Gospel, that it is necessary to raise an excitement among them, till the tide rises so high as to sweep away the opposing obstacles. They must be so excited that they will break over these counteracting influences, before they will obey God. Not that excited feeling is religion, for it is not; but it is excited desire, appetite and feeling that prevents religion. The will is, in a sense, enslaved by the carnal and worldly desires. Hence it is necessary to awaken men to a sense of guilt and danger, and thus produce an excitement of counter feeling and desire which will break the power of carnal and worldly desire and leave the will free to obey God.”

Finney would also use that inward excitement to support outward reform campaigns.

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against alcohol and slavery.\textsuperscript{42}

The excesses of the new Revival Movements caused other denominations to push back as they offered different religious approaches for believers. Descendants of the original Puritans de-emphasized emotion and emphasized divine goodness, human rationality and the transforming power of culture. Episcopalians offered distinctive liturgical practices and pointed to a long and comforting history of religious practice. German speaking Lutherans and Reformed offered faith practices more in keeping with their European brethren. Finally, Shakers, Mormons and Transcendentalists offered even more radical alternatives to the religious practices of the day.\textsuperscript{43}

**Conclusion: Revivalism in Europe and America**

The threads of Revivalism in Europe and America reached into the very hearts of Christian believers. Through Jansenism, Quietism, Methodism, Pietism, and both of the Great Awakenings, believers were asked to look inward, to explore a “strange warming” of the heart, to feel the transforming power of conversion from within. This very personal form of religion created a perceptible bond between a believer and God. But, what if God didn’t care? What if God didn’t need or want our worship? What if reason, not emotion, defined our relationship with God? Those are the threads we will explore as we next examine Christianity and the Enlightenment.

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There should be no beggars ... according to Lyman Beecher

For Lyman Beecher, there was a single cause for the plight of beggars: Demon rum. As a leader of the temperance movement, Beecher preached:

“Can we lawfully amass property by a course of trade which fills the land with beggars, and widows, and orphans, and crimes, which peoples the grave-yard with premature mortality, and the world of woe with the victims of despair? Could all the forms of evil produced in the land by intemperance, come upon us in one horrid array—it would appal the nation and put an end to the traffick in ardent spirits. If in every dwelling built by blood, the stone from the wall should utter all the cries which the bloody traffick extorts—and the beam out of the timber should echo them back—who would build such a house? — and who would dwell in it? What if in every part of the dwelling from the cellar upward, through all the halls and chambers—babblings, and contentions, and voices, and groans, and shrieks, and wailings, were heard, day and night? What if the cold blood oozed out, and stood in drops upon the walls; and by preternatural art, all the ghastly skulls and bones of the victims destroyed by intemperance, should stand upon the walls, in horrid sculpture within and without the building—who would rear such a building? What if at eventide, and at midnight, the airy forms of men destroyed by intemperance, were dimly seen haunting the distilleries and stores, where they received their bane—following the track of the ship engaged in the commerce—walking upon the waves—flitting athwart the deck—sitting upon the rigging—and sending up from the hold within, and from the waves without, groans, and loud laments, and wailings. Who would attend such stores? Who would labour in such distilleries? Who would navigate such ships?

“Oh! were the sky over our heads one great whispering gallery, bringing down about us all the lamentation and woe which intemperance creates, and the firm earth one sonorous medium of sound, bringing up around us from beneath, the waitings of the damned, whom the commerce in ardent spirits had sent thither; — these tremendous realities assailing our sense, would invigorate our conscience, and give decision to our purpose of reformation. But these evils are as real, as if the stone did cry out of the wall, and the beam answered it—as real, as if day and night, wailings were heard in every part of the dwelling—and blood and skeletons were seen upon every wall—as real, as if the ghostly forms of departed victims, flitted about the ship as she passed o’er the billows, and showed themselves nightly about stores and distilleries, and with unearthly voices screamed in our ears their loud lament.”

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1 Beecher, Lyman. *Six sermons on the nature, occasions, signs, evils, and remedy of intemperance*. Boston: Crocker & Brewster. 1827. pp. 81-83
Christianity and the Enlightenment

"Ne peut-on pas remonter jusqu’à ces anciens scélérats,
fondateurs illustres de la superstition et du fanatisme,
qui, les premiers, ont pris le couteau sur l’autel
pour faire des victimes de ceux qui refusaient d’être leurs disciples?"¹

(Can we not return to those ancient villains,
the illustrious founders of superstition and fanaticism,
who were, the very first, to have seized the knife from the altar
so they could make victims of those who refused to become their disciples?)²

~ Voltaire
Letter to Frederic II of Prussia (December 1740)

In late November 1770, François-Marie Arouet, better known as Voltaire, sat down to write a letter dealing with the mysteries of water and flour. Voltaire had celebrated his 76th birthday just one week earlier and was responding to a letter from Frederic-William, Prince Royal of Prussia, nephew and heir presumptive of Frederic. The young prince had written to Voltaire to ask him if he thought the soul ceased to exist at death. In his response, Voltaire famously included the words:

"— Si Dieu n’existait pas, il faudrait l’inventer. —"³

(If God didn’t exist, it would be necessary to invent him.)

As pithy a statement as that is, it’s the context of Voltaire’s response that actually gives a better view into Voltaire’s mind and the minds of other Enlightenment thinkers. We’ll examine the body of Voltaire’s response in a moment. For now, let’s look at what triggered his famous riposte.

Earlier in 1770, Paul Henri Thiry, Baron d’Holbach, a prominent figure in the French Enlightenment, had published his great work entitled “Système de la nature” (The System of Nature). In his book, Thiry had belittled a statement made by Voltaire about water and flour. According to Thiry, Voltaire’s statement failed to provide “demonstrative proof that God does NOT exist.” This is what Voltaire wrote:

"En humectant de la farine avec de l’eau, & en renfermant ce mélange, on trouve,
au bout de quelque temps, à l’aide du microscope, qu’il a produit des êtres organisés dont on croyait la farine & l’eau incapables. C’est ainsi que la nature inanimée peut passer à la vie, qui n’est elle-même qu’un assemblage de mouvemens."⁴

(By moistening flour with water, and by locking away this mixture, one finds, after a little while, with the aid of a microscope, that it has produced ordered creatures of which one had believed the flour and water incapable. It is in this way that lifeless nature can become alive, which is in itself nothing but an as-

² English translation by author.
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Thiry examined this statement by Voltaire and rejoined that this “unheard of foolishness” certainly did not prove that there is no God. Thiry would then go on at length to provide his rationale for why God did not exist.

Voltaire, in his letter to Frederic-William, replied that Thiry’s audaciousness was revolting, Thiry’s arguments were baseless, Thiry’s work was pernicious, and that Voltaire’s analysis of flour and water wasn’t trying to deny the existence of God in the first place. To quote Voltaire:

“Si Dieu n’existait pas, il faudrait l’inventer. Mais toute la nature nous crie qu’il existe; qu’il y a une intelligence suprême, un pouvoir immense, un ordre admirable, et tout nous instruit de notre dépendance."  
(If God didn’t exist, it would be necessary to invent him. But all of nature cries out to us that he exists, that there is one Supreme Intelligence, an immense power, a commendable order, and all of this instructs our state of dependence.)

Voltaire didn’t need to invent God because the ordered universe — including the universe found in a microscopic drop of water — demonstrated God’s existence. Was Voltaire sure of this? Voltaire wrote to Frederic:

“It is only charlatans who are certain. We know nothing of first principles. It is truly extravagant to define God, angels, minds, and to know precisely why God formed the world, when we do not know why we move our arms at will. Doubt is not a very agreeable state of mind, but certainty is a ridiculous state."  

But Voltaire was sure that our very souls needed science. As Voltaire described to a friend who questioned his scientific quests:

“We must give our souls all the forms possible to them. It is a fire which God has confided to us; we ought to nourish it with whatever we find that is most precious. We must have all imaginable modes of intellectual life, open all the doors of our souls to all the sciences and all the sentiments; and, provided that they do not enter pell-mell, there is room within us for every one of them."  

Like many Enlightenment thinkers, Voltaire felt called by a higher power to use science and reason to unlock the mysteries of the world. What that higher power wasn’t calling the world to, according to Voltaire, was the Christian Church, and specifically, the eighteenth-century Christian Church. Historian John Moreley described the distinction:

“It cannot be too often repeated that the Christianity which Voltaire assailed was not that of the sermon on the mount, for there was not a man then alive more keenly sensible than he was of the generous humanity, which is there enjoined with a force that so strangely touches the heart, nor one who was on the whole, in spite of constitutional infirmities and words which were far worse than his deeds, more ardent and persevering in its practice."  

5 Translation by author.  
7 Translation by author.  
Christianity and the Enlightenment

What unified the thoughts of Voltaire and many Enlightenment thinkers was their opposition to the power and influence of institutional churches in secular affairs. This anticlericalism manifested itself in Enlightenment contraposition to sectarianism, religious superstition and fanaticism, and to the clergy itself. In radical cases, this anticlericalism was demonstrated in outright calls for atheism.¹¹

The majority of these thinkers, however, looked for reasons to believe. This religious approach, called Deism, had been developing for centuries. As historian John Morley wrote:

“People constantly speak as if deism only came in with the eighteenth century. It would be impossible to name any century since the twelfth, in which distinct and abundant traces could not be found within the dominion of Christianity of a belief in a supernatural power apart from the supposed disclosure of it in a special revelation. … There were, indeed, mystics like the author of the immortal De Imitations, in whom the special qualities of Christian doctrine seem to have grown pale in a brighter flood of devout aspiration towards the perfections of a single being. But this was not the deism which either Christianity on the one side, or atheism on the other, had ever had to deal in France. Deism, in its formal acceptation, was either an idle piece of vapid sentimentality, as in the case of Madame d’Epinay, or else it was the first intellectual halting-place for spirits who had travelled out of the pale of the old dogmatic Christianity, and lacked strength for the continuance of their onward journey. … The deism which the Savoyard Vicar explained to Emilius in his profession of faith, was pitched in a very different tone from this.”¹²

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, who wrote “Profession de foi du Vicaire savoyard” (Profession of Faith of a Savoyard Vicar), was born in Geneva on June 28, 1712. Rousseau’s talent as a writer was discovered when he won a prize offered by the Academy of Dijon for an essay on the theme, “Whether the progress of the sciences and of letters has tended to corrupt or to elevate morals.” He argued — brilliantly and soon famously — that civilization was indeed degrading.

Found in the fourth book of Rousseau’s “Emile, ou l’éducation” (Emile or the education) (1762), The Savoyard Vicar features opinions that are generally recognized to be Rousseau’s own.¹³ The character of the Vicar is believed to be based on two Savoyard priests Rosseau knew in his youth, the Abbé Gaime, whom he had known at Turin and the Abbé Gatier, who had taught him at Annecy. Some historians believe that the Savoyard

¹¹ Landry, Stan M. Christianity and the Enlightenment, University of Arizona, Online presentation. 8 November 2010. Lecture notes.
Vicar is one of the clearest examples of deistic thinking.\textsuperscript{14} In fact, the deistic content of the Savoyard Vicar was so threatening to the religious status quo that this section of Rousseau's work was ordered to be ripped out and burned in both Paris and Geneva.\textsuperscript{15}

In one of the more controversial sections, the vicar muses on using a Quietist approach in order to lose himself in God:

\begin{quote}
"Je médite sur l'ordre de l'univers, non pour l'expliquer par de vains systèmes, mais pour l'admirer sans cesse, pour adorer le sage auteur qui s'y fait sentir. Je converse avec lui, je pénètre toutes mes facultés de sa divine essence ... mais je ne le prie pas. Que lui demanderais-je? qu'il changeât pour moi le cours des choses ...? ... N'être pas content de mon état, c'est ne vouloir plus être homme, c'est vouloir autre chose que ce qui est, c'est vouloir le désordre et le mal."\textsuperscript{16}
\end{quote}

(I meditate on the order of the universe, not to explain it by empty systems, but to admire it without end, to revere the wise author whose presence can be felt within it. I speak with him, I immerse all of my faculties in his divine essence ... but I do not pray to him. What would I ask of him? That he change the course of nature for me? ... Not to be content with my place in life, is to wish to no longer be a man, it's to wish for things other than they are, it's to wish for disorder and evil.)\textsuperscript{17}

For Rousseau, God could be understood, not through Scripture and sermons, but through Reason and an awareness of the reality in nature. This appeal to natural law and natural theology obviated the need for organized religion or priests as the true nature of things could be revealed by listening directly to God.\textsuperscript{18} In addition, since prayer was the "currency" of the Catholic Church, any thought of its elimination was deeply challenging to the religious authorities. In response to Rousseau's publication of the Savoyard Vicar, the Church pressured Rousseau's local pastor to deny him communion and to begin steps towards his excommunication. The pastor obliged and, from his pulpit, openly decried the heresy of the Savoyard Vicar calling Rousseau a heretic and an atheist. Rousseau's neighbors, inspired by the pastor's sermons, attempted to stone Rousseau to death.\textsuperscript{19}

The writings of the Irish freethinker John Toland were equally well received by the Church. Toland's book "Christianity Not Mysterious" (1696) was condemned as heretical and burned by the public hangman in Dublin. In his book, Toland argued that the mysteries of the Christian Church were placed there by the clergy to manipulate and control the laity. As Toland wrote in the preface to "Christianity Not Mysterious":

\begin{quote}
"I'm a declared Enemy to all Churchmen, and consequently (say they) to all Religion, because I make 'em the Sole Contrivers of those inconceivable or mysterious Doctrines, which I also maintain are as advantageous to themselves, as they are prejudicial to the Laity. Indeed there are those, who, easily overlooking all Contempt of the true Religion, are very ready to treat 'em as pernicious Hereticks,
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{14} Landry, Stan M. \textit{Christianity and the Enlightenment}, University of Arizona, Online presentation. 8 November 2010. Lecture notes.
\textsuperscript{15} Rousseau, Jean-Jacques. \textit{Rousseau's Émile: or, Treatise on education}. London: Appleton & Co. 1908. p. 316
\textsuperscript{17} Translation by author.
\textsuperscript{18} Landry, Stan M. \textit{Christianity and the Enlightenment}, University of Arizona, Online presentation. 8 November 2010. Lecture notes.
or insufferable Atheists … . To all corrupt Clergy-men therefore who make a meer trade of Religion, and build an unjust Authority upon the abused Consciences of the Laity, I'm a professed Adversary; as I hope every good and wise Man already is or will be. But as I shall always remain a hearty Friend to pure and genuine Religion so I shall preserve the highest Veneration for the sincere Teachers thereof, than whom there is not a more useful Order of Men, and without whom there could not be any happy Society or well constituted Government in this World … 

A contemporary of Toland, the Englishman Matthew Tindall, also asserted the natural essence of religion in a series of books including one that became to be known as the “Bible of Deism.” In “Christianity As Old As the Creation” (1730) Tindall outraged the Church by asserting some of the same points that would threaten Rousseau’s life three decades later. Regarding the necessity of prayer and worship, Tindall wrote:

“God requires nothing for his own sake; no, not the Worship we are to render him, nor the Faith we are to have in him. By our Arguing from the Nature of God, that every Thing, consequently Faith in him, and even the Worship and Service we render to him, is wholly for our own sake, will hardly go down with the Bulk of Mankind, who imagine, they by those Acts do him some real Service. If they think so, ‘tis a Sign they have not been well instructed; the most eminent of our Divines wou’d teach them, That Prayer itself, God knowing before-hand what we will ask, chiefly becomes a Duty, as it raises in us a due Contemplation of the divine Attributes, and an Acknowledgement of his great and constant Goodness, and serves to keep up a constant Sense of our Dependance on him; and as it disposes us to imitate those Perfections we adore in him, in being kind and beneficent to one another. There are few so gross as to imagine, we can direct infinite Wisdom in the Dispensation of Providence, or persuade him to alter those Laws he contriv’d before the Foundation of the World … “

According to Tindall’s Bible of Deism, God didn’t need to be worshipped and our prayers to God would not change a thing. What then was religion supposed to be? According to Tindall, religion is “the practice of Morality in Obedience to the Will of God.” God is all-wise and all-joyful
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and his moral commandments are for the benefit of humans.\textsuperscript{23} 

This eudemonistic approach to Deistic thinking was adopted by some of America's founding fathers and became a foundational concept for the new nation.\textsuperscript{24} For example, Benjamin Franklin made his Deistic beliefs clearly known in a letter he wrote to his friend Ezra Stiles on March 9, 1790:

“You desire to know something of my Religion. It is the first time I have been questioned upon it: But I do not take your Curiosity amiss, and shall endeavour in a few Words to gratify it. Here is my Creed: I believe in one God, Creator of the Universe. That He governs it by his Providence. That he ought to be worshipped. That the most acceptable Service we can render to him, is doing Good to his other Children. That the Soul of Man is immortal, and will be treated with Justice in another Life respecting its Conduct in this. These I take to be the fundamental Principles of all sound Religion, and I regard them as you do, in whatever Sect I meet with them. As to Jesus of Nazareth, my Opinion of whom you particularly desire, I think the System of Morals and his Religion as he left them to us, the best the World ever saw, or is likely to see; but I apprehend it has received various corrupting Changes, and I have with most of the present Dissenters in England, some Doubts as to his Divinity: tho’ it is a Question I do not dogmatise upon, having never studied it, and think it needless to busy myself with it now, when I expect soon an Opportunity of knowing the Truth with less Trouble.”\textsuperscript{25}

Like Franklin, Thomas Jefferson harbored "Christian Deistic" beliefs.\textsuperscript{26} For example, in 1803 Jefferson wrote to Benjamin Rush:

“To the corruptions of Christianity I am indeed opposed; but not to the genuine precepts of Jesus himself. I am a Christian, in the only sense he wished any one to be; sincerely attached to his doctrines, in preference to all others; ascribing to himself every human excellence; & believing he never claimed any other.”\textsuperscript{27}

But Jefferson's radical approach to Christianity went far beyond this simple statement of faith. Jefferson also believed that Christianity was "not mysterious" so he edited his own version of the Bible eliminating the supernatural elements and concentrating, instead, on the moral lessons of Jesus. Jefferson entitled his work “The Life and Morals of Jesus of Nazareth.” A synopsis of Jefferson's approach to Christian Deism can be found in a syllabus of the project he sent to Rush on May 21st, 1803.\textsuperscript{28}

“Syllabus of an Estimate of the Merit of the Doctrines of Jesus 

“According to the ordinary fate of those who attempt to enlighten and reform mankind, (Jesus) fell an early victim to the jealousy & combination of the altar and the throne, at about 33 years of age, his reason having not yet attained


\textsuperscript{24} Landry, Stan M. Christianity and the Enlightenment, University of Arizona, Online presentation. 8 November 2010. Lecture notes.

\textsuperscript{25} Franklin, Benjamin. Letter from Benjamin Franklin to Ezra Stiles. beliefnet.org. Web. 12 November 2010.

\textsuperscript{26} Landry, Stan M. Christianity and the Enlightenment, University of Arizona, Online presentation. 8 November 2010. Lecture notes.


the maximum of its energy, nor the course of his preaching, which was but of 3 years at most, presented occasions for developing a complete system of morals.

“Hence the doctrines which he really delivered were defective as a whole, and fragments only of what he did deliver have come to us mutilated, misstated, & often unintelligible.

“They have been still more disfigured by the corruptions of schismatising followers, who have found an interest in sophisticating & perverting the simple doctrines he taught by engrafting on them the mysticisms of a Grecian sophist, frittering them into subtleties, & obscuring them with jargon, until they have caused good men to reject the whole in disgust, & to view Jesus himself as an impostor.

“Notwithstanding these disadvantages, a system of morals is presented to us, which, if filled up in the true style and spirit of the rich fragments he left us, would be the most perfect and sublime that has ever been taught by man.”

Jefferson’s syllabus shows just how far his approach to religion had evolved from that of John Locke, one of the most influential of the Enlightenment thinkers. Locke was not a Deist, but was a proponent of natural theology. Like all liberal thinkers, Locke and Jefferson believed that everything, including religion, should be reasonable. They also believed that authority was a foundation built of sand for the faith of rational human beings. However, while Jefferson discounted any thought of religious miracles, Locke embraced miracles as essential to belief. As historian Samuel Hefelbower wrote:

“Locke nowhere shows the skeptical attitude toward miracles that characterized the Deists. He accepted and emphasized repeatedly the importance of miracles as evidence of revelation, which was the prevailing view of the time. The Deists, with the exception of Toland and Bolingbroke, denied all evidential value to miracles, and frequently emphasized and gave reason for this denial. This view characterized Deism; it was a radical departure from the views that were generally accepted, which were held by Locke.”

In addition, Hefelbower contrasts the mainstream beliefs held by Locke versus the radical beliefs held by Deists. Hefelbower wrote:

“Not even Locke’s severest critics classed him among the Deists; and Leland, the persistent foe of Deism, writing only a half century after Locke’s death, recog-
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nized Locke as differing from and separate from the deistic movement.”31

Just how far Locke is from radical forms of Deistic beliefs can be seen by reading the entire context of one of his well-known quotes. In the nineteenth chapter of his “Essay Concerning Human Understanding” (1690), Locke wrote of the combined need for Divine revelation and human reason in the religious life of man:

“Reason is natural revelation, whereby the eternal father of light, and fountain of all knowledge, communicates to mankind that portion of truth which he has laid within the reach of their natural faculties: revelation is natural reason enlarged by a new set of discoveries communicated by God immediately, which reason vouches the truth of, by the testimony and proofs it gives, that they come from God; So that he that takes away reason to make way for revelation, puts out the light of both, and does much—what the same, as if he would persuade a man to put out his eyes, the better to receive the remote light of an invisible star by a telescope.”32

Conclusion: Christianity and the Enlightenment

Reason was the king for Enlightenment thinkers, but (for most of them) God was still the Lord. For Voltaire, nature cried out that God existed, but in what form he wasn’t sure saying, “It is only charlatans who are certain.” Rousseau was sure that God was within each of us, but he wasn’t sure that God was listening declaring, “I immerse all of my faculties in his divine essence ... but I do not pray to him.” Toland was certain that the Church had used its power to make God mysterious, and he sought to uncover those mysteries by becoming “a declared Enemy to all Churchmen.” Tindall knew we needed God but asserted “God requires nothing for his own sake; no, not the Worship we are to render him, nor the Faith we are to have in him.” Franklin was sure that God was a moral God looking out for our happiness and, consequently, “the most acceptable Service we can render to (God), is doing Good to his other Children.” Jefferson was a professed Christian but wrote that Jesus’ real miracle was providing “a system of morals ... the most perfect and sublime that has ever been taught by man.” And Locke found his assurance in natural theology professing “revelation is natural reason ... communicated by God.”

While God and reason wove these Enlightenment elites together, the Cult of Reason and godlessness would soon rip all of France apart. It is those threads we will examine as we explore Christianity and the French Revolution.

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There should be no beggars ... according to John Locke

As a member of the Commission on Trade and Plantations, Locke attempted to reform the poor laws of England in 1697. His plan called for a system of workhouses for adults and work-schools for children where the unemployed poor — starting at the age of four — would work for the government. In his proposal, Locke wrote:

“In order to the suppression of these idle beggars, the corporations in England have beadle authorised and paid to prevent the breach of the law in that particular; yet, nevertheless, the streets everywhere swarm with beggars, to the increase of idleness, poverty, and villany, and to the shame of Christianity. And, if it should be asked in any town in England, how many of these visible trespassers have been taken up and brought to punishment by those officers this last year, we have reason to think the number would be found to have been very small, because that of beggars swarming in the street is manifestly very great. But the remedy of this disorder is so well provided by the laws now in force that we can impute the continuance and increase of it to nothing but a general neglect of their execution.

“Besides the grown people above mentioned, the children of labouring people are an ordinary burden to the parish, and are usually maintained in idleness, so that their labour also is generally lost to the public till they are twelve or fourteen years old.

“The most effectual remedy for this that we are able to conceive, and which we therefore humbly propose, is, that, in the fore-mentioned new law to be enacted, it be further provided that working schools be set up in every parish, to which the children of all such as demand relief of the parish, above three and under fourteen years of age, whilst they live at home with their parents, and are not otherwise employed for their livelihood by the allowance of the overseers of the poor, shall be obliged to come.” …

“In order therefore to the more effectual carrying on of this work to the advantage of this kingdom, we further humbly propose that these schools be generally for spinning or knitting, or some other part of the woollen manufacture, unless in countries where the place shall furnish some other materials fitter for the employment of such poor children; in which places the choice of those materials for their employment may be left to the prudence and direction of the guardians of the poor of that hundred, and that the teachers in these schools be paid out of the poor’s rate, as can be agreed.

“This, though at first setting up it may cost the parish a little, yet we humbly conceive (the earnings of the children abating the charge of their maintenance, and as much work being required of each of them as they are reasonably able to perform) it will quickly pay its own charges with an overplus.”

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A piecemeal version of Locke’s system was slowly put into place between 1697 and 1834. In 1843, Charles Dickens wrote “A Christmas Carol” which, in part, dealt with the unfortunate results of the system Locke had attempted to reform. In the following scene, Ebeneezer Scrooge is speaking to the soon-to-depart Ghost of Christmas Present:

“Forgive me if I am not justified in what I ask,” said Scrooge, looking intently at the Spirit’s robe, “but I see something strange, and not belonging to yourself, protruding from your skirts. Is it a foot or a claw?”

“It might be a claw, for the flesh there is upon it,” was the Spirit’s sorrowful reply, “Look here.”

From the foldings of its robe it brought two children; wretched, abject, frightful, hideous, miserable. They knelt down at its feet, and clung upon the outside of its garment.

“Oh, Man! look here. Look, look down here!” exclaimed the Ghost.

They were a boy and a girl. Yellow, meagre, ragged, scowling, wolfish; but prostrate, too, in their humility. Where graceful youth should have filled their features out, and touched them with its freshest tints, a stale and shrivelled hand, like that of age, had pinched, and twisted them, and pulled them into shreds. Where angels might have sat enthroned, devils lurked, and glared out menacing. No change, no degradation, no perversion of humanity, in any grade, through all the mysteries of wonderful creation, has monsters half so horrible and dread.

Scrooge started back, appalled. Having them shown to him in this way, he tried to say they were fine children, but the words choked themselves, rather than be parties to a lie of such enormous magnitude.

“Spirit! are they yours?” Scrooge could say no more.

“They are Man’s,” said the Spirit, looking down upon them. “And they cling to me, appealing from their fathers. This boy is Ignorance. This girl is Want. Beware them both, and all of their degree, but most of all beware this boy, for on his brow I see that written which is Doom, unless the writing be erased. Deny it!” cried the Spirit, stretching out its hand towards the city. “Slander those who tell it ye! Admit it for your factious purposes, and make it worse! And bide the end!”

“Have they no refuge or resources?” cried Scrooge.

“Are there no prisons?” said the Spirit, turning on him for the last time with his own words. “Are there no workhouses?”

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The assault on Christianity during the French Revolution began years before the revolution with the blast of cannons in Marignano and ended years later with the “birth” of a savior announced by the roar of cannons in Toulon. As this chapter analyzes Christianity during the time of the French Revolution, it will begin with one young ruler, Franciès I, and end with the rise and fall of another, Napoleon Bonaparte.

In Marignano in 1515 the young Francis I was given little chance of defeating the Swiss army which was known throughout Europe as “the tamers and correctors of princes”.

Francis was just a day past his twenty-first birthday and the Swiss mercenaries were considered to be invincible. Counting on that invincibility was Pope Leo X who had the previous year brought about an Anglo-French alliance but now was negotiating in a “deceitful and disloyal manner with France and her enemies simultaneously.”

Leo’s negotiations counted on the defeat of Francis I; anything less would quite possibly mean Leo’s death. As historian Michael Creighton described:

“Leo X does not seem to have thought a defeat of the Swiss to be possible. The first news that reached Rome announced their victory, and Cardinal Bibbiena illuminated his house and gave a banquet; when contradictory rumours were brought, they were not believed. At last the Venetian envoy received dispatches from his government. He went in the early morning to the Vatican, while the Pope was still in bed; at his urgent request the Pope was roused and came in half-dressed. ‘Holy Father,’ said Giorgi, ‘yesterday you gave me bad news and false: to-day I will give you good news and true; the Swiss are defeated.’ The Pope took the letters and read them. ‘What will become of us, and what of you?’ he exclaimed. Giorgi tried to console him, though he felt little sympathy with his grief. ‘We will put ourselves in the hands of the Most Christian King,’ said the Pope, ‘and

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2 Translation by author.
will implore his mercy."\(^5\)

Leo’s please for mercy would result in the transfer of control of the Church in France to the French Monarch. As the Catholic Encyclopedia wrote:

“Francis I won the great victory of Marignano, 13-14 September, 1515, and the pope now made up his mind to throw himself into the arms of the Most Christian King and beg for mercy. He was obliged to alter his policy completely and to abandon to the French king Parma and Piacenza, which had been reunited with Milan. An interview with King Francis at Bologna resulted in the French Concordat (1516), that brought with it such important consequences for the Church. The Pragmatic Sanction of Bourges (1438), deeply inimical to the papacy, was revoked, but the pope paid a high price for this concession, when he granted to the king the right of nomination to all the sees, abbeys, and priories of France. Through this and other concessions, e.g. that pertaining to ecclesiastical jurisdiction, the royal influence over the French Church was assured. Great discontent resulted in France among the clergy and in the parliaments. The abolition of the Pragmatic Sanction, drawn up in compliance with the decrees of the Council of Basle, affected the adherents of the conciliar system of church government. The abolition of free ecclesiastical elections affected grievously the interests of many and opposition to the Concordat was maintained for centuries."\(^6\)

Two hundred years later, during the reign of Louis XV (r. 1715-1774), the French King still controlled the churches of France. However, this would change in less than a generation. During that time, Louis XV would lose the French colonies in the Americas because of his efforts in the Seven Years War. Because of this, and the profligate lifestyle led by the court, Louis XV — once known as “The Well-Beloved” — came to be regarded as “the worst king” in the history of France.\(^7\)\(^8\) The reign of Louis XV’s successor, his grandson Louis XVI, would also be marked by financial and political failure including the death of Louis XVI and his wife, Marie Antoinette, on the guillotine. The first steps of the scaffold for Louis XVI were built by the French courts, the Parlements, and the followers of Cornelius Jansen.

The Jansenists were in control of the parlements and were opposed to central authority. This prepared the way for a broader distrust of central monarchical authority and a democratic-based revolution.\(^9\) As historian Henry Morse Stephens wrote:

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7 *BBC Historic Figures: Louis XV (1710-1774)*. bbc.co.uk. Web. 30 November 2010.
9 Landry, Stan M. *Christianity and the French Revolution*, University of Arizona, Online presentation. 15 November 2010. Lecture notes.
“The Parlement of Paris and most of the provincial parlements had been infected with Jansenism as early as the reign of Louis XV, and in the struggle with the Jesuits the lawyers of the Parlements began to hold Jansenist tenets, rather from political than from religious causes. The sound morality and sober garb of the Jansenists, ... made them appear the Puritans of the Roman Catholic Church .... But this Jansenist party, though not obtrusive, though not striving to make converts, or, for the matter of that, holding extremely strong religious convictions themselves, were yet a very great power in the greater cities of France.”

The result of that power and the Jansenists’ distrust of authority is detailed by historian William Doyle:

“The powers of the parlements, even legitimately exercised, were simply not enough to sustain what was increasingly depicted as a contract between the king and his people. And so Jansenists were among the first to call for genuinely representative institutions, elected assemblies which would spell the end of absolute monarchy.”

The second step on the scaffold for Louis XVI was constructed by a war of pamphlets. Louis and France were in financial trouble. The French support for the American revolutionaries had brought the country to the verge of bankruptcy. In addition, “accusations of frivolity, extravagance and scandalous behaviour” against his queen added to the crisis. Louis listened to the advice of his ministers, including Jacques Necker, and in 1789 summoned the Estates General (a form of parliament, but without true power) for the purpose of raising taxes. The Estates General had not met since 1614 and much had changed since then for the Three Estates of France.

Technically, the First Estate consisted of the clergy, the Second Estate was made up of the nobility, and the Third Estate (Tiers État) was everybody else or 95% of the population of France. However, this was no longer the case. Because of the Concordat of 1516, the monarchy had the power to appoint all of the bishops in the First Estate. These bishoprics went to nobles who had given the Crown mass sums of money in exchange for their positions. In short, by the 1780’s all of the bishops in France were also noblemen so the First and Second Estates were effectively one powerful estate. This change had not gone unnoticed by the Tiers État and that awareness set the stage for the upcoming voting rights crisis. As Stephens explained:

“On this report was based the “Résultat du Conseil,” which decreed that the com-

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The Tiers État instantly realized that the clergy and the nobles were colluding to strip away their electoral power. In response, a pamphlet war erupted in France. As Stephens described:

“The publication of the “Résultat du Conseil” altered the current of electoral literature. Historical disquisitions were no longer needed, and place was given to a flood of pamphlets of a more abstract and, at the same time, of a more revolutionary character. Of these new pamphlets the most successful (included) Qu’est-ce que le Tiers État?” by the Abbé Sieyes. These pamphlets, amongst hundreds of others published at Paris, had an immense circulation all over France, and contained the most revolutionary proposals with regard to the privileged orders, if they refused to acquiesce in the vote “par tête.”

The pamphlet written by Emmanuel Joseph Sieyès (1748-1836), known as the Abbé Sieyès, asked “What is the Third Estate?” Its radical answers to that question set off a firestorm of controversy. Sieyès began his pamphlet by posing three questions:

“Le plan de cet Écrit est assez simple. Nous avons trois questions à nous faire. 1. Qu’est-ce que le Tiers-État? — Tout. 2. Qu’a-t-il été jusqu’à présent dans l’ordre politique? — Rien. 3. Que demande-t-il? — À être quelque chose.”

(The outline of this writing is rather simple. We have three questions for us to answer:
1. What is the Third Estate? -- Everything.
2. What has it been in the political order until now? -- Nothing.
3. What does it want? -- To be something.)

The Abbé Sieyès then built the third step of the scaffold for Louis XVI when he famously declared that no one in France could be free if the Tiers-État was not free:

“Qu’est-ce que le Tiers-État a été jusqu’à présent? Rien.
Nous n’examinerons point l’état de servitude où le Peuple a gémi si long-temps, non plus que celui de contrainte et d’humiliation où il est encore retenu. Sa condition civile a changé; elle doit changer encore: il est bien impossible que la Nation en Corps, ou même qu’aucun Ordre en particulier devienne libre, si le Tiers-État ne l’est pas. On n’est pas libre par des privilèges, mais par les droits de
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Citoyen: droits qui appartiennent à tous.17
(What has the Third Estate been until now? Nothing.
We will not examine the state of servitude about which the People have cried out for so long, nor the state of coercion and humiliation within which they are still restrained. Their civil condition has changed; it must change again. It is quite impossible that the Nation as a Whole, or likewise that any particular Order can become free, if the Third Estate is not. One is not free because of privilege, but by the rights of a Citizen; rights that belong to all.)18

One June 10, 1789 representatives of the Tiers-État met in session and, led by Sieyés, sent a final invitation to the clergy and the nobles to meet with them. If the clergy and the nobles failed to do so, the Tiers-État declared they would on their own volition empower themselves as the Estates General and would proceed accordingly. As Stephens detailed:

“Meanwhile public opinion in Paris had been watching the silent struggle with the utmost interest. On June 12, Bailly, the first deputy for Paris, who had acted as dean of the tiers état since June 3, was elected provisional president and the deputies of the different bailliages were called over in alphabetical order, when no deputies of either the clergy or the noblesse answered the call. However, on June 13, three cures of Poitou, named Lecesve, Ballard, and Jallet, had the courage to break away from the Estate of the clergy, and thus acknowledge that the three orders formed but one assembly, and then popular feeling showed itself in tumultuous applause from the Parisians, who filled the galleries of the hall. But if the tiers état was not any longer a single Estate, was their assembly a meeting of the States-General of France?”19

The French court responded that the Tiers-État was absolutely not the Estates-General and friends of the Comte d’Artois, the king’s younger brother, “loudly demanded that an example should be made of these insolent provincials”. The king ordered the Tiers État to suspend their meeting until a “stance royale,” or royal session could be held on June 22nd. According to Stephens, this instantly built the fourth and final step on Louis’ scaffold:

“But the tiers état would not obey. On June 20, when the deputies found themselves unable to enter their hall, they ran in a crowd to the largest building they could find in Versailles, namely, the tennis-court. There, in the tennis-court ... they swore that they would never separate until a constitution had been drawn up. ... The oath of the tennis-court had now given to the National Assembly that bond of cohesion which it had hitherto lacked. The deputies were no longer an assembly of provincials, without a knowledge of each other and with no fixed’ aim, without leaders and without experience; they had now, by their serious opposition to the commands of the king, formed themselves into a body of rebels—rebels who would not fail to be punished if they did not hold together.”20

The Assembly would go on to reject the very concept of the divine right of kings and, con-

18 Translation by author.
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sequently, renamed Louis XVI “King of the French” instead of “King of France”. Religious liberty was established and Huguenots were granted freedom of worship while Jews were granted French citizenship. However, the rights of the Church were decidedly attacked. All monastic vows and religious houses were suppressed and the properties of all monasteries were confiscated. (By the same decree, however, the orders specially devoted to nursing the sick and to public education were maintained.)

In the deepest blows to the Church, the bishop from Autun, Talleyrand, had seconded the motion to confiscate all church property and the Abbé Gouttes gave the Assembly the reasons why:

“The wealth of the clergy, has done much harm to religion, for it has introduced into the clergy men who have no other call than the love of a living. It is on account of such people that the Church deserves the persecution which it is now undergoing…”

The legislation that shocked Catholics most, however, was probably the Civil Constitution of the Clergy. It stated that all local clergy would be elected by local congregations and that bishops would be elected by all of the citizens — including Protestants and Jews — within their district. Most controversially, however, the legislation demanded that all clergy swear to an oath to support the as yet unwritten national constitution. As described by Stephens:

“On June 17 Camus, on behalf of the ecclesiastical committee, brought up the project of the new constitution of the clergy. According to this the number of bishoprics was to be reduced, and there was to be but one bishop for every department, and one cure for every commune. The bishops were to receive from 12,000 to 50,000 francs a year, and the cures from 6000 to 12,000 francs. So far the new arrangement was admirable. The ridiculous disproportion between the bishops’ salaries and those of the cures was abolished. The new constitution of the Church was to correspond with the new administrative division of the kingdom, and incomes sufficiently liberal were allotted to all the clergy. But the plan of the committee contained two ridiculous propositions which completely destroyed any chance of vitality in the new organization. Both bishops and cures were to be elected, and before consecration or institution were to take, in the presence of the people, an oath to support in every way the new constitution of the country, which was not yet completed.”

The ecclesiastics who supported the Civil Constitution of the Clergy believed that once the new Church was put in place, it would eventually be recognized by the pope “if it proposed no new doctrine.” What these religious leaders did not recognize, however, was the number of clergy who would refuse to take the oath. Even when the investiture of bishops was extended to the lower clergy, only half of the lower clergy would take the oath. In turn, only half of French Catholics supported the new Church system as well. As the Catholic loyalists saw it, the power

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22 Landry, Stan M. *Christianity and the French Revolution*, University of Arizona, Online presentation. 15 November 2010. Lecture notes.
24 Landry, Stan M. *Christianity and the French Revolution*, University of Arizona, Online presentation. 15 November 2010. Lecture notes.
The Revolution was dramatically underway. There were now two Churches in France: a national Church approved by the Assembly which was led by clergy who would take the oath affirming the Revolution and a divergent Church consisting of everyone else. The laity in France was split as well with about half supporting the oath and half refusing. This split would soon dissolve into religious anarchy and the process of dechristianization. Historian Caroline Ford filled in some of the shocking details:

“By the fall of Year II or 1793, dechristianization assumed violent and often sinister forms. In some communities churches were closed. Religious ceremonies were replaced with revolutionary ceremonies and festivals. In others, icons and statues were smashed and destroyed. Detachments of the Revolutionary Army aided, abetted, and sometimes initiated these activities, as they defaced sacred objects. On 13 December 1793 a public official by the name of Dagorn, responsible for overseeing the accounts of the municipality in Quimper in Brittany, ordered the closing of the churches in the city. In front of a crowd of peasants celebrating the feast of Saint Corentin, the patron saint of Quimper, two officials, guarded by troops … systematically began to destroy statues and ornaments inside and outside the cathedral. Dagorn concluded his exploit by urinating in a ciborium—a revered receptacle for holding the consecrated waters of the Eucharist.”

By this time, Louis had met his fate at the stroke of the “National Razor” and Marie Antoinette would have her appointment with the guillotine shortly. To enable this terrible justice, the Revolutionaries had already abolished the monarchy, had declared war on Austria, Prussia, England and Spain, and had declared France a republic.

During the process of dechristianization, the Christian calendar was replaced, Christian feast days were abolished, and the Sabbath was eliminated. Tens of thousands of clergy were banished, many non-conforming clergy were killed, and any non-juring priests that remained were denied a salary and prohibited from teaching in public schools. In an act of exceptional symbolism, the cathedral of Notre-Dame in Paris was stripped of its religious contents and publicly declared to now be the Temple of Reason.

This last act incensed one of the leaders of the Revolution, Maximilien Robespierre. After a so-called Feast of Reason was held in November of 1793 at Notre-Dame, Robespierre rose in anger at the Jacobin Club (21 November 1793) and declared to loud applause:

“There are men who would go further; who, under the guise of destroying su-
perstition, would establish atheism itself. Every philosopher, every individual, is at liberty to adopt whatever opinion he pleases, but the legislator would be a thousand times blameable who adopted such a system. The Convention abhors all such attempts; it is no maker of metaphysical theories; it is a popular body, whose mission is to cause not only the rights, but the character of the French people to be respected. Not in vain has it proclaimed the rights of man in the presence of the Supreme Being. They will say, perhaps, that I am prejudiced, that I am a man of narrow mind; that I am a fanatic. I have already said that I do not here speak as an individual, nor as a systematic philosopher, but a representative of the people. Atheism is aristocratic. The idea of a supreme being, who watches over oppressed innocence, and punishes triumphant crime, is altogether popular. The people, the unfortunate, will always applaud me; I shall find detractors only among the rich and the guilty.33

In response to the spreading wave of atheism, Robespierre initiated the Festival of the Supreme Being. According to Robespierre, the Festival was a way for France to return to the truly divine:

“The true priest of the Supreme Being is Nature; His temple the universe; His religion virtue; His fetes the joy of a great people assembled under his eyes, to draw closer the sweet bonds of universal fraternity, and to present to him the homage of pure and sensitive hearts. Let us leave the priests and return to the Divinity. Let us establish morality upon an eternal and sacred basis; let us inspire in man that religious aspect for man, that profound sentiment of his duties, which is the sole guarantee of social happiness.”34

For Robespierre the Festival of the Supreme Being and its attendant cult, was a religious revolution. But, what if a religious revolution happened and nobody noticed?

That’s what some historians argue when it comes to the Cult of the Supreme Being. According to the standard interpretation, Robespierre created the Cult of the Supreme Being to:

1) “Preserve the ethical basis of Christianity by giving it rational form and simultaneously eliminating the priests and their church.”35 and/or

2) Justify “citizens’ solidarity with their state by referring to higher, unquestionable principles.”36

That may have been Robespierre’s plan. What Robespierre succeeded in doing, however,

was nearly negligible because the celebrations in honor of the supreme being were almost identical to the celebrations for the cult of reason.\footnote{Nicholls, David. \textit{God and government in an \textquote{age of reason}.} London: Psychology Press. 1995. p. 82. books.google.com. Web. 20 November 2010.} In short, the majority of the French people had no idea that a significant religious revolution had even occurred. As François-Alphonse Aulard wrote:

“In some quarters the cult of the Supreme Being has appeared, retrospectively, to be a solemn reaction against the cult of Reason. But the mass of the French people had no such feeling. To provincial eyes the cult of Reason and the cult of the Supreme Being were very much the same thing. On the 11th of Floreal of the year Il the deputy-commissioner Chaudron-Rousseau had written from Limoux to the Committee of Public Safety:

“Here I am, in the most fanatical district of the department of Aude; I am determined to be present here on a tenth day (jour de decade). The latter will be remarkable on account of the opening of a Temple of Reason, which will not make us forget the Divinity. I and my collaborators will offer the latter our chief and our profoundest homage. We, like you, regard the former as being only an incarnation of the latter.”

“Thus, before the 18th of Floreal, in worshipping Reason men considered they were worshipping God; after that date they worshipped God without any intention of ceasing to worship Reason, as the latter was regarded merely as an emanation of the former. In reality there was no change in the new national and philosophical religion which the Government had sought to establish in the Catholic places of worship, and to substitute for Catholicism. Under the name of the Supreme Being, as under the name of Reason, it was the patrie that men really worshipped; and the cult of the Supreme Being, like the cult of Reason, was bound, unless the people very clearly distinguished one from the other, to lose itself in patriotism.”\footnote{Aulard, François-Alphonse. \textit{The French Revolution: a political history, 1789-1804}, Volume 3. New York: C. Scribner’s Sons. 1910. p. 191.}

Apparently, the reviews for Robespierre’s festival were rather cutting. He was guillotined by the Revolutionary government the following month. The next year that government would be replaced by a moderate government known as the Directory. This government repealed some of the most radical policies of the Revolution, but it would be left to Napoleon — who overthrew the Directory in 1799 — to truly restore religious rights in France.\footnote{Landry, Stan M. \textit{Christianity and the French Revolution}, University of Arizona, Online presentation. 15 November 2010. Lecture notes.} The year before his death, Robespierre first met Napoleon. Napoleon was in Avignon having been left behind by the army to reorganize the artillery. Napoleon desperately wanted to join the actual fighting, and he inveigled his way into battle by showing Commissioner Robespierre a pamphlet he had written. As Acton described:

“This pamphlet, \textit{Le Souper de Beaucaire}, was an admirable presentation of the most telling arguments in favour of the Jacobin government, and well calculated to win the approbation of the Commissioners, who now became eager to
push forward so promising a young Republican. Carteaux had advanced against Toulon with some 4000 men .... By the influence of the friendly commissioners Bonaparte now secured the command of a battery. The strategy by which the town was taken, the essential part of which was the seizure of Cepet, a promontory that commanded both the inner and the outer harbours, has often been attributed to him; it seems however improbable that he was the author of it, although, by his vigour and the skill with which he directed the artillery, he contributed much to its success. The English and Spaniards soon found the harbour untenable, and, carrying off a number of the inhabitants, and either towing away or destroying about one half of the French ships, they abandoned Toulon to the Republicans, who entered the city on December 19. The surrendered town was at once handed over to the Convention Commissioners; they used their powers with extreme ferocity, fusilladed in three days some 800 citizens, and established a Revolutionary Tribunal which destroyed about 1800 persons within three months."\(^{40}\)

It was Napoleon's adept usage of cannons at Toulon in 1793 that propelled him to immediate fame and, by 1796, command of the French army in Italy where he forced Austria and its allies to make peace. In 1798, Napoleon conquered Ottoman-ruled Egypt, and in 1800 Napoleon defeated the Austrians at Marengo. It was there that Napoleon acted as the “saviour” of the Church when he made a proposal to Pope Pius VII. According to Catholic historian Georges Goyau:

“In the 25th of June, 1800, Bonaparte, after his victory at Marengo, passed through Vercelli, where he paid a visit to Cardinal Martiniana, bishop of that city. He asked that prelate to go to Rome and inform Pius VII that Bonaparte wished to make him a present of thirty million French Catholics; that the first consul desired to reorganize the French dioceses, while lessening their number; that the émigré bishops should be induced to resign their sees; that France should have a new clergy untrammelled by past political conditions; that the pope’s spiritual jurisdiction in France should be restored. Martiniana faithfully reported these words to Pius VII. It was only a few months before that Pius VI had died at Valence, a prisoner of revolutionary France. …"\(^{41}\)

The result of the proposal was an agreement between France and the Holy See called the Concordat of 1801. This agreement legitimized the revolution and gave Napoleon’s office of consul nearly complete control over the Catholic Church in France. The Concordat also restored


appointment of French bishops to the practices followed before the Revolution, namely that the French crown would nominate a bishop and the Pope would then approve or reject the choice. In addition, the Concordat specified that France would pay the salaries of French clergy who were, therefore, required to take an oath of fidelity to the state.\(^{42}\)

The most controversial points of the Concordat were seven articles relative to Catholicism and 44 articles relative to Protestantism that Napoleon inserted into the agreement at the last moment. Called the “Organic Articles”, they were published by the French government as part of the Concordat of 1801 even though Pope Pius VII declared formally in 1802 that “these articles had been promulgated without his knowledge, and that he could not accept them without modification”.\(^{43}\) The Organic Articles dramatically altered the desired French religious landscape for Rome. According to Goyau:

“The Organic Articles which refer to Catholicism fall under four titles.

“Title I deals with “the government of the Catholic Church in its general relations to the rights and constitution of the State.” In virtue of these articles, the authorization of the Government is necessary for the publication and execution of a papal document in France; for the exercise of ecclesiastical functions by any representative of the pope, for the holding of a National Council or a Diocesan Synod. Moreover, the Council of State, thanks to the formality of the appel comme d’abus, may declare that there is abus in any given acts of the ecclesiastical authority, and thus thrust itself into the affairs of the Church.

“Title II deals with the ministers of public worship whose powers it defines: the rules and regulations of seminaries must be submitted to the State, the “Declaration of 1682” must be taught in the seminaries, the number of those to be ordained must be fixed yearly by the Government; the curés of important parishes cannot be appointed by the bishop without the consent of the State. Under Title III, devoted to public worship, the legislature forbids public processions in towns where there are adherents of different creeds. It fixes the dress of the priests, who must be dressed “in the French fashion and in black”, it prescribes that there shall be only one catechism for all the churches of France.”\(^{44}\)

Napoleon saw the Concordat of 1801 and the Organic Articles as a way to keep almost complete control over the churches in France. Like Louis XVI, Napoleon was worried that French Protestants might rebel. Like Robespierre, Napoleon saw religion as a tool for effective social control. And like his predecessors, Pius VII again looked for a savior in the blast of cannons.

For Pius, his temporal salvation came in 1814 in the form of the armies allied against Napoleon. Pius had been made a prisoner by Napoleon and the allies demanded his liberation. As Goyau described:

“As the Allies demanded the liberation of the pope, Napoleon sent orders to ... let him make his way to Italy. On 10 March the prefect of Montenotte received orders to have the pope
conducted as far as the Austrian outposts in the territory of Piacenza. The captivity of Pius VII was at an end.\textsuperscript{45}

Thanks to the blast of allied cannons, the French Senate declared Napoleon dethroned on April 3rd, 1814 and, by May 4th, the once great savior of the French Church was exiled to Elba.

\textbf{Conclusion: Christianity and the French Revolution}
The roar of cannons and the bloodthirsty slashing of the “National Razor” almost completely destroyed the Church in revolutionary France:
— Cannons made Leo X beg for mercy and cede control of the Church to the French king.
— The guillotine put an end to Louis XVI, the King of the French, and gave control of the Church to the Revolutionaries.
— The guillotine cut Robespierre’s rule short when he tried taking the Church back from the atheists and giving it to the Cult of the Supreme Being.
— Cannons would then take control of the Church away from the Directory and give it to Napoleon.
— And finally, cannons would end the reign of Napoleon and usher in a new era for the Church in France.

The fabric of the Church was shredded at the end of the French Revolution and it would take soulful acts of piety to make it whole again throughout the countries of Europe. These threads of national piety are the threads we will follow next as we consider Nineteenth Century Piety.

Christianity and the French Revolution

There should be no beggars ... according to the French Revolution

The thinkers behind the French Revolution talked about the rights of men but, in reality, those rights were not to be shared with the poor. According to historian Emily Balch, the Revolutionaries' efforts only created destruction and waste:

“The men of the revolution believed that in matters of public assistance, as in everything else, a clean sweep might be made of the past and a complete and philosophical system concocted de novo. This attitude gives to much of their work the permanent interest that belongs to the discussion of principles, but what they accomplished was singularly different from what they promised—was, indeed, little but destruction and waste. …

“The Legislative Assembly, like the Constituant, listened to the reports of its committee on relief, known as the comite de secours publics, and left matters practically in status quo, except for the increased financial embarrassment of existing charities. … The Comite de la Mendicite reported that hospitals and asylums had lost ten million livres, or more than a third of their revenue, by the suppression of tithes and feudal rights. …

“All giving of alms, after these measures should have been executed, was forbidden … This enactment was followed by some severe legislation against beggary, which was supposed to be of only temporary application however, as all necessity for poverty was to disappear. Depots de repression, or workhouses, were to be kept up, but a mendicant convicted for the third time was to be transported to Madagascar for eight years.

In addition to this new legislation, the Revolutionaries gutted pre-revolution reform efforts returning France to the status quo of the seventeenth century:

“… All the poor, not natives or old residents of Paris, were expelled from the capital; the rest were ordered into asylums known as hopitaux enfermes or hopitaux ateliers. These institutions were a sort of work house, the prototypes of the later depots de mendicity. They were divided into three sections destined respectively for able-bodied men, for women and children, and for the aged and incurable. … The first and second classes were kept at work, the men grinding wheat in hand-mills, brewing beer, sawing planks and at “other laborious tasks.” The women and girls over eight were occupied with spinning, making buttons and with other sorts of work not belonging to an incorporated trade. The food and clothing were to be confined to the strictly necessary. All rose at six in winter and five in summer, and worked until seven in the evening, “or earlier or later if the masters or governors so order.” They were bound to furnish the amount of work required, on pain of punishment at the discretion of the same officers.”

Le Sacre de Charles le Simple

"Puisqu’aux vieux us on rend leurs droits,
Moi, je remonte à Charles Trois
Ce successeur de Charlemagne,
De Simple mérita le nom;
Il avait couru l’Allemagne
Sans illustrer son vieux pennon.
Pourtant, à son sacre on se presse:
Oiseaux et flatteurs ont chanté.
Le peuple s’écrie: Oiseaux, point de folle allégresse;
Gardez bien, gardez bien votre liberté."¹

(Since to ancient traditions their rights are referred,
Me, I'll give mine back to Charles the Third.
That successor of Charlemagne,
So “Simple” he merits the name;
In Germany he used to be the planner,
But never once flew old Charlie’s banner.
Nevertheless, to his coronation they run:
Birds and flatterers have already sung.
The people cry out: Birds, to the point of madness you take flight,
So guard well, guard well your freedom and rights.)²

~ The Coronation of Charles the Simple
written by Pierre-Jean de Béranger after the coronation of Charles X

Nineteenth Century Piety in France
In 1815, after Napoleon's final fall and exile to the island of Saint Helena, France restored Louis XVIII to the throne. Under Louis, significant power and authority would be returned to the Catholic Church in France. As historian John Richard Hall described:

"In the Royalist schemes for undoing the work of the Revolution, the restoration of ecclesiastical power and influence occupied a foremost place. But in order to be powerful the clergy must be wealthy and independent. During the latter half of the Session many propositions dealing with the condition of the Church had been brought before the Chamber. The members of the Congregation had, as may be supposed, taken a prominent part in these discussions. The demands of the clerical party were not confined to the mere improvement of the material circumstances of the clergy. It was desired that the control of the University, public education, and the care of the civil registers should pass into ecclesiasti-
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cal hands. Whether Louis XVIII had any religious belief at all may be doubted. It cannot, at any rate, be questioned that any convictions he may have had were not very deep-seated. He knew well, however, that the clergy were firm supporters of the throne. On political grounds, therefore, he was disposed to encourage them and to meet their wishes, as far as he considered it safe to do so. Seeing the strong feeling which existed in the Chamber in favour of legislation in the interests of the Church, the King directed that a bill should be brought forward to provide the clergy with a largely increased income.3

The death of Louis XVIII did nothing to slow the restoration of the Church’s influence. In fact, one of the first acts of Louis’ successor and brother, Charles X, was to reintroduce the Church-supported Anti-Sacrilege Act. The Anti-Sacrilege Act called for penalties up to and including death for acts defined as sacrilegious.4 As historian Thomas Kington-Oliphant described, this moment was the antithesis of “separation of church and state” in France:

“The Throne and Altar seemed now to be one; in 1825 France stood aghast at the new law on Sacrilege. Thefts and profanations committed in churches were henceforth to stand on an altogether different footing from crimes perpetrated elsewhere; and in certain cases the punishment of death was to follow. The law, Guizot remarked long afterwards, was worthy of the Twelfth century. … The Archbishop of Rouen produced a great effect by ordering the names of all who did not fulfil their Easter duties to be posted on the Church doors; he also denounced as “concubinaries” those of his flock who were satisfied with civil marriage.”5

In May of 1825, to further demonstrate the reintegration of Church and state, Charles X announced his intention of re-establishing the religious custom of consecration of the monarch. Charles declared that he would rule by divine right and would, therefore, prostrate himself “at the steps of the altar where Clovis received the sacred unction.” A commission of architects and coordinators was established at Reims to give the ceremony the requisite pomp and splendor. On the appointed day, the Bishops of France handed over to Charles X the sword of Charlemagne, with the specific request “that he would protect and defend the churches, repair disorders, (and) preserve what had been reestablished.” In short, the throne and altar were, in deed, one.6

Charles’ prostration to the clergy may have been applauded by the Church, but it was decried by the people. As Acton described:

“But from that day also the country began to awake to the perception of this domination of the clergy. The Royalist poets, Lamartine, Victor Hugo, Soumet, and Baour-Lormian celebrated the consecration. Beranger mocked at this “consecration of Charles the Simple,” and his popular song made more enemies for the monarchy than the official poetry made friends. The Liberal press, the Constitutionnel, the Courrier Français, reopened a violent campaign against the en-

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terprises of a clergy “under Jesuit orders.”

Pierre-Jean de Béranger’s song, “Le Sacre de Charles le Simple” (The Consecration of Charles the Simple), was sung throughout France and would garner Beranger a two-month prison sentence. While the song literally talks about Charles III (also known as Charles The Simple, 879-929), it unmistakably refers to Charles X and even alludes to the birds released in the nave of the cathedral at Rheims during his coronation.

“Le Sacre de Charles le Simple

Puisqu’aux vieux us on rend leurs droits,
Moi, je remonte à Charles Trois
Ce successeur de Charlemagne,
De Simple mérita le nom;
Il avait couru l’Allemagne
Sans illustrer son vieux pennon.
Pourtant, à son sacre on se presse:
Oiseaux et flatteurs ont chanté.
Le peuple s’écrie: Oiseaux, point de folle allégresse;
Gardez bien, gardez bien votre liberté.”

Since to ancient traditions their rights are referred,
Me, I’ll give mine back to Charles the Third.
That successor of Charlemagne,

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Nineteenth Century Piety

So “Simple” he merited the name;
In Germany he used to be the planner,
But never once flew old Charlie’s banner.
Nevertheless, to his coronation they run:
Birds and flatterers have already sung.
The people cry out: Birds, to the point of madness you take flight,
So guard well, guard well your freedom and rights.10

In France, the actual separation of church and state would not be achieved until 1905. The law (“Loi du 9 décembre 1905 concernant la séparation des Églises et de l’État”) barred the state from officially recognizing, funding or endorsing religious groups and is recognized as the backbone of the French principle of laïcité.11/12/13

**Nineteenth Century Piety in Spain**

In Spain, the Constitution of 1812 provided a wide array of liberal reforms but also made one thing very clear: Spain was a nation by and for the Catholic Church. As historian William Rule noted:

“In preparing a new fundamental code for future government, the leading statesmen deliberated on the relations the temporal and spiritual authorities ought to bear to each other; and, as a first measure, framed an article of the new Constitution which, though excessively intolerant, was constructed to serve an important purpose. It ran thus: “The religion of the Spanish nation is, and shall be perpetually, the Catholic, Apostolic, Roman, only true. The nation protects it by wise and just laws, and prohibits the exercise of any other.” The same Cortes, in preparing a coronation oath, provided that the Sovereign should swear to “defend and preserve the Roman Catholic Apostolic religion, without permitting any other;” and the hottest bigots might, therefore, have thought their cause secure.”14

In fact, the Constitution of 1812 was far from secure. On assuming the throne in December of 1813, Ferdinand VII set aside the constitution — and its section that limited the power of the king — and then turned to the Church, and the revival of Inquisition, for support.15 Acton described the European reaction to Ferdinand’s actions:

“They watched with disgust and alarm the proceedings of Ferdinand VII in Spain. It was a little matter that he had violated his oath to maintain the Constitution of 1812; for the Constitution was unworkable, and was not desired by the Spanish people. But Metternich (Prince Klemens Wenzel von Metternich, German-Austrian diplomat) cursed the wicked infatuation which reestablished the Inquisition, and set up what Gentz (Metternich’s advisor) described as “a system of re-

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10 Loose translation in the spirit of the original by author.
13 Landry, Stan M. *Nineteenth Century Piety*, University of Arizona, Online presentation. 15 November 2010. Lecture notes.
15 Landry, Stan M. *Nineteenth Century Piety*, University of Arizona, Online presentation. 15 November 2010. Lecture notes.
action and persecution only to be compared with the reign of terror in France under Robespierre." It was not to the interests of monarchy that a king should "debase himself to become no more than the leading police agent and gaoler of his country."16

The reforms of the Constitution of 1812 were finally enacted in 1820 thanks, in part, to the depredations caused by the Peninsular War. As the Catholic Encyclopedia analyzed it, the liberal reforms enacted by the Constitution of 1812 were contraposed to the "moral unity" the Church had created by aiding in the expulsion of the Jews and Muslims from Spain:

"That moral unity which the Catholic Sovereigns had restored in Spain by the expulsion of the Jews, the subjection of the Moors, and the establishment of Catholic unity, was broken by the influx of ideas from the French Revolution and English Liberalism. Face to face with the Spanish people, so strongly attached to their ancient traditions and forms of government, there arose the Constitutional Party, which at first proclaimed no further aim than the establishment of representative government, saving the principle of religious unity. But the Liberals, persecuted in 1812, pushed their ideas to extremes and, profiting by a military insurrection in 1820 (Don Rafael de Riego), finally proclaimed the Constitution and forced Ferdinand VII to swear to it."17

The Liberal government then abolished the Inquisition, forced the clergy to swear an oath to the constitution, drove away the Jesuits, suppressed the cloisters, eliminated the tithes, forbade the sending of any money to Rome, interdicted all communications with the Pope, and confiscated all of the property of the Church.18 Because of these draconian actions, only a few monasteries were left to aid the poor. Unfortunately, that aid was desperately needed due to the economic depression caused by the Napoleonic wars and by the revolt of Spain's American colonies.19 Many of these same issues would be raised again in the Republican Constitution of 1931. This constitution called for "the redistribution of large estate lands, the separation of church and state, and an antiwar, antimilitarist policy dedicated to undermining the power of the aristocracy, the Catholic Church, and the armed forces."20 These anti-clerical actions would lay the groundwork for the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939).21

Nineteenth Century Piety in Germany

As early as 1798, Frederick William III, King of Prussia, had discussed his hope of uniting the Reformed and Lutheran Churches. The first concrete steps toward this religious union were taken by Frederick on his trip to London in 1814. At St. James Palace, the first diplomatic arrangements were made for the union of the churches and for the new liturgy they would fol-

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low. According to Catholic historian Joseph Wilhelm:

“It was proposed to celebrate in Germany the third centennial jubilee of the Reformation, and in anticipation of this festival he issued on 27 Sept., 1817, the memorable declaration that it was the royal wish to unite the separate Lutheran and Reformed Confessions in his dominions into one Evangelical Christian Church, and that he would set an example in his own congregation at Potsdam by joining in a united celebration of the Lord’s Supper at the approaching festival of the Reformation. It was not intended to fuse the Reformed Church into the Lutheran, or vice-versa, but to establish one Evangelical Church, quickened with the spirit of the Reformation. The epithet “Protestant” was avoided as too partisan; prominence was given to the vague term evangelical; Lutherans and Calvinists, whilst maintaining their own specific doctrines, were to form a single church under a single government and to present a united front to the Catholic Church.”

At first the “Agenda” was made mandatory only for the royal chapel, the Berlin Cathedral, and for the army. Despite being optional, by 1825 it had been adopted by 5343 churches out of 7782. In 1828-1829, the “Agenda” was made generally mandatory on all Protestant churches with some provincial exceptions. However, some congregations continued to resist. As Wilhelm noted:

“The Lutherans, fearing the loss of their confessional status, offered increased resistance. But the king was inexorable. Dr. Scheibel, professor in Breslau, and others of the Lutheran clergy who had refused to accept the new liturgy, were suspended from their offices. For several years a fierce persecution raged against the “Old Lutherans”, especially in Silesia and the Grand Duchy of Posen. Preacher Hahn headed the troops which were sent to subdue the recusant villagers by seizure of their goods, imprisonment, and all manner of violence. Minister von Altenstein justified these measures on the principle that it was the Government’s duty to protect these blind sectarians against the consequences of their own folly. Thousands of the recusants were driven to emigrate to America and Australia. Not a voice was raised in their defence; the whole Liberal press lauded the energy of the Prussian Government. By a royal decree of 28 Feb., 1834, all Lutheran worship was declared illegal.”

The royal decree encountered stiff resistance from the surprising strength and activity of the Lutheran traditionalists, called Old Lutherans. This strength was based on a Pietism-based religious revival (Erweckungsbewegungen) that was sweeping through Germany. Allied with the Old Lutherans were other traditionally-minded Lutherans who looked to revive ancient liturgical practices along with an emphasis on the importance of sacraments in the church. At this time, Lutheran theology in Germany was bitterly divided between three schools of thought.

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24 Landry, Stan M. Nineteenth Century Piety, University of Arizona, Online presentation. 15 November 2010. Lecture notes.
As described by religious historian Hans Hillerbrand, the three schools were:

“(A) liberal school, represented by Heinrich Eberhard Gottlob Paulus (1761–1851);

a traditional-confessional school, represented by Ernst Wilhelm Hengstenberg (1802–69) and Claus Harms (1778–1855); and a mediating school, which included August Neander (1789–1850) but was chiefly influenced by Friedrich Daniel Ernst Schleiermacher (1768–1834).”

Schleiermacher is generally recognized as the father of modern Protestant theology. He was strongly influenced by Pietism and developed an approach to faith that defined religion as a feeling of absolute dependence on God. Schleiermacher saw religion as independent of science, morals, art, love and spirit. Thus, the transcendental character of religion is the “higher realism.” As Schleiermacher wrote:

“Praxis ist Kunst, Spekulation ist Wissenschaft, Religion ist Sinn und Geschmack fürs Unendliche.”

(Practice is Art. Speculation is science. Religion is a sense and a taste for the infinite.)

Schleiermacher was raised in the Moravian Church and, years after he left the church, he still considered himself a Moravian. Through the Moravians, Schleiermacher grew to believe that religion is the expression of “that which is most authentic about human existence.” Unlike the Moravians, Schleiermacher saw Jesus as a man, not a god. Jesus, according to Schleiermacher, was fully human but had achieved a perfect consciousness with God allowing a “veritable existence of God in him.” As theologian William La Due wrote:

“For Schleiermacher Jesus is distinguished from the rest of humankind by the constant potency of his God-consciousness, which was a veritable existence of God in him. Whereas in believers there is an imperfect God-consciousness that is not pure and does not assert itself in activity, in Christ the God-consciousness is in his self-consciousness continually and exclusively, determining his actions every moment and thus constituting the perfect dwelling for the supreme being in him.”

This put Schleiermacher at odds with traditionalists. In addition, Schleiermacher battled
with philosophers like Immanuel Kant who held that God could be understood using reason and that the essence of religion is morality.\textsuperscript{31}

Another threat to traditionalists at this time was the Historical Jesus Movement as embodied by David Friedrich Strauss. In his work “The life of Jesus: Critically Examined”, Strauss scrutinized the stories of Jesus as presented in the New Testament seeking to examine them from a realistic historical perspective. This radically different approach can be seen in how Strauss considered the story at the heart of the Jesus Movement: the resurrection of Jesus. Strauss wrote:

“(T)he cultivated intellect of the present day has very decidedly stated the following dilemma: either Jesus was not really dead, or he did not really rise again.

“Rationalism has principally given its adhesion to the former opinion. The short time that Jesus hung on the cross, together with the otherwise ascertained tardiness of death by crucifixion, and the uncertain nature and effects of the wound from the spear, appeared to render the reality of the death doubtful. That the agents in the crucifixion, as well as the disciples themselves, entertained no such doubt, would be explained not only by the general difficulty of distinguishing deep swoons and the rigidity of syncope from real death, but also from the low state of medical science in that age; while at least one example of the restoration of a crucified person appeared to render conceivable a resuscitation in the case of Jesus also. This example is found in Josephus, who informs us that of three crucified acquaintances whose release he begged from Titus, two died after being taken down from the cross, but one survived. …

“If we compare with this account of the resurrection of Jesus, the precise and internally consistent attestation of his death: we must incline to the other side of the dilemma above stated, and be induced to doubt the reality of the resurrection rather than that of the death. Hence Celsus chose this alternative, deriving the alleged appearance of Jesus after the resurrection, from the self-delusion of the disciples, especially the women, either dreaming or waking; or from what appeared to him still more probable, intentional deception.”

If traditionalists were up in arms over minute differences of opinion about the Eucharist, one can imagine their reaction to a theologian who called the story of the resurrection a likely “intentional deception”. Strauss’ book scandalized Europe and was met with virulent protest. As the preface to Strauss’ “Address to the People of Zurich” revealed:

“It will be remembered, that Dr. Strauss, the celebrated author of “The Life of Jesus” when elected, in 1839, by the proper authorities to the then vacant chair of a Professor of Theology at the University of Zurich, in Switzerland, and ready to leave his abode in Germany for his new place of destination, was prevented from doing so on account of an insurrection of the people of Zurich and of the surrounding country. Instigated and headed by their clergy, they took up arms, and declared their determination to prevent his coming, calling him “a heretic and an unbeliever.” The authorities tried all possible means to tranquillize them, and to

\textsuperscript{31} Landry, Stan M. Nineteenth Century Piety, University of Arizona, Online presentation. 15 November 2010. Lecture notes.
convince them of their being wrong, and of the groundlessness of their apprehensions; but in vain: the people remained firm in their resolution, obeying their spiritual leaders. It was at this critical time that the following letter of Dr. Strauss was written, evidently in order to reconcile the people to his doctrines, which he thought were misunderstood by them, because misrepresented by their clergy. Nothing, however, could induce them to retrace their steps; and at last they actually succeeded in forcing the authorities to institute a new election, the result of which was, that another Professor, whom they did not object to, was chosen, and thus the peace of the country restored.32

In Germany, things were far from peaceful as well. The conflict between Protestant factions and Catholic factions increased dramatically. In 1860, for example, the Prussian Parliament began a culture war against Catholics. As Catholic historian Martin Spahn described:

“But when the Liberal influence increased after 1860 in the Prussian Parliament (Landtag) and in the various German states, the party leaders began to change their tactics. The Grand Duke of Baden confided to them the organization of the Ministerium, i.e., the civil administration of the State. Forthwith the Archbishop of Freiburg and the clergy of Baden were subjected to the strictest civil supervision. The Church was deprived of all free control of its property and revenues, with which, till then, the Government had not interfered. All ecclesiastical influence was expelled from the schools, and an effort made to introduce the spirit of “free science” even into the education of the clergy.”33

This war became known as the Kulturkampf and the attacks against the Catholics were led by Otto von Bismarck, the first chancellor of the newly created German Empire. Major battles in the Kulturkampf included:

1871 -- Bismarck abolished the Catholic Section of the Prussian Ministry of Worship ceding to Protestant control all government matters pertaining to Catholic churches and schools.

1872 -- Bismarck sent out his papal election dispatch asking the European governments to agree on what conditions they would accept the next papal election. In direct opposition to Rome, Bismark uttered the famous words: “Nach Canossa gehen wir nicht” (We shall not go to Canossa).

1872 -- Reichstag passed a law against the Jesuits handing them to police supervision and imminent expulsion from the Empire.

1873 -- Expulsion order expanded to include the Redemptorists, Lazarists, Fathers of the Holy Ghost, and the Ladies of the Sacred Heart.

1873 -- The Maigesetze (May Laws) made it a criminal offense for any priest to act without authorization from the civil authority, silenced anybishop who refused to comply, and withdrew the sacraments from any Catholics who protested.

1874 -- The Reichstag passed a Priests-Expulsion Law (Priester-ausweisungsgesetz) by which all priests who had been removed from their positions for violation of the May Laws were to be turned over to the discretion of the police authorities.

1874 -- Edward Kullman, a Catholic cooper’s apprentice, attempts to assassinate Bismarck.

1875 -- The Landtag closed all monasteries in Prussia and expelled all members of religious orders, except for those who cared for the sick.

1875 -- The Landtag confiscated all Church property and turned it over to lay trustees for administration.

1876 -- The Kanzelparagraf or “pulpit-law” was amended to allow the Government to prosecute any priest who should criticize in the pulpit the laws or the administration of the Prussian State.34

These policies produced a backlash among conservative Protestants and were generally repealed by the 1880’s.35

**Nineteenth Century Piety in England**

The Corporation Act of 1661 was one of four acts known as the “Clarendon Code”. These acts excluded dissenters from the Church of England from public office and from any share in the Establishment. In addition, the Corporation Act specifically declared that “no man could hold office in a corporate town unless he took the sacrament according to the Church of England, renounced the Covenant, and declared that it was unlawful, under any circumstances, to bear arms against the King.”36 The Test Act and the Break-up of the Cabal of 1673 further cemented the authority of the Church of England by holding that all members of the military and those holding civil office must receive the sacrament as prescribed by the Church of England. In addition, these members were also required to declare an oath affirming their disbelief in transubstantiation.37 The repeal of these acts in 1828 and the passage of the Catholic Relief Bill in 1829 shocked the English establishment. For the first time in centuries, nonconformists and Catholics were allowed as a group to hold civil service jobs and public office. In addition, these “low churchmen” could vote in England and Ireland.38 As historian Arthur Cross described:

“There was already much discontent, when a series of events occurred which threatened to shake the Establishment to its very foundations. In 1828 came the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, followed by the Catholic Relief Bill in 1829. The passage of the Reform Bill, three years later, gave an impulse to a more radical policy in ecclesiastical as well as political legislation; Lord Grey advised the bishops “to set their houses in order,” and, in 1833, came the Irish Church Temporalities Act. The attempt to meet the threatened dangers resulted in the Oxford Movement, so called because it was started largely by a group of young Oxford scholars, and for some years had its center in the University. Its main aim was to emphasize the antiquity and authority of the Church, partly for the purpose of asserting its independence of State control, and partly for the purpose of stimulating the imagination and arousing spiritual and moral enthusiasm in its

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35 Landry, Stan M. *Nineteenth Century Piety*. University of Arizona, Online presentation. 15 November 2010. Lecture notes.
38 Landry, Stan M. *Nineteenth Century Piety*. University of Arizona, Online presentation. 15 November 2010. Lecture notes.
members. Another powerful stimulus to the Movement was the romantic revival in literature, the glorification of medievalism, which Scott had done so much to foster."

The Oxford Movement was spearheaded by Edward Bouverie Pusey and John Henry Newman. Newman, who came to be the dominant figure in the movement, dated the beginnings of the group from a fervent sermon preached by John Keble on July 14th, 1833. In the sermon, entitled “National Apostasy”, Keble asked in part “What are the symptoms, by which one may judge most fairly, whether or not a nation, as such, is becoming alienated from God and Christ?” Keble answered his own question by preaching:

“One of the most alarming, as a symptom, is the growing indifference, in which men indulge themselves, to other men's religious sentiments. Under the guise of charity and toleration we are come almost to this pass; that no difference, in matters of faith, is to disqualify for our approbation and confidence, whether in public or domestic life. Can we conceal it from ourselves, that every year the practice is becoming more common, of trusting men unreservedly in the most delicate and important matters, without one serious inquiry, whether they do not hold principles which make it impossible for them to be loyal to their Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier? Are not offices conferred, partnerships formed, intimacies courted,—nay, (what is almost too painful to think of,) do not parents commit their children to be educated, do they not encourage them to intermarry, in houses, on which Apostolical Authority would rather teach them to set a mark, as unfit to be entered by a faithful servant of Christ?”

Nineteenth Century Piety in Eastern Europe

Russia

In 1470 Grand Duke Ivan III declared the Russian Church independent of the Patriarch of Constantinople. In 1589, the Metropolitan of Muscovy was raised to the status of Patriarch removing the last token of Muscovy's subordination to Constantinople. By the eighteenth century, the reforms of Peter the Great had created an independent Russian Orthodox Church that acted as a branch of the secular government. As historian James Cracraft described:

“The church reform of Peter the Great quite possibly contributed more to the modernization of Russia than any of his other celebrated reforms. It destroyed the quasi-theocracy of medieval Muscovy, and in doing so irreversibly set in motion the secularization of Russian society. For under the terms of the Ecclesiastical Regulation, which was promulgated in 1721, the Moscow or All-Russian patriarchate was abolished and replaced by an Ecclesiastical College, a governing body modeled on the recently established civil colleges. It was commissioned by Peter both to rule and to reform the church. With the creation of this body ...”

Nineteenth Century Piety

the supreme administration of the Russian Orthodox Church became simply a department of the tsar’s government ....”

While the greater Russian church followed its secular duties, many of the churchgoers in eighteenth century Russia followed a vastly more conservative approach including some who practiced flagellation and castration. As historian Peter Duncan noted:

“The reign of Peter I provided a boost to the strength of the Old Believers. Peter’s enthusiastic adoption of Western methods and his promotion of foreigners (particularly Germans) into high places alienated many Russians. Again the Tsar was seen as Antichrist. Merchants who had lost their privileges through Peter’s reforms found that the ideology of the Old Believers was supportive of their interests; many of them broke from the Westernized urban environment and joined the Old Believer communities, spearheading the conquest of Siberia. Old Believer life was industrious and ascetic. Messianic groups with their own prophets constantly emerged and split off, keeping alive the intense religious tradition. They intermingled with the many Protestant sectarian communities which appeared in Russia from the seventeenth century onwards, and were influenced by them both. Both the Old Believers and the sectarians expected the imminent end of the natural order, but while the former expected only the Last Judgement, the latter generally expected the Millennial Kingdom of God on Earth. Sects such as the khlysty (flagellants) … the molokane (milk drinkers) and … the skoptsy (castrated ones) showed great vitality, producing numbers of “Christs” and “angels.”

Independence of the Orthodox churches in Greece, Serbia, Romania and Bulgaria from the Patriarchate in Constantinople would follow in the Russian mold in the nineteenth century:

**Greece**

In 1821, the Greek revolution against the Turks was proclaimed by the revolutionaries and condemned by the Patriarch in Constantinople. The revolutionaries succeeded in taking over Greece and hanged the ecumenical patriarch from the front gate of his residence on Easter 1821. The bishops of liberated Greece gathered and established themselves as the synod of an autocephalous church in 1833. The independence of the Greek Orthodox Church was finally recognized by the Patriarch in Constantinople in 1850.

**Serbia**

In 1832, the independence of Serbia led to the formal recognition of Serbian ecclesiastical autonomy.

**Romania**

After centuries of foreign dominance, the creation of an independent Romania led in 1865 to the self-proclamation of the Romanian Church as autocephalous.

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Nineteenth Century Piety

Bulgaria

After several decades of revolt in Bulgaria, the Bulgarian Orthodox Church became autocephalous in 1871 and the Bulgarian nation achieved independence from the Ottoman Turks in 1876.47

Popular Piety in Europe

At the end of the nineteenth century, there were fewer churchgoers and fewer practicing Christians in Europe.48 According to historian Robin Gill, one cause of this decline was the increasing “implausibility” of religious belief:

“(C)hurch decline started with a crisis in religious belief. The gradual effect of some of the leading intellectuals of the nineteenth and early twentieth century — notably Darwin, Marx and Freud — has been that religious belief has become increasingly implausible to ever larger sections of the population and that churchgoing has, as a result, slowly atrophied and been replaced by other leisure activities. Empty churches are but the latest visible evidence of this long process of secularization. Owen Chadwick has characterized this process in cultural terms as ‘the secularization of the European mind’.”49

Chadwick, a British religious historian, attributed part of the process of secularization to the Enlightenment’s recognition of ignorance. Chadwick wrote:

“The reason of the Enlightenment, after jerking its way in the turmoils of revolution, came again into its own, and remade philosophy, and sought to reconstruct society, and to end ancient prejudice and superstition. But its confident mood could not last. Men who expect the impossible run into disillusion. The more they used the reason, the more knowledge they gained; and gaining knowledge was accompanied by its bedfellow, recognition of ignorance. They had thought their confidence due to great learning, and saw now that it sprang from too little learning; that as the questions were solved more questions multiplied. In the reconstruction of thought the old metaphysical questions refused to lie down. In the realm of religion, practice and belief were pertinacious, unexpectedly pertinacious, and showed no sign of vanishing under rational education. In the realm of politics the mighty ideals of liberty and nationalism transformed the states of Europe, their constitutions, societies and frontiers - and still men hungered, and were exploited, and were slaves of unpredictable economic forces, and those ideals of liberty and nationalism were usable, and were used, to clothe the nakedness of power.”50

Chadwick termed this situation in Europe a “loss of a sense of Providence”51 and held out

47 History of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church. Website of the Bulgarian Eastern Orthodox Diocese of the USA, Canada, and Australia. bulgariandiocese.org. Web. 29 November 2010.
48 Landry, Stan M. Nineteenth Century Piety, University of Arizona, Online presentation. 15 November 2010. Lecture notes.
51 Landry, Stan M. Nineteenth Century Piety, University of Arizona, Online presentation. 15 November 2010. Lecture notes.
hope in the fact that there will always be those who still believe. Chadwick wrote:

“Nature propagates species and is careless about individuals. Men live and work and suffer, knowing not why. Something is playing a game at our cost Nature has a plan to make an unknown end justify these means. To be good is to be deceived. One must be good, but it is not one’s interest to be good. To be happy is to be deceived. Seek happiness and you end in disaster, yet you must seek happiness because this is nature’s instinct. Said the philosopher in the park at Versailles, I submit. The worst thing of all is to revolt. If everyone grew so educated that they all realized the deceitfulness of goodness and of happiness, life would come to an end. But there will always be men who will sacrifice themselves instinctively, irrationally, for some transcendent reason. There will always be men who believe and who love. It is the duty of wise men, said this wise man, to resign themselves and, while undecided themselves, cooperate in the deceit.”

Among those who continued to believe was English Methodist preacher William Booth. Booth, born in 1829, was the founder of the Salvation Army. He established branches of the Army in 58 countries and colonies and was received in audience by emperors, kings and presidents. Booth’s most famous book, “In Darkest England and the way Out” became the blueprint for the Army’s social programs.

The programs of the Salvation Army were not just handouts to the poor. According to Booth, the Army’s main pathway to helping the homeless was through their souls. As Booth wrote in the preface to “In Darkest England and the way Out”:

“If we help the man it is in order that we may change him. The builder who should elaborate his design and erect his house and risk his reputation without burning his bricks would be pronounced a failure and a fool. Perfection of architectural beauty, unlimited expenditure of capital, unfailing watchfulness of his labourers, would avail him nothing if the bricks were merely unkindled clay. Let him kindle a fire. And so here I see the folly of hoping to accomplish anything abiding, either in the circumstances or the morals of these hopeless classes, except there be a change effected in the whole man as well as in his surroundings. … My only hope for the permanent deliverance of mankind from misery, either in this world or the next, is the regeneration or remaking of the individual by the power of the Holy Ghost through Jesus Christ. But in providing for the relief of temporal misery I reckon that I am

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only making it easy where it is now difficult, and possible where it is now all but impossible, for men and women to find their way to the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Not everyone saw Booth’s popular approach as a good thing. As Edwin Hodder in his book “The life and work of the 7th Earl of Shaftesbury, K.G.” wrote, Booth was guilty of making serious religion “grotesque and familiar”:

“Lord Shaftesbury, in expressing his surprise that so many were found to encourage Mr. Booth and his “myrmidons,” protested against the haughty title, “The Salvation Army,” and that the only plea urged in their behalf was that they were in earnest. “In earnest! “he exclaimed,” was not Mr. Bradlaugh in earnest? Were not the Nihilists and the Fenians in earnest? Was not the Devil himself in earnest? And, if they supported all that was in earnest, to what extremes would they not be driven? The excesses of the “Army” were producing great irreverence of thought, of expression, of action, turning religion into a play, and making it grotesque and familiar. Now, if religion was made easy and jocular, hundreds would join it, and swell the number of conversions, but that was not the way to carry on the work of the Gospel.”

The Salvation Army also allowed women to preach. This use of “Hallelujah Lasses” provided for an expanded range of possibilities for women — and controversy. As historian Beverly Mayne Kienzle wrote:

“The Salvation Army invaded the streets of East London in 1865, bombarding these working-class neighborhoods with brass bands and flamboyant preachers. The Hallelujah Lasses, as the Army’s women preachers were known, excited the most controversy. Salvationist women preached and assumed positions of leadership and authority at a time when few Protestant denominations or other working-class organizations allowed women to perform any such work. Salvationist women drew large crowds and helped transform the Salvation Army from a small London mission into a recognized national and international denomination with a strong social-service wing. The distinctive role of women had its origin in the work of Catherine Mumford Booth, who founded the Salvation Army with her husband, William Booth. She fervently argued for women’s right to preach the gospel and was a respected independent evangelist. Her interpretation of female ministry drew upon Methodism and American holiness teachings, as well as her own class position and family life. Under her aegis, the Salvation Army institutionalized women’s preaching and provided an extraordinary range

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55 According to Webster, a myrmidon is: “a loyal follower; especially: a subordinate who executes orders unquestioningly or unscrupulously.” merriam-webster.com. Web. 29 November 2010.
57 The Fenians were a secret society of militant Irish nationalists. Found at: Fenianism. encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org. Web. 29 November 2010.
of possibilities for women.”

Prior to the controversial 1865 founding of The Salvation Army (originally “The Christian Mission”), London also saw the establishment of two other notable Christian programs. In 1844, George Williams, a farmer-turned-department store worker joined with eleven friends to establish the first Young Men’s Christian Association (YMCA). Williams saw the YMCA as a refuge of “Bible study and prayer for young men seeking escape from the hazards of life on the streets.”

In 1855, social activist Lady Mary Jane Kinnaird and committed Christian Emma Robarts founded the YWCA. Kinnaird had set up housing for single women in London who had arrived to work or serve in the Crimean War. At the same time, Robarts brought together 23 women in a London-based prayer group that would later merge with Kinnaird’s program.

It was prayer groups like these that typified the expanding English missionary movement. Indeed, prayer as a form of religious revival was instrumental in the founding of the Baptist Foreign Missionary Society by William Carey and others in 1792. As the Society wrote in its own history:

“(In 1792) the English Baptist Foreign Missionary Society was formed. The plan had encountered much opposition, excited much ridicule, and been preceded by many conferences for counsel and prayer. The first step leading to its adoption strikingly illustrates the connection between revivals and missions. Edwards’s tract entitled “Persuasives to Prayer for a Revival of Religion” had been extensively circulated in England, and read by Carey, Sutcliffe, Fuller, and several other members of the Nottingham Association. At a meeting of the association, held in 1784, it was resolved, under the inspiration of this publication, to set apart the first Monday evening of each month, in all the churches, for the observance of “extraordinary prayer for the revival of religion, and for the extending of Christ’s kingdom in the world.” Thus originated what has long been known as the concert of prayer for missions; a service which has contributed at once to strengthen the Church at home, and to extend its power abroad.”

The “weapon” of choice for these missionaries was, of course, the Bible itself. In 1804 the British and Foreign Bible Society was founded with a singular purpose: “the universal circulation of the Holy Scriptures’. The Society would be responsible for the distribution of hundreds of thousands of Bibles in more than twenty languages throughout Europe and beyond during the next 50 years.

The increasing role of women in missionary and prayer societies coincided with an increase in devotion to the Virgin Mary and in the proliferation of Rosary Societies among nineteenth century Catholics. This Marian devotion was fostered and approved by the Catholic Church as evidenced in the 1854 dogmatization of the Immaculate Conception of Mary by Pope Pius IX.
in his constitution Ineffabilis Deus. It would also be the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception that would play such an important role in the apparition of the Virgin Mary at Lourdes, France four years later.

Bernadette Soubirous was a sickly girl from Lourdes who was so attached to her rosary beads that her friends used to say “Celle-la n’est bonne quo pour dire ses chaplets” (She is no good for anything but to say her rosary). At a cave near Lourdes, Soubirous saw repeated vision of the Virgin Mary. As described by William Shepard Walsh:

“The time had come when these manifestations were to reach their climax. It was the feast of the Annunciation, the day when the angel Gabriel had communicated her destiny to the Virgin Mary. The village priest, sceptical and scornful, had asked Bernadotte to exact a sign from the vision. “On the spot where she appears,” he said, “there grows a wild rose-bush. Tell her to cause the roses to bloom at once, as if it were spring. If before your eyes and the eyes of all present that prodigy occurs, you may promise her, on my part, that a handsome chapel shall be built on the spot.” Thousands of people, who had poured in from the neighboring villages, accompanied Bernadette to the cavern. Of course they saw nothing. To their eyes the consecrated cave was but a common cavern, the holy niche wherein the vision appeared only a plain, ivy-grown rock. One thing, however, they did see, and that was the little maiden so lost in ecstasy at what she saw that she seemed not to feel the flame of a burning candle. When she rose she repeated the words she had heard from the vision, which were, in brief, that the Virgin wished the people to be happy, and bade them eat the herb of that place and wash in the water. When Bernadette had besought her for her name, she had answered, “I am the Immaculate Conception.”

The circumstances of the visitations and, specifically, the Virgin’s use of the words “I am the Immaculate Conception”, were very helpful for the efforts of Pius IX and very troubling for sceptics. As Émile Zola wrote:

“Was it not always the same story, the Lady clad in light, the secret confided, the spring bursting forth, the mission which had to be fulfilled, the miracles whose enchantments would convert the masses? And was not the personal appearance of the Virgin always in accordance with a poor child’s dreams—akin to some coloured figure in a missal, an ideal compounded of traditional beauty, gentleness, and politeness. And the same dreams showed themselves in the naiveté of the means which were to be employed and of the object which was to be attained—the deliverance of nations, the building of churches, the processional pilgrimages of the faithful! Then, too, all the words which fell from Heaven resembled one another, calls for penitence, promises of help; and in this respect,
in Bernadette’s case the only new feature was that most extraordinary declaration: “I am the Immaculate Conception,” which burst forth—very usefully—as the recognition by the Blessed Virgin herself of the dogma promulgated by the Court of Rome but three years previously! It was not the Immaculate Virgin who appeared: no, it was the Immaculate Conception, the abstraction itself, the thing, the dogma, so that one might well ask oneself if really the Virgin had spoken in such a fashion. As for the other words, it was possible that Bernadette had heard them somewhere and stored them up in some unconscious nook of her memory. But these—“I am the Immaculate Conception”—whence had they come as though expressly to fortify a dogma—still bitterly discussed—with such prodigious support as the direct testimony of the Mother conceived without sin?

Despite the pronouncements of the sceptics, Lourdes attracted (and still attracts) pilgrims in record numbers. The Catholic Church estimates that in the first 50 years after the apparitions, Lourdes had been visited by over 10 million pilgrims.69

Another apparition of the Virgin (also as the Immaculate Conception) was reported in 1876 in Marpingen, Germany. In Marpingen, three young girls were told by a woman in white in a meadow “I am the Immaculately Conceived.” The events at Marpingen happened at the height of the Kulturkampf, leading to serious conflict between the Prussian Government and Christians.70 Despite the conflict, the Marpingen apparitions inspired numerous imitations. As historian Geoff Eley wrote:

“Within the village itself, a score of “rival children” claimed increasingly extravagant visions. Further local apparitions were reported from Gronig, Wemmetsweiler, Munchwies, and Berschweilcr. In Munchwies a group of children worked themselves into a religious ecstasy; at one point a group burst in on Neureuter at Marpingen “bathed in sweat” and asking to take communion. Children and adults saw the devil standing next to the Virgin and dancing around her in the shape of a dog, a donkey, and a cow. In Berschweiler a group of a dozen children, mainly girls, fought violent struggles with the devil in front of large crowds. We are told how “eleven girls rolled on a bed with convulsive twitches and improper movements, while screaming and shouting about the apparitions they were witnessing,” performances that commonly went on beyond midnight. A little further afield, the “Virgin in a bottle” at the Gappenach mill, over which the miller, his wife, an impoverished tailor, and a woman known as “the nun of Naunheim” were prosecuted, attracted five thousand pilgrims a day.”71

These apparitions had an extreme impact on the church. Historian Niels Hyidt took a broader look at that impact when he wrote:

“In the nineteenth century, the prophetic charism surfaced in yet another forceful way in the form of Marian apparitions. Beginning with the French apparitions of La Salette in 1846, Lourdes in 1858, and Pontmain in 1871, continuing in the
Nineteenth Century Piety

twentieth century with Fatima in 1917, Banneux and Beauraing (1932-33), Gara-bandal (1961-63), and Medjugorje (ongoing from 1981), just to mention a few, a new wave of prophetic messages presented themselves to Christians. These apparitions have created apparition sites that function as centers of pilgrimage and prayer with reports of repeated miraculous healings and other extraordinary experiences. The impact that these many modern pilgrimage sites, which Victor Turner has described as “postindustrial Marian pilgrimage places” have had on the fruition and development of life in the church in all parts of the world cannot be underestimated.72

Also not to be underestimated are the socio-political effects derived by the Church through its use of Marian apparitions and other deeply-rooted Christian beliefs. For example, for temporal economic and political benefit, the Catholic Church has seen fit to display one of its most treasured relics, the Holy Coat of Christ, to pilgrims. The Coat is normally locked away at the Cathedral in Trier, Germany but it was removed and displayed to the public in 1844 in connection with the rise of the sect of German Catholics. Another period of public display was in 1891 (which attracted over two million pilgrims)73 when the Coat was brought out to celebrate the end of the Kulturkampf. And in 1933, the Catholic Church ordered the Holy Coat of Christ to be paraded in Trier again, this time to celebrate the rise to power of Adolph Hitler.74

Conclusion: Nineteenth Century Piety

In Nineteenth century Europe, governments alternately tried to destroy or restore the Church. In some countries, like France, their unification efforts achieved some success. In other countries, like Spain, their restoration efforts failed miserably. And in some countries, like Germany, the battle was fought to a near draw. But even while the elites battled, the people found their champions of piety in the lowest, the least and the lost. Throughout Europe, it was the visions seen mostly by poor and forgotten children that would define this age of faith. It is that faith — and the threads woven by supernal belief — that we will follow as we look at The Churches and Modernity.

Nineteenth Century Piety

There should be no beggars ... according to the Salvation Army

We have already seen the serious and substantial work the Salvation Army did in the 1800’s as described by its founder, William Booth. For a lighter look at things, we now turn to someone the Salvation Army helped in the nineteenth century, William Henry Davies.

W. H. Davies was a poet and writer born in 1871 in Newport, Wales. A troubled teenager, Davies joined a shoplifting gang and was “given the birch for stealing two bottles of perfume”. He left Wales for the United States in 1893 and spent the next six years intermittently working and begging his way across North America. Davies documented his life as a beggar in his acclaimed memoir “Autobiography of a Super-Tramp” and saw the impact that the Salvation Army had on beggars first-hand. In his book “Beggars” Davies wrote of his experience with begging and the “Army”:

“As I was on my way back I saw Curly Jack going to a house, and waited—at his motion—until he was at liberty to come. “What luck, Jack?” I asked, when he came. “Very bad,” he answered; “I was in a good street, where I have done well before, but twenty or thirty beggars have been there this morning before me, and played it out.” These words surprised me not a little, and I asked him for an explanation. “There they are again,” he cried, with an oath. I looked in every direction, but all I saw was three little children together, and one couple that appeared to be lovers. “Can’t you hear the beggars?” he asked. “I hear the Salvation Army,” I said; “surely you don’t mean them!” “Of course I mean them,” he answered, with some impatience. “What difference can they make?” I said, at a loss to understand him, “I should think their presence would be good for beggars—that they would open people’s hearts.” “Come with me, and I will show you how they spoil the street for a beggar,” said Jack. And away we went. In a few moments we were in the same street as the Salvation Army, and my companion walked boldly towards them, while I lingered a little behind. However, when I saw him standing near them, I joined him, and could not help but notice that several members of the Army rewarded our presence with smiles. It was not long before I saw how the Salvation Army could spoil a street for a beggar. While the meeting was going on, several members not only went from house to house, but even begged passers-by—aye, even came to me and my seedy friend. “Now,” said Curly Jack, as we were leaving—“now, are you satisfied? What chance has a beggar, be he ever so good, against these people?”

1 W. H. Davies. bbc.co.uk. Web. 29 November 2010.
Pope Pius IX greeted modernity not with an open hand, but with a clenched fist. On December 8, 1864 Pope Pius IX promulgated the papal encyclical “Quanta Cura” along with an annexed syllabus of errors entitled “A Syllabus containing the most important errors of our time, which have been condemned by our Holy Father Pius IX in Allocutions, at Consistories, in Encyclicals, and other Apostolic Letters”. The Syllabus of Errors contains eighty theses condemning modern religious errors and was slowly and carefully crafted by a papal commission. As the Catholic Encyclopedia explained:

“The commission took the wording of the errors to be condemned from the official declarations of Pius IX and appended to each of the eighty theses a reference indicating its content, so as to determine the true meaning and the theological value of the subjects treated. With that the preparation for the Syllabus, having occupied twelve years, was brought to an end. Of the twenty-eight points which Cardinal Fornari had drawn up in 1852, twenty-two retained their place in the Syllabus; of the sixty-one theses which had been laid before the episcopate for examination in 1862, thirty were selected. The promulgation, according to the original plan, was to have taken place simultaneously with the proclamation of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception.”

Instead, the Syllabus of Errors was annexed to the encyclical Quanta Cura and released ten years later on the celebration of the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. The timing was not just symbolic. The Holy See used the “binding power” of Quanta Cura to elevate the status of the Syllabus. As the Catholic Encyclopedia explained:

“The binding power of the Syllabus of Pius IX is differently explained by Catholic theologians. All are of the opinion that many of the propositions are condemned if not in the Syllabus, then certainly in other final decisions of the infallible teaching authority of the Church, for instance in the Encyclical “Quanta Cura”. There is no agreement, however, on the question whether each thesis condemned in the Syllabus is infallibly false, merely because it is condemned in the Syllabus.”

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But, Quanta Cura did, indeed, carry the infallible teaching authority of the Church. So, what was being taught? In short, the Holy See condemned freedom of religion and freedom of speech as “nefarious enterprises of wicked men.” In fact, Quanta Cura decried the “insanity” of believing:

“(T)hat erroneous opinion, most fatal in its effects on the Catholic Church and the salvation of souls, ... that “liberty of conscience and worship is each man’s personal right, which ought to be legally proclaimed and asserted in every rightly constituted society; and that a right resides in the citizens to an absolute liberty, which should be restrained by no authority whether ecclesiastical or civil, whereby they may be able openly and publicly to manifest and declare any of their ideas whatever, either by word of mouth, by the press, or in any other way.”

But, while they rashly affirm this, they do not think and consider that they are preaching “liberty of perdition;” and that “if human arguments are always allowed free room for discussion, there will never be wanting men who will dare to resist truth, and to trust in the flowing speech of human wisdom; whereas we know, from the very teaching of our Lord Jesus Christ, how carefully Christian faith and wisdom should avoid this most injurious babbling.”

Unfortunately for the Church, that injurious babbling continued as Quanta Cura was seen as an attack so great that “lovers of civil and religious freedom throughout Roman-catholic Christendom bent their heads in silence.” Indeed, the United States Senate severed diplomatic relations in 1867 with the Holy See in part because of Quanta Cura.

A significant component to the reaction to Quanta Cura was not just its content, but the way the Church handled the reaction to this encyclical. As Acton described:

“The Encyclical Quanta Cura was a declaration of war against modern ideas, liberties, and institutions. ... Theologians of repute did not hesitate to describe it as infallible; and it was hoped in influential quarters that its doctrines would be imposed by the Vatican Council as of faith. Prominent among the errors condemned was that of those who deny the Church’s right to employ force, that is to inflict civil and criminal penalties. A practical comment on this was the beatification, a few years later, of the Inquisitor Peter Arbues and other officials of the Holy Office; thus the practice as well as the principle of the Inquisition was approved.”

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4 Quanta Cura. Encyclical of Pope Pius IX promulgated on December 8, 1864. papalencyclicals.net. Web. 28 November 2010.
According to Acton, Quanta Cura was promulgated in part to reaffirm the Church's right to employ force as it had through the offices of the Inquisition. To confirm that end, Pius IX began the process of sainthood for Peter Arbues, an infamous 15th-century inquisitor known for forcible conversion of Jews. In Quanta Cura, Pius' condemnation of freedom of religion did not just apply to Protestant heresies. It also directly applied to the role of Jews in modern society. As Pius himself said in an 1871 address to a group of Catholic women:

“(Jews) had been children in the House of God, (but) owing to their obstinacy and their failure to believe, they have become dogs. We have today in Rome unfortunately too many of these dogs, and we hear them barking in all the streets, and going around molesting people everywhere.”

In 1880, the Civiltá Cattolica (the informal publishing arm of the Vatican where every article was nonetheless cleared before publication by the papal secretariat of state) made the Holy See's opinion even clearer:

“The Jews -- eternal insolent children, obstinate, dirty, thieves, liars, ignoramuses, pests and the scourge of those near and far . . . managed to lay their hands on . . . all public wealth . . . and virtually alone they took control not only of all the money . . . but of the law itself in those countries where they have been allowed to hold public offices . . . [yet they complain] at the first shout by anyone who dares raise his voice against this barbarian invasion by an enemy race, hostile to Christianity and to society in general.”

In short, according to the pronouncements and the actions of the Vatican during Pius IX, “liberty of conscience and worship” was no man's right, especially if he were Jewish.

When Pius convened the First Vatican Council in 1869, some feared that the Holy See was attempting to elevate the Syllabus of Errors to the status of Catholic dogma. However, the Council was primarily concerned with promulgating the doctrine of papal infallibility. According to the Catholic Encyclopedia:

“Infallibility means more than exemption from actual error; it means exemption from the possibility of error; … it does not require holiness of life, much less imply impeccability in its organs; sinful and wicked men may be God’s agents in defining infallibly; and finally that the validity of the Divine guarantee is independent of the fallible arguments upon which a definitive decision may be based, and of the possibly unworthy human motives that in cases of strife may appear to have influenced the result. It is the definitive result itself, and it alone, that is guaranteed to be infallible, not the preliminary stages by which it is reached.”

In short, in the case of papal infallibility, the ends absolutely justify the means. So how are those ends achieved? There are very specific steps the Pope must take to have a doctrine considered as infallible. As detailed by the Catholic Encyclopedia:

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9 Landry, Stan M. *The Churches and Modernity*, University of Arizona, Online presentation. 22 November 2010. Lecture notes.
“The pontiff must teach in his public and official capacity as pastor and doctor of all Christians, not merely in his private capacity as a theologian, preacher or allocutionist, nor in his capacity as a temporal prince or as a mere ordinary of the Diocese of Rome. It must be clear that he speaks as spiritual head of the Church universal.

“Then it is only when, in this capacity, he teaches some doctrine of faith or morals that he is infallible .... Further it must be sufficiently evident that he intends to teach with all the fullness and finality of his supreme Apostolic authority, in other words that he wishes to determine some point of doctrine in an absolutely final and irrevocable way ....

“Finally for an ex cathedra decision it must be clear that the pope intends to bind the whole Church. To demand internal assent from all the faithful to his teaching under pain of incurring spiritual shipwreck (naufragium fidei) ....”

However, the mere thought of anyone being infallible led some Catholics to split from the Church. One such group was called the “Old Catholics” who were inspired by Ignaz von Döllinger. Döllinger was a theologian and historian from Munich and was, until 1860, a true supporter of the Pope’s supremacy. However, the Syllabus of Errors promulgated by Pius IX turned him into a “single-minded critic of papal infallibility”. When the Civiltà Cattolica predicted in February 1869 that the doctrine of papal infallibility would be proclaimed by acclamation at the upcoming First Vatican Council, Döllinger fought back by responding with a series of German newspaper articles. These articles were then expanded, translated, and published by the author “Janus” under the title “The Pope and the Council”. In the book, Döllinger affirmed that the rule of a pope “rests on Divine appointment”:

“But on this has followed, since the ninth century, a further development, artificial and sickly rather than sound and natural—of the Primacy into the Papacy, a transformation rather than a development. . . . The ancient Church found the need of a centre of unity, of a bishop possessed of primatial authority.... But when the presidency of the Church became an empire, when in the place of the first bishop deliberating and deciding in union with his “brethren” on the affairs of the Church, and setting them an example of submission to her laws, there was substituted the despotic rule of an absolute monarch, . . . Of the privileges afterwards obtained or laid claim to by the Popes not one can be traced up to the earliest times, and pointed to as a right uninterruptedly and everywhere exercised.”

Döllinger's book ended with a warning about the danger of absolute power:
“All absolute power demoralizes its possessor. To that all history bears witness. And if it be a spiritual power … the danger of self-exaltation is only so much the greater ... while it is peculiarly conducive to self-deceit. . . . And if the man into whose hands this absolute power has fallen cherishes the further opinion that he is infallible, and an organ of the Holy Ghost . . . it seems almost impossible that his sobriety of mind should always be proof against so intoxicating a sense of power.”

This “intoxication” was quickly demonstrated by Pius himself during the deliberations at the First Vatican Council. When a Dominican theologian suggested the inclusion of a phrase that would require the Pope to examine tradition before making an infallible decision, Pius rebuked him with the words: “Tradition! I am the Tradition!” When the Council finally voted on the Doctrine of Papal Infallibility, the doctrine was passed with 533 council members voting yes and only two voting no. Döllinger, along with other Catholic theologians, protested and was excommunicated. Döllinger died nineteen years later without rejoining the Catholic Church and without ever having joined the Old Catholic Church.

By promulgating dogma like the Doctrine of Papal Infallibility and condemning errors and heresies, Pius was able to strengthen his control over the Church. In the temporal world, however, Pius was not so fortunate. The Risorgimento, the drive to reunify Italy, ended up forcing Pius to live as a virtual prisoner in one of the last remnants of land controlled by the Holy See — the Vatican itself. As historian Bart McDowell wrote:

“By 1870 Italian troops had occupied the papal lands and proclaimed Rome the capital of the new kingdom of Italy. The new Italian government enacted laws that permitted the Pope to use the Vatican and other properties considered part of the kingdom. But Pius IX refused to accept this new status. He regarded the Holy See as a sacred trust to he handed over to his successor in the same condition it had been received. He and his immediate successors chose to live as ‘prisoners in the Vatican,’ never setting outside the grounds from the moment of their election, and forbidding Catholics from taking part in the ‘usurping kingdom of Italy.”

Pius’ successor, Pope Leo XIII also lived as a “prisoner” in the Vatican. When Leo ascended to the papacy in 1878, one of his first decisions was whether to flee Rome. As historian David Kertzer wrote:

“From practically his first days on St. Peter’s throne, Leo XIII turned time and again to the cardinals of the Curia to advise him on whether he should flee Rome, just as, year after year, he had his secretary of state put out feelers to various Eu-
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ropean governments to see which ones would agree to host him. Not surpris-
ingly, the failure of his halting reconciliation efforts in the spring of 1887, and a series of events over the next two years culminating in the unveiling of the Bruno monument, led to yet another round of frenetic planning. But this time, many believed, the pope’s threat to leave Rome was all too real. By late 1888, continued tensions in Europe had led to widespread expectations of war, including fears by Germany and Austria of a French-Russian attack on their borders. The continuing agitation in France, linked to the possibility of a monarchist revolt led by Boulanger against the republican government, further fueled fears that war was near. On December 6, Galimberti expressed his own worries: “The international situation grows ever more serious and threatening. It would take only a puff of air to blow open the gates of the temple of Mars, which have only recently been closed.” In response to the war fever, that same month Leo summoned two different groups of cardinals — including many of the major figures in the Church — to examine the question of leaving Rome once more. Again, they recommended against immediate flight but advised that if Italy were drawn into a European war — a prospect they viewed as both likely and imminent — he should leave at once.17

This feeling of helplessness, this loss of temporal power, would greatly affect the coming decisions of Leo’s long papacy. In fact, one of the first controversies Leo encountered was whether he intended to fight back militarily to regain temporal power. Governments around the world held their breath as they waited for a sign from the new pope. At first, things looked encouraging. Leo did little to protest his loss of temporal power, but then the real message came through loud and clear from a traditional source, the Civiltà Cattolica. Would Leo be a modernist and turn the Church in a new spiritual direction, or would Leo follow the traditional path of temporal power as followed by his militarist predecessors? From the Jesuit Journal, the prisoner of the Vatican spoke:

“Hardly had the new Pontiff Leo XIII sat on Peter’s throne than the liberal press began to spread confusion with its tales of a new direction,” the Jesuit journal reported in late April 1878. “It kept repeating that the new pope, given his great intelligence, breeding, his knowledge of world conditions, and especially his moderate and pacific temperament, would reconcile himself to the century, would infuse new life into Catholicism and recognize the justice of the conquests of the modern

State." But all these foolish speculations, the journal continued, had been shown to be groundless: "The fact is that the liberals — Jews and non-Jews — would like the pope to stop these protests, to be able to say that finally the Holy See relinquishes any right to temporal power... But it is one thing to act like an ass, and another the ass's driver."18

For Leo, the path to the future of the Catholic Church could be found in its past. In 1879 Leo released the encyclical Aeterni Patris. It dealt with one of Leo's favorite topics, the philosophical and theological orientation of Catholic schools, but it was truly a foundational encyclical for the goals Leo sought to pursue during his pontificate. In Aeterni Patris, Leo confronted the challenges of modernity by reviving the philosophy of a man who had died over 600 years before: Thomas Aquinas. In doing so, the encyclical Aeterni Patris contains two parts: "It speaks from tradition, but this tradition must be revived in order to be able to do justice to the problems of the modern world."19

According to Aeterni Patris, one of the traditions that was required to be revived was the Church tradition of using reason to help explain the world. This thought was especially surprising to a world used to the anti-reason pronouncements of Pius IX. In Aeterni Paris Leo wrote:

"Divine Providence itself requires that, in calling back the people to the paths of faith and salvation, advantage should be taken of human science also — an approved and wise practice which history testifies was observed by the most illustrious Fathers of the Church. They, indeed, were wont neither to belittle nor undervalue the part that reason had to play, as is summed up by the great Augustine when he attributes to this science "that by which the most wholesome faith is begotten... is nourished, defended, and made strong."20

Reason and science and philosophy, continued Leo citing a plethora of Church Fathers in support, are a vital and natural part of the Church and had always been so. Always. Just as long as those using them remain humble. Leo explained:

"But in order that philosophy may be bound equal to the gathering of those precious fruits which we have indicated, it behooves it above all things never to turn aside from that path which the Fathers have entered upon from a venerable antiquity, and which the Vatican Council solemnly and authoritatively approved. As it is evident that very many truths of the supernatural order which are far beyond the reach of the keenest intellect must be accepted, human reason, conscious of its own infirmity, dare not affect to itself too great powers, nor deny those truths, nor measure them by its own standard, nor interpret them at will; but receive them, rather, with a full and humble faith, and esteem it the highest honor to be allowed to wait upon heavenly doctrines like a handmaid and attendant, and by God's goodness attain to them in any way whatsoever."21

In conclusion, Leo cited the example of the “Angel Doctor” Thomas Aquinas. Aquinas “pushed his philosophic inquiry into the reasons and principles of things” but never lost sight of what was even more important, the role of God in this process. In Aeterni Patris Leo concluded:

“Let carefully selected teachers endeavor to implant the doctrine of Thomas Aquinas in the minds of students, and set forth clearly his solidity and excellence over others. … also let us follow the example of the Angelic Doctor, who never gave himself to reading or writing without first begging the blessing of God, who modestly confessed that whatever he knew he had acquired not so much by his own study and labor as by the divine gift; and therefore let us all, in humble and united prayer, beseech God to send forth the spirit of knowledge and of understanding to the children of the Church and open their senses for the understanding of wisdom.”

Aeterni Patris was an encyclical aimed at the scholarly world. Two years later in 1891, Leo would focus on the common world with his encyclical Rerum Novarum. The political reasons for Rerum Novarum were self-evident. As historian Hubert Jedin explained:

“The transition from an artisan to an industrial economy, which had to compete with the more productive branches of industry north of the Alps and was largely dependent on their finances, their machines, and their technicians, occasioned constant disquiet and anxiety. The organization of the working class under both the flag of Marxist socialism and the banner of the most radical revolutionary syndicalism, as represented by the anarchist Bakunin, took place even in the rural areas. Strikes, civil unrest, and suppressive measures followed one after another in all parts of the country and found a strong echo in the press. The expansion of suffrage, which in 1882 increased the number of eligible voters from 2 to 10 percent of the population, provided the Socialists, in coalition with the Radicals, representation in parliament. In 1891, the official founding of the Italian Socialist Party took place. Its program represented the demands of the workers, but also contained a lay anticlerical policy. All this favored the draft of a social legislation which was in line with the encyclical Rerum novarum …”

Rerum Novarum helped earn Leo the title of the “Worker’s Pope” but the encyclical was more anti-socialist than pro-worker. This is evidenced by looking at the actual words of Leo in Rerum Novarum. For example, in his introduction, Leo drew attention to the changed status of masters and workmen due to the developments of the industrialized age:

“The elements of the conflict now raging are unmistakable, in the vast expansion of industrial pursuits and the marvellous discoveries of science; in the changed relations between masters and workmen; in the enormous fortunes of some few individuals, and the utter poverty of the masses; the increased self reliance and closer mutual combination of the working classes; as also, finally, in the prevailing moral degeneracy. The momentous gravity of the state of things now obtain-
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No small part of that apprehension was the increased popularity of socialism among workers in Italy and throughout the world. This development, according to Leo, was “emphatically unjust”:

“To remedy these wrongs the socialists, working on the poor man’s envy of the rich, are striving to do away with private property, and contend that individual possessions should become the common property of all, to be administered by the State or by municipal bodies. They hold that by thus transferring property from private individuals to the community, the present mischievous state of things will be set to rights, inasmuch as each citizen will then get his fair share of whatever there is to enjoy. But their contentions are so clearly powerless to end the controversy that were they carried into effect the working man himself would be among the first to suffer. They are, moreover, emphatically unjust, for they would rob the lawful possessor, distort the functions of the State, and create utter confusion in the community.”

If socialism created confusion, then communism begat chaos. Leo strongly supported private ownership when he wrote:

“The fact that God has given the earth for the use and enjoyment of the whole human race can in no way be a bar to the owning of private property. For God has granted the earth to mankind in general, not in the sense that all without distinction can deal with it as they like, but rather that no part of it was assigned to any one in particular, and that the limits of private possession have been left to be fixed by man’s own industry. … Here, again, we have further proof that private ownership is in accordance with the law of nature.”

Also according to the laws of nature, was poverty. According to Leo, being poor was bitter and hard — and natural. Leo, therefore, suggested that humanity “suffer and endure”:

“As for those who possess not the gifts of fortune, they are taught by the Church that in God’s sight poverty is no disgrace, and that there is nothing to be ashamed of in earning their bread by labor. …

“... In like manner, the other pains and hardships of life will have no end or cessation on earth; for the consequences of sin are bitter and hard to bear, and they must accompany man so long as life lasts. To suffer and to endure, therefore, is the lot of humanity; let them strive as they may, no strength and no artifice will ever succeed in banishing from human life the ills and troubles which beset it.”

Those ills and troubles were to be solved by individual effort and not, except in extreme cases, by the civil government. Leo made this abundantly clear when he wrote:

“The contention, then, that the civil government should at its option intrude into and exercise intimate control over the family and the household is a great and pernicious error. True, if a family finds itself in exceeding distress, utterly deprived of the counsel of friends, and without any prospect of extricating itself, it is right that extreme necessity be met by public aid, since each family is a part of

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the commonwealth. … But the rulers of the commonwealth must go no further; here, nature bids them stop. Paternal authority can be neither abolished nor absorbed by the State; for it has the same source as human life itself.”

What also had to stop, according to Leo, were the disorderly actions of workers. According to Leo, the duties of the worker were clear:

“Of these duties, the following bind the proletarian and the worker: fully and faithfully to perform the work which has been freely and equitably agreed upon; never to injure the property, nor to outrage the person, of an employer; never to resort to violence in defending their own cause, nor to engage in riot or disorder; and to have nothing to do with men of evil principles, who work upon the people with artful promises of great results, and excite foolish hopes which usually end in useless regrets and grievous loss.”

The employer had duties as well. Chief among those was to make sure that the employer kept in mind “religion and the good of his soul” when dealing with a worker. Leo wrote:

“The following duties bind the wealthy owner and the employer: not to look upon their work people as their bondsmen, but to respect in every man his dignity as a person ennobled by Christian character. They are reminded that, according to natural reason and Christian philosophy, working for gain is creditable, not shameful, to a man, since it enables him to earn an honorable livelihood; but to misuse men as though they were things in the pursuit of gain, or to value them solely for their physical powers - that is truly shameful and inhuman. Again justice demands that, in dealing with the working man, religion and the good of his soul must be kept in mind. Hence, the employer is bound to see that the worker has time for his religious duties; that he be not exposed to corrupting influences and dangerous occasions; and that he be not led away to neglect his home and family, or to squander his earnings. Furthermore, the employer must never tax his work people beyond their strength, or employ them in work unsuited to their sex and age. His great and principal duty is to give every one what is just. Doubtless, before deciding whether wages axe fair, many things have to be considered; but wealthy owners and all masters of labor should be mindful of this . . .”

Leo concluded Rerum Novarum by providing a solution to the problems facing capitalists and laborers. According to Leo, the primary solution was “Charity” of the kind detailed by St. Paul in 1 Corinthians 13:

“The happy results we all long for must be chiefly brought about by the plenteous outpouring of charity; of that true Christian charity which is the fulfilling of the whole Gospel law, which is always ready to sacrifice itself for others’ sake, and is man’s surest antidote against worldly pride and immoderate love of self; that charity whose office is described and whose Godlike features are outlined by the Apostle St. Paul in these words: “Charity is patient, is kind, . . . seeketh not her own, . . . suffereth all things, . . . endureth all things.”

A little more than a generation before Rerum Novarum, the words of St. Paul were also

heard on the other side of the church aisle. William Wilberforce (1759-1833) was an Anglican Christian and a member of the British Parliament who deeply believed that things needed to change. For Wilberforce, change needed to come by abolishing the slave trade, stopping the exploitation of children, and prohibiting the mistreatment of industrial workers. For his inspiration, Wilberforce also relied on the words of St. Paul. In his book unmistakably titled “A practical view of the prevailing religious system of professed Christians, in the higher and middle classes in this country, contrasted with real Christianity,” Wilberforce wrote:

“Great as was the progress which the apostle Paul had made in all virtue, he declares of himself that he still presses forward, “forgetting the things which are behind,” and reaching forth unto the things which “are before.” He prays for his beloved converts, “that they may be filled with all the “fulness of God” that they may be filled with the fruits of righteousness:” “that they might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good “work.” And from one of the petitions, which our blessed Saviour inserts in that form of prayer which he has given as a model for our imitation, we may infer that the habitual sentiment of our hearts ought to be, “Thy will be done in Earth as it is “in Heaven”.

For Wilberforce, the will of God on earth required change. In order to make that change happen, Wilberforce traveled to Clapham near London and gathered with like-minded reformers. This Clapham Group (sometimes referred to as the Clapham Sect though it was never a sect and this term was never used during Wilberforce’s lifetime) worked tirelessly for social reform. Its members were derisively called “The Saints” for their efforts. As Anglican historian O. Hardman wrote:

“Like the Methodists, these Evangelical laymen of the Church of England lived strictly according to rule. They had a fixed time for rising, and a definite part of each day was apportioned to prayer, to reading, and to work. Sunday was wholly the Lord’s Day. Their possessions were held in trust from God; and as good stewards they kept faithful account of all their expenditure and were nobly generous towards others. … Social service involved the Sect in unceasing labours of the most diverse kinds, by which they attempted to encourage thrift among the people, to promote sound education in the schools, to soften the rigours of prison discipline, and generally to persuade all men to show a proper respect for man, whatever his station, and to increase the sum total of human happiness.

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But the greatest of all their works in this sphere was the contribution they made to the abolition of the slave trade.²⁸

Through the efforts of the Clapham Group, the slave trade was made illegal in England in 1807, slavery itself was abolished in 1833, and six evangelical societies were formed between 1799 and 1836 sending thousands of missionaries to Africa, India, Ceylon, China, Japan, Palestine, and Persia.²⁹

The spirit of the Clapham Group and the impetus of Rerum Novarum helped to create such political movements as Christian Democracy. According to the Catholic Encyclopedia, Christian Democracy grew out of popular Catholic action towards reform:

“But the last definitive stage of Christian democracy, and one that has given the name a fixed and technical meaning, dates from the time that elapsed between the fall of Napoleon I and the international Revolution of 1848. Among the many calumnies heaped upon the Church during the French Revolution was the charge that she was anti-democratic, and this not only in a political, but also in a larger social sense it meant that the Church favoured the great and mighty, and sided with the monarchical oligarchy against the just political and economic demands of the middle and lower classes. … After the appearance of the Encyclical “Rerum Novarum”, the rapid growth of popular Catholic action called for a suitable name to describe it. The old name, indeed, “Popular Catholic Action”, was both accurate and comprehensive; but a discussion arose as to selecting a nom de guerre, and the choice eventually lay between “Catholic Socialism” and “Christian Democracy”.

There was no doubt which name Pope Leo XIII preferred. In his encyclical Graves de Communi Re Leo condemned any mention of socialism and applauded Christian Democracy:

“What Social Democracy is and what Christian Democracy ought to be, assuredly no one can doubt. The first, with due consideration to the greater or less intemperance of its utterance, is carried to such an excess by many as to maintain that there is really nothing existing above the natural order of things, and that the acquirement and enjoyment of corporal and external goods constitute man's happiness. It aims at putting all government in the hands of the masses, reducing all ranks to the same level, abolishing all distinction of class, and finally introducing community of goods. Hence, the right to own private property is to be abrogated, and whatever property a man possesses, or whatever means of livelihood he has, is to be common to all. As against this, Christian Democracy, by the fact that it is Christian, is built, and necessarily so, on the basic principles of divine faith, and it must provide better conditions for the masses, with the ulterior object of promoting the perfection of souls made for things eternal. Hence, for Christian Democracy, justice is sacred; it must maintain that the right of acquiring and possessing property cannot be impugned, and it must safeguard the various distinctions and degrees which are indispensable in every well-ordered

commonwealth. Finally, it must endeavor to preserve in every human society the
form and the character which God ever impresses on it. It is clear, therefore, that
there in nothing in common between Social and Christian Democracy. They dif-
fer from each other as much as the sect of socialism differs from the profession
of Christianity."

While Leo preached against Christian Socialism, socialists preached against Leo. The most
famous among these were Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. Historian Jeremy Morris described
the socialists’ main points of attack:

"The atheist turn of Socialism was signalled in that classic text of Communist lit-
erature, The Communist Manifesto, which acknowledged and criticized Christian
forms of Socialism. In setting out to define just what true socialism might mean,
it was necessary for Marx and Engels to reject false Socialisms. Their words on
that score were sobering reading for Christian Socialists. Marx’s general position
on religion had already been marked out in his Introduction to a Contribution
to a Critique of Hegel’s Philosophy of Right: religion was ‘the self-consciousness
and self-esteem of man who has either not yet won through to himself or has al-
ready lost himself again’. It was ‘the sigh of the oppressed creature . . . the opium
of the people’. . . Now, in 1848, Marx and Engels together dismissed religious
practice, even when it sought egalitarian ends. Institutional Christianity was the
product of a feudal era. Its Socialism, such as it was, was reactionary: ‘Nothing is
easier than to give Christian asceticism a socialist tinge. Has not Christianity de-
claimed against private property, against marriage, against the state?’ But, chill-
ingly, they went on: ‘Has it not preached in the place of these, charity and pov-
erty, celibacy and mortification of the flesh, monastic life and Mother Church?
Christian socialism is but the holy water with which the priest consecrates the
heart-burnings of the aristocrat.”

There were some Christian Socialists, however, who believed in the social role of the Chris-
tian Church. One of these was Frederick Denison Maurice (1805-1872). F.D. Maurice was one of
the foremost theologians of the modern Church of England. He sought to defend traditional
Christian belief by a profoundly considered re-examination of biblical theology. To this ap-
proach, Maurice added a deep conviction toward social justice as an integral part of Christian
life — even if such practice necessitated an overturning of the social order. This twofold ap-
proach led to contemporary attacks on Maurice for both being too conservative and too lib-
eral. In one such attack, Thomas Carlyle notoriously chided Maurice for Maurice’s strong-willed
defense of the Thirty-Nine Articles of Faith of the Church of England originally promulgated in
1562. Carlyle’s derisive ditty went:

“Thirty-nine English Articles.
Ye wondrous little particles,
Did God shape his universe really by you?  
In that case I swear it.  
And solemnly declare it,  
This logic of Maurice’s is true.”33

Maurice’s 1838 book, “The Kingdom of Christ”, sounded a note that became the motto of the Social Gospel Movement in America. According to historian Gary Wills:
“The idea of the (Social Gospel’s) kingdom was taken from Lord’s Prayer: “Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.” The kingdom on earth must bless the poor, the meek, and the peacemakers.”34

The most notable supporter of the Social Gospel in America was Walter Rauschenbusch, a Baptist pastor. Like Maurice, Rauschenbusch and the proponents of the Social Gospel held that the Kingdom of God was to be found not in heaven, but here on earth.35 Consequently, Christians should work for social justice now. As Rauschenbusch wrote in his book “A Theology for the Social Gospel”:
“The worth of personality, freedom, growth, love, solidarity, service, — these are marks of the Kingdom of God. In Christ’s thought the Kingdom of God was to come from heaven to earth, so that God’s will would be done on earth as it is in heaven. So then it exists in heaven; it is to be created on earth. All true joys on earth come from partial realizations of the Kingdom of God; the joy that awaits us will consist in living within the full realization of the Kingdom. Our labour for the Kingdom here will be our preparation for our participation hereafter. The degree in which we have absorbed the laws of the Kingdom into our character will determine our qualification for the life of heaven. If in any respect we have not been saved from the Kingdom of Evil, we shall be aliens and beginners in the Kingdom of God.”36

Conclusion: The Churches and Modernity
Pius IX greeted the modern hand with a clenched fist. Ignaz von Döllinger refused the hand of “infallible” modern Catholicism and returned to the ancient truths. Pope Leo XIII reached out his hands to embrace the modern world, and especially the world of the workers, but still held hope for a return to the Catholic glory of old. William Wilberforce tried — and succeeded — in freeing the hands of slaves, exploited children and forgotten industrial workers. Marx and Engels thought the hands of the Church had drugged the common man. And F.D. Maurice and Walter Rauschenbusch thought that the hands of God held the supernal glory of true righteousness in the modern world. Also putting themselves in the very hands of God were the brave men and women of the Missionary Movement whom we will consider next.

35 Landry, Stan M. *The Churches and Modernity*, University of Arizona, Online presentation. 22 November 2010. Lecture notes.
There should be no beggars ... according to Walter Rauschenbusch

Walter Rauschenbusch looked back to the beginnings of the Christian Church in order to learn how modern Christians should deal with beggars. By studying early examples, Rauschenbusch found evidence of church practices that could be used to solve the social crises of his day. For Rauschenbusch, the worth of a church was demonstrated by how it handled the least of its members. In his book, “Christianity and the Social Crisis” Rauschenbusch wrote:

“It is possible to get a very fair estimate of a man’s character from the allotment of his expenditures. The same is true of a Church. If its income is largely devoted to appliances of aesthetic beauty, we may be sure that its heart is in its ritual. If the primitive churches could do with little income spontaneously offered, we may be sure that they were democratic bodies in which the people themselves did the work. If the income was wholly devoted to the help of the needy, we may be sure that fraternal helpfulness was essential to their church life. …

“From the outset widows and orphans were extensively cared for. The social conditions of the ancient world and the impulses inherited from Judaism laid this duty upon the churches. About A.D. 250, the church at Rome had fifteen hundred dependents of that kind under its care. When Christians were in prison for their faith or exiled to the mines, the churches cared for their needs and comfort, often in lavish degree. It was not uncommon to ransom Christians imprisoned for debt.

“The proper burial of the dead was even more important to the sentiments of the ancient world than to ours. Just as to-day, the poorer classes organized in societies which guaranteed their members an honorable burial. The churches performed this service for their members. In public calamities, like pestilence or the invasion of nomadic brigands, they stood by their members and sent aid to a distance.

“The duty of working was strictly urged in the primitive Church; holy idleness was the outgrowth of later asceticism. But if a man was out of work, the churches assumed the responsibility either of finding him a job or of caring for him. Thus the means of life were guaranteed him in either case. The church at Rome, living in the midst of vast pauperism, could boast that it had no beggar in its membership. The troubles coming upon them for their faith made Christians even more migratory than the rest of the city population of that day. But wherever they went, they were sure of Christian hospitality and the first aid needed to get a foothold in a strange place. Hospitality was one of the fundamental Christian virtues in primitive Christian life. It was so open-handed that it invited exploitation by professional beggars.

The heathen writer Lucian made the gullibility of the Christians part of the plot of his novelette, “On the Death of Peregrinus Proteus.”

“By the end of the third century charity began to be institutionalized. There were Christian lodging-houses for strangers, homes for the aged, the sick, the poor. In the
first and second century it was more a matter of direct neighborly help from man to man. Probably the chief help was not given in the form of money, but of human service and influence."

According to Rauschenbusch, the original church avoided money as corrupt and hopelessly intoxicating. That was no longer the case and the social crises of Rauschenbusch's day could be traced directly to this fundamental change:

"But our age is so drunk with the love of money that anything which does not pan out in cold cash has to take a back seat. Our newspapers constantly speak of college professors and ministers in a tone of patronizing condescension. The salaries of teachers are pitifully inadequate when compared with their value to the community. They turn boys and girls into nobler men and women; a successful writer of advertisements may turn a lie into dollars; clearly he deserves the higher pay. There have been times when the community had a truer judgment of comparative values and gave its spiritual leaders veneration and love. Our commercial system has begotten a fierce competitive thirst for wealth. It has concentrated all minds on money, and accordingly all callings which serve the intellectual and spiritual life have dropped in the relative importance and honor assigned to them. The ministry is one of them."

But in 1907, Rauschenbusch still looked to a miracle for the poor: a miracle based on the present reality of the Kingdom of God. Maybe the 1900 years that had gone by were just a warm-up. Maybe the centuries spent in moral and economic degradation were about to be changed. In his conclusion, Rauschenbusch wrote fervently of the hope of a religious rally, a religious revival that might yet come in his lifetime. For Rauschenbusch, that moment never came. Perhaps it will come in ours:

"Last May a miracle happened. At the beginning of the week the fruit trees bore brown and greenish buds. At the end of the week they were robed in bridal garments of blossom. But for weeks and months the sap had been rising and distending the cells and maturing the tissues which were half ready in the fall before. The swift unfolding was the culmination of a long process. Perhaps these nineteen centuries of Christian influence have been a long preliminary stage of growth, and now the flower and fruit are almost here. If at this juncture we can rally sufficient religious faith and moral strength to snap the bonds of evil and turn the present unparalleled economic and intellectual resources of humanity to the harmonious development of a true social life, the generations yet unborn will mark this as that great day of the Lord for which the ages waited, and count us blessed for sharing in the apostolate that proclaimed it."

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The Missionary Movement

“People talk of the sacrifice I have made in spending so much of my life in Africa. Can that be called a sacrifice which is simply paid back as a small part of a great debt owing to our God, which we can never repay? … Anxiety, sickness, suffering, or danger now and then with a foregoing of the common conveniences and charities of this life, may make us pause and cause the spirit to waver and the soul to sink; but let this only be for a moment. All these are nothing when compared with the glory which shall be revealed in and for us. I never made a sacrifice.”

~ David Livingston

Speech to students at Cambridge University, December 4th, 1857

Christian missionary David Brainerd (1718-1747) knew about sacrifice. In fact, it was Brainerd’s personal sacrifice as documented in a biography by Jonathan Edwards that would inspire missionaries for generations to come. This spirit of sacrifice “even to death itself” is the eternal thread that binds The Missionary Movement together. As Brainerd wrote:

“Here am I, Lord, send me. Send me to the ends of the earth. Send me to the rough, the savage pagans of the wilderness. Send me from all that is called comfort in earth or earthly comfort. Send even to death itself if it is be in Thy service and to promote Thy kingdom.”

According to historian John Grigg, Brainerd the “Missionary Hero” was indeed historical, but his impact as an allegorical sacrificial lamb was woven out of whole cloth. Grigg wrote:

“Of course, much of what makes Brainerd such a recognizable figure in colonial America is the extraordinary legend that developed after his death. Given the theological and ministerial luminaries who were his contemporaries or near-contemporaries—Joseph Bellamy, James Davenport, Jonathan Dickinson, Gilbert Tennent, Samuel Hopkins, Nathaniel Emmons, and others—it is remarkable that Brainerd is probably the second most recognizable American religious figure of the eighteenth century, behind only Jonathan Edwards. This reputation is owed, in the first instance, to Edwards’s own Life of Brainerd. However, the legend was continued and expanded by new versions of Brainerd’s life, especially that written by John Wesley, as well as by references to the inspiration his life has offered in the diaries, letters, and promotional literature of missionaries, mission organizations, ministers, and lay Christians from the eighteenth century to the present day. Many of those who have used Brainerd’s life as an example did so in order to advance personal and/or corporate agendas. As such, Brainerd was first fragmented anew, abstracted again, and finally often used as little more than a starting point to create an argument out of whole cloth.”

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The Missionary Movement

This new missionary fabric as originally woven by Edwards would set the tone for the Missionary Movement to come. Unfortunately, especially for those they sought to convert, Brainerd’s missionary tone was dark, somber, and eerily depressing. For example, here are just a few quotes from Brainerd that Edwards used in his book as “inspirational” thoughts:

“Never expect any satisfaction or happiness from the world. If you hope for happiness in the world, hope for it from God, and not from the world.”

“Worldly pleasures, such as flow from greatness, riches, honours, and sensual gratifications, are infinitely worse than none.”

“The whole world appears to me like a huge vacuum, a vast empty space, whence nothing desirable, or at least satisfactory, can possibly be derived; and I long daily to die more and more to it; even though I obtain not that comfort from spiritual things which I earnestly desire.”

“While we were singing, there was one (the woman mentioned in my Journal of February 9) who, I may venture to say, if I may be allowed to say so much of any person I ever saw, was “filled with joy unspeakable and full of glory,” and could not but burst forth in prayer and praises to God before us all, with many tears, crying sometimes in English and sometimes in Indian, “O blessed Lord, do come, do come! O do take me away, do let me die and go to Jesus Christ! I am afraid if I live I shall sin again! O do let me die now! O dear Jesus, do come! I cannot stay, I cannot stay! O how can I live in this world! do take my soul away from this sinful place! O let me never sin any more!” … She continued in this sweet frame for more than two hours, before she was well able to get home.”

Brainerd’s role in setting the tone of the Missionary Movement should not be underestimated. As the American Baptist Missionary Society wrote in 1876 when describing the impact of Jonathan Edwards:

“But unconsciously (Edwards) did something signal for the cause of missions in the preparation of his celebrated Memoir of Brainerd, which has since produced so deep an impression upon the Christian world, and which, according to the confession of William Carey himself, did much to awaken the missionary spirit,

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and form the missionary character, of that remarkable man, the originator of the English Baptist Missionary Society, and the real leader of the era of modern Christian missions.\(^8\)

Carey was originally an English shoemaker and autodidact who was recognized for his facility in Hebrew and Greek. With other members of the Baptist Missionary Society, Carey went to India to learn the local languages and then translate the Bible into them. Carey launched a translation program at Serampore and participated in thirty-five translations of the Bible in such local languages as Sanskrit and Urdu and other languages including Arabic and Persian.\(^9,^{10}\)

However, Carey's true mission was to mine the “gold mine” of heathen souls to be found in India. In fact, this is what inspired Carey to offer to go to India in the first place. As historian John Myers described:

“The circumstances in which the offer was made are now historic. Having been greatly impressed by perusing Mr. Thomas's account of the religious condition of the heathen, Andrew Fuller remarked that “there was a gold mine in India, but it seemed almost as deep as the centre of the earth.” When he asked, “Who will venture to explore it?” “I will venture to go down,” was the instant reply of Carey: “but remember that you,” addressing Fuller, Sutcliff, and Ryland, “must hold the ropes.” “This,” afterwards said Fuller, “we solemnly engaged to him to do, pledging ourselves never to desert him as long as we should live.”\(^11\)

For Carey and his brethren, the mining for souls in India would be, more often than not, dark, somber, and depressing work. For example, it took fifteen years for the group to achieve its first Hindu to Christian conversion and even that moment was marked by sadness. As Myers wrote:

“The joy, however, of this eventful day was mingled with sadness and anxiety on account of the health of both Mr. Thomas and Mrs. Carey. The effect of the recent events upon Thomas had been greatly to excite his highly wrought temperament. The delight of seeing at last, after fifteen years' labour, an actual conversion from Hindooism, completely overmastered his excitable brain; and so, whilst Carey was administering the rite of baptism, he was obliged to be put under restraint in the mission house. And further, Mrs. Carey's mental malady had so increased that at the same time she had to be forcibly confined to her own room.”\(^12\)

How did Carey persevere? The answer can be found in a sermon that was read each year to the group on the first Sunday of every January, May and October. The sermon reminded Carey and the others to look to the example of Brainerd for inspiration. As quoted by Myers, Carey would preach:

“Let us ever have in remembrance the examples of those who have been most

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\(^12\) Myers, John Brown. William Carey: the shoemaker who became “the father and founder of modern missions”. London: S.W. Partridge. 1887. p. 77.
eminent in the work of God. Let us often look at Brainerd, in the woods of America, pouring out his very soul before God for the perishing heathen, without whose salvation nothing could make him happy. Prayer, secret, fervent, believing prayer, lies at the root of all personal godliness. A competent knowledge of the languages where the missionary lives, a mild and winning temper, and a heart given up to God in closet religion, these are the attainments, which more than all knowledge, or all other gifts, will fit us to become the instruments of God in the great work of human Redemption. Let us then ever be united in prayer at stated seasons, whatever distance may separate us, and let each one of us lay it upon his heart that we will seek to be fervent in spirit wrestling with God, till He banish these idols and cause the heathen to experience the blessedness that is in Christ . . .”

The disappointments of missionary work would also pierce the soul of the celebrated English missionary to Africa David Livingstone (1813-1873). Despite his many accomplishments, it is probable that Livingstone personally converted only one African to Christianity. While there were already previous converts in the small village when Livingstone arrived, the only one Livingstone converted himself was Sechéle, chief of the Bakwains, and that did not happen until 1848. As in Carey’s experience, this momentous occasion was also tinged with sadness. As Livingstone biographer William Blaikie wrote:

“At one time (Sechéle) expressed himself quite willing to convert all his people to Christianity by the litupa, i.e. whips of rhinoceros hide; but when he came to understand better, he lamented that while he could make his people do anything else he liked, he could not get one of them to believe. He began family worship, and Livingstone was surprised to hear how well he conducted prayer in his own simple and beautiful style. When he was baptized, after a profession of three years, he sent away his superfluous wives in a kindly and generous way; but all their connections became active and bitter enemies of the gospel, and the conversion of Sechéle, instead of increasing the congregation, reduced it so much that sometimes the chief and his family were almost the only persons present. A bell-

13 David Livingstone’s Africa. Livingstone Online. Wellcome Trust Centre for the History of Medicine at UCL. livingstoneonline.ucl.ac.uk. Web. 2 December 2010.
man of a somewhat peculiar order was once employed to collect the people for service, — a tall gaunt fellow. “Up he jumped on a sort of platform, and shouted at the top of his voice, ‘Knock that woman down over there. Strike her, she is putting on her pot! Do you see that one hiding herself? Give her a good blow. There she is—see, see, knock her down!’ All the women ran to the place of meeting in no time, for each thought herself meant. But, though a most efficient bell-man, we did not like to employ him.”

Livingstone tried to put the lack of conversions into context when he responded to critics in a letter to his father back home. In the letter Livingstone explained:

“The conversion of a few, however valuable their souls may be, cannot be put into the scale against the knowledge of the truth spread over the whole country. In this I do and will exult. As in India, we are doomed to perpetual disappointment; but the knowledge of Christ spreads over the masses. We are like voices crying in the wilderness. We prepare the way for a glorious future in which missionaries telling the same tale of love will convert by every sermon. I am trying now to establish the Lord’s kingdom in a region wider by far than Scotland. Fever seems to forbid; but I shall work for the glory of Christ’s kingdom—fever or no fever.”

Livingstone had originally intended on being a missionary to China, but that country barred missionaries until the British Opium Wars. The Opium Wars began in 1839 and were concluded at gunpoint with the signing of the 1842 Treaty of Nanjing. This and subsequent treaties humiliated the Chinese and forced the Qing Dynasty to pay 21 million silver dollars in war reparations in addition to ceding the island of Hong Kong to the British. For Christian missionaries, however, the forced opening of China would be both a blessing and a curse. A blessing because more Christian converts would be made in the upcoming years in China than Livingstone would have thought possible. A curse because many of those converts as well as millions of others would then die in the Taiping Rebellion. As historian Patricia Ebrey wrote:

“Beginning less than a decade after the Opium War, the Qing Dynasty faced some of the most destructive rebellions in world history. The bloodiest was the Taiping Rebellion (1851-1864), in which some 20 to 30 million people lost their lives. Like many of China’s earlier insurrections, this one had its organizational base in an unorthodox religious sect. The founder of this sect was Hong Xiuquan (1814-1864). Hong was a Hakka (the Hakkas were a large Han Chinese ethnic group that spoke a distinct dialect and lived predominantly in the far south). Although from a humble background, Hong had spent years attempting the civil service examinations. His career as a religious leader began with visions of a golden-bearded old man and a middle-aged man who addressed him as younger brother and told him to annihilate devils. After reading a Christian tract that a missionary in Guangzhou had given to him, Hong interpreted his visions to mean that he was Jesus’s younger brother. He began preaching, calling on people to

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destroy idols and ancestral temples, give up opium and alcohol, and renounce foot binding and prostitution. Hong spent two months studying with a Christian preacher and adopted the Ten Commandments, monotheism, and the practice of communal prayer and hymns. He called his group the God Worshipping Society and soon attracted many followers, especially among the Hakka.s.17

The Taiping Rebellion, sparked by the actions of Christian missionaries in China, remains one of the deadliest military conflicts in human history. At first, however, the rebellion was seen as a golden opportunity by Christian missionary associations like the Chinese Evangelisation Society (CES). The CES received news of the Taiping Rebellion in London and dispatched missionary James Hudson Taylor (1832-1905) to China on September 19th, 1853.

Taylor was particularly suited for his mission to the Middle Kingdom. As a child, Taylor’s parents had prayed that their son would preach the gospel in China. At the age of seventeen, Hudson had a conversion experience and felt called to become a missionary. At age twenty, Taylor began training in London as a doctor. However, one year later news of the Taiping rebellion caused him to set sail from Liverpool for Shanghai. In China, Taylor would witness first-hand the devastation wreaked by the Hong “Christians” and the opposing Qing armies. In a letter to his family he described the destruction:

“Shanghai is now in peace, but it is like the peace of death. Two thousand people at the very least have perished, and the tortures some of the victims have undergone cannot have been exceeded by the worst barbarities of the Inquisition. The city is little more than a mass of ruins, and many of the wretched objects who have survived are piteous to behold. . . . How dreadful is war! From the South to the North Gate of Shanghai, on one side only, sixty-six heads and several bodies are exposed by the sanguinary Imperialists, including those of old men with white hair, besides women and children. . . . These terrible sights are now so common that they do not upset one as they did at first. But it is impossible to witness them without feelings of intense abhorrence for the Government that permits and even perpetrates such atrocities.”18

Like Brainerd, Carey and Livingstone, Taylor’s experiences were frequently dark, somber and depressing. According to the official history of the Overseas Missionary Fellowship (founded as the China Inland Mission in 1865 by Taylor):

“The next six years were difficult. The actions taken by the CES administration proved repeatedly to be confusing, erratic, and financially irresponsible, finally causing Taylor to resign in 1857. He had been travelling on evangelization tours, often with at least one companion. He even tried to cross the battle lines to reach Taiping-held Nanking. He began to adopt the dress and hairstyle of a Chinese scholar and tried in other ways to make his evangelism attractive. He developed other principles from his experience, such as no mission should base its work on borrowed money.”19

19 CIM/OMF History. James Hudson Taylor. omf.org. Official website of the Overseas Missionary Fellowship founded as the China Inland
In fact, Taylor’s work was so difficult and depressing that Taylor’s health failed and in 1860 he returned to England. While in England, Taylor would envision a very modern approach to missionary work. According to the Overseas Missionary Fellowship:

“(Taylor) came to feel that a new mission society was needed because the existing ones were too tied to old methods and strategies. He envisioned a mission with headquarters in China (rather than in Great Britain) and dedicated to going into areas where no other Christian group was active (such as China’s eleven inland provinces). The mission would have no fund-raising programs but would, like the orphanages run by George Mueller, depend on prayer and God’s faithfulness for support. The mission would not guarantee the support of any work but funds that were received would be given out according to need. Candidates would be accepted from any Protestant denomination, provided they could sign the mission’s statement of faith.”

This modern missionary approach would be put into place by Taylor in 1866 in Hangchow (now known as Hangzhou) when he returned to China in 1866. However, by 1868 thousands of Chinese were rioting against the “foreign devils” and the British navy became involved. As time passed, things got even more difficult for Taylor. As reported by the Overseas Missionary Fellowship:

“The next few years were ones of great hardship, since the CIM workers had to bear the resentment and suspicion of the Chinese caused by the activities of the European governments. For Taylor, there was also personal hardship. His daughter Grace had died in 1867 and his wife, Maria, passed away in 1870.”

Taylor would eventually make eleven trips to China and would die in Changsha in 1905:

“On Saturday, June 3, 1905, Dr. and Mrs. Keller, missionaries in charge of the C.I.M. work at Ch’ang-sha, held a reception for all the Protestant missionaries in Ch’ang-sha to meet Mr. Hudson Taylor. Representatives from seven Societies came. Less than three hours after this group was photographed Mr. Hudson Taylor entered into the presence of the Lord.”

only hours after having met with Protestant missionaries in order to urge them to continue their work. Taylor’s encouragement was much needed as the missionaries were still recovering from the effects of the Boxer Uprising two years previously. The Boxer Uprising was an anti-Western rebellion that violently targeted, among other groups, Chinese Christians and Chinese missionaries.

Catholic missionaries also participated in the modern Missionary Movement. One of the best known is Charles-Martial-Allemand Lavigerie (1825-1892). Lavigerie is particularly noted for his efforts in combating a devastating famine in Africa. In addition to his humanitarian motivations, Lavigerie saw the famine as a way to expand Catholic influence in the region. The Catholic Encyclopedia detailed this process:

“As Archbishop of Algiers (Lavigerie) promptly reversed the policy of neutrality towards the Moslems imposed upon his predecessors by the French authorities, and inaugurated a strong movement of assimilation and conversion. With the help of the White Fathers and of the White Sisters, whom he founded for the purpose, he established and maintained at great cost orphan asylums, industrial schools, hospitals, and agricultural settlements, wherein the Arabs could be brought under the influence of the Gospel. Appointed as early as 1868 Apostolic Delegate of Western Sahara and the Sudan, he began in 1874 the work of southward expansion which was to bring his heroic missionaries into the very heart of the Dark Continent, and result in the erection of five vicariates Apostolic in Equatorial Africa.”

Lavigerie was also an ardent foe of the slave trade and traveled throughout the world to rally governments and people to the cause. Lavigerie’s impassioned speeches gave proof to his oft-quoted assertion:

“Pour sauver l’Afrique intérieure, il faut soulever la colère du monde.”

(In order to save the interior of Africa, one must raise the anger of the world.)

Also strongly supporting missionary work to Africa while opposing the slave trade was Pope Gregory XVI (r. 1841-1846). Like the Protestant missionaries, the Catholics sent by Gregory encountered extraordinary difficulties. Their desperate situation was described by the American Catholic Quarterly Review in 1890:

“Pope Gregory XVI was energetic, on his elevation to the Papacy, in starting Catholic missions in many remote parts of the world. He resolved to found a mission in Abyssinia, selecting the Capuchins for this great work, and at the head of the missionaries of his order, in 1845, stood Padre Massaia—the same illustrious missionary who received the Cardinal’s hat from Pope Leo XIII on November 10, 1900.”

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24 Landry, Stan M. *The Missionary Movement*, University of Arizona, Online presentation. 22 November 2010. Lecture notes.
27 Translation by author.
1884, for his saintly missionary services in Africa for the last nearly half a century, and who lately closed his noble life at Naples at the age of eighty-one. When sent by Gregory XVI to Africa, he received the title and authority of Bishop of Casia in partibus and Vicar Apostolic of Upper Ethiopia. For forty-five years he devoted himself to the African missions, especially among the Gallas. In the struggles of European powers for dominion in upper Africa, Cardinal Massaia and his missionaries suffered incredible hardships—prison after prison became the home of these apostles, and no less than eight decrees of banishment had been issued by the Ethiopian emperors.  

Gregory also expanded the Catholic missionary field by appointing “floating Bishops” to work in countries where secular rulers controlled the Church. These special missionaries enabled Gregory to circumvent that secular control as these emissaries followed only the orders of the Holy See.

**Conclusion: The Missionary Movement**

Christian missionary David Brainerd tried, failed and ultimately succeeded in his mission work by inspiring others. William Carey tried, failed, and ultimately succeeded by becoming the inspirational “father” of all modern missions. David Livingstone tried, failed, and ultimately succeeded by being a popular example of practical piety for generations to come. Hudson Taylor, tried, failed, and ultimately succeeded by laying the groundwork of a missionary organization that still exists today. Charles Lavigerie tried, failed, and ultimately succeeded by raising the anger of the world. And Pope Gregory XVI tried, failed, and ultimately succeeded by planting seeds of Christian conversion that are growing throughout Africa still today. The nearly unbelievable efforts of the Missionary Movement continue to inspire the hearts and minds of Christians. It is those Christians we will now consider as we examine Christianity in the Twentieth Century.

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29 Landry, Stan M. *The Missionary Movement*, University of Arizona, Online presentation. 22 November 2010. Lecture notes.
There should be no beggars ... according to Hudson Taylor

Hudson Taylor saw the devastation created by the Taiping Rebellion in China and was stunned by its enormity. What was an individual Christian to do? For Taylor and his friends the answer was simply to do whatever they could given their very meager resources. This individual approach to beggars was a hallmark of the original Jesus Movement. Taylor’s practice of this original approach to the Christian faith was described in a book about Taylor by his son Howard:

“During the whole period of their stay in Shanghai they were surrounded by suffering and distress of the most painful kind. Famine refugees from Nanking had poured into the city until there were thousands of destitute and starving persons added to the ranks of beggary. This meant that one never could go out without seeing heart-rending scenes, which the conditions of life around them made it almost impossible to relieve.

“Returning from the city one evening Mr. Jones and his companion, were distressed to find the body of a dead beggar lying by the roadside. The weather was bitterly cold, and he had slowly perished for lack of food and shelter. No one seemed to notice, no one seemed to care. It was a sight too common, alas! But the missionaries could bear it no longer.

“We took food with us,” wrote Mr. Jones, “and sought out others. Many of these poor creatures ... have their dwelling literally among the tombs. Graves, here, are often simple arches, low, and from ten to twelve feet long. One end being broken through, they creep inside for shelter, specially at night.... We found them in all stages of nakedness, sickness and starvation.” This led to earnest work on their behalf, to the comfort of many.

“In our search,” wrote Mr. Taylor, “we came upon the remains of a house bearing witness to the troublous times through which Shanghai had passed. ... Affording some little shelter from the weather, it had been taken possession of by beggars, and in it we found a large number collected, some well and able to beg, others dying of starvation and disease. From this time we made regular visits to these poor creatures, and helped those who were unable to help themselves... We found, as is always the case, how difficult it is to care for body and soul at the same time. We did, nevertheless, as far as we were able, and I trust the seed sown was not without fruit in the salvation of souls.” (One little orphan, Tien-hsi, adopted as a result of this work, grew up to be a valued helper at Shao-hing, and one of the first native preachers in connection with the China Inland Mission.)

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“I shall venture to affirm that, so far as I can see, there are errors in the Scriptures that no one has been able to explain away; and the theory that they were not in the original text is sheer assumption, upon which no mind can rest with certainty.”

~ Charles Augustus Briggs
in an address at Union Theological Seminary in 1891

Is the Bible the inerrant word of God? This critical thread will bind together the personalities and events we examine in Christianity in the Twentieth Century.

The stage was set for this debate by a series of rapid scientific developments in the latter half of the nineteenth century. In 1859, Charles Darwin’s The Origin of Species began to attack the old biblical truths that had gone nearly unchallenged for almost two thousand years. Other scientists had recently uncovered fossil records that appeared to demonstrate that life on earth was hundreds of millions of years old, not thousands. Astronomers had developed theories that galaxies were born, not from the finger of God, but from clouds of swirling dust. As the scientific advances mounted, an intense debate between reason and belief erupted worldwide. The epicenter of that debate was in Berlin. That is were a young Presbyterian minister from New York, Charles, Augustus Briggs, felt compelled to travel.

Briggs, like most theologians, had been taught that the Bible contained the inerrant word of God. As a Presbyterian, Briggs also believed that this word was perspicacious (self-evident) in the Bible. What the Bible said was what it said and one didn’t need to be a specialist or scholar to understand the word of God. But, at this time, scholars were repeatedly pointing out significant “errors” in Scripture. For example, Moses supposedly wrote the first five books of the Bible, but in those books Moses refers to his own death. So, scholars asked, who really wrote those books? David supposedly wrote the Psalms but historians had demonstrated that the word “psalm” didn’t even exist in Hebrew during the time of David. So, historians asked, who really wrote the Psalms? Scientists looked at the story of Jonah and the whale but in that story time itself stops. Scientists knew that was impossible, so what really happened in that story? And Briggs, listening to the debate in Berlin, saw these new truths as a reasoned and rational way to get even closer to the true word of God. Briggs returned from Berlin excited by this new way of looking at the Bible, but wary of openly sharing this information with a wide audience. That changed in January of 1891 when Briggs was appointed chair of the new Department of Biblical Theology at the Union Theological Seminary in New York.

In his inaugural address, Briggs detailed the “errors” in Scripture while explaining that no Christian should be afraid of the truth. In his lengthy oration, Briggs declaimed in part:

“I shall venture to affirm that, so far as I can see, there are errors in the Scriptures that no one has been able to explain away; and the theory that they were not in the original text is sheer assumption, upon which no mind can rest with certainty. … Let the light shine higher and higher, the bright, clear light of day. Truth

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fears no light. Light chases error away. … True orthodoxy seeks the full blaze of
the noontide sun. In the light of such a day, the unity of Christendom will be

Briggs’ students applauded wildly. The adults in the audience, however, sat in stunned
silence. In fact, they would soon bring charges to have Briggs excommunicated from the Pres-
byterian Church for heresy. The “Briggs Affair” created an “ecclesiastical bomb” that marked the
explosive beginning of what would eventually become accepted, mainstream liberal theolog-
ical teaching. In 1893, however, Briggs was suspended for heresy but his courageous actions
had launched a revolution in modern American religious thought.5

That revolution had begun in Berlin and had also spread throughout Europe. In France,
Alfred Loisy (1857–1940), a French Roman Catholic priest, also believed in the use of scientific
methods to study the Bible. Loisy came to the conclusion that the Bible was a generally ac-
curate historical witness, but that it suffered from what Loisy termed “relative inerrancy”. As
historian Harvey Hill explained:

“By taking a historical approach, by beginning with the biblical books them-
selves rather than with a theological claim about them, Loisy shifted the ground
of the controversy to the character of the Bible’s historical witness. No longer
should one ask if inspired books might theoretically contain errors, but rather
what truth the Bible actually did contain. As a historian, Loisy responded that
the Bible aided in reconstructing the beliefs of particular ancient cultures, but
that it also clearly reflected their limitations. To emphasize the point, he listed
several well-established historical findings, all calculated to disturb conservative
readers. Moses did not write the Pentateuch. The first chapters of Genesis did
not record actual history. The different parts of the different books of the Old
Testament did not all have the same historical value. Doctrines changed and de-
eveloped even within the Bible itself. And the Bible contained the erroneous sci-
entific beliefs of the ancient world. The original lecture, which Loisy toned down
for publication, expressed his point even more strongly. “The condemnation of
Galileo,” it said, “has delivered a mortal blow to the theory of the absolute iner-
rancy of the Scriptures, since Galileo was right and since the Bible, in the name
of which Galileo was condemned, with good logic, was wrong.”6 Galileo showed
that the sun did not revolve around the earth, while the Bible testified to the
Israelite belief that it did. The Bible, Loisy concluded, was a generally accurate
historical witness to past beliefs, but the beliefs to which it bore testimony were
not themselves necessarily true. Did Loisy’s admission that the Bible contained
errors undermine the value of its religious teaching? Loisy naturally answered
no, and he ended the article with a theological discussion of the “relative iner-
rancy” of Scripture. The Bible, he said, had communicated its message in the rela-
tive forms most appropriate for its original audience. Its very “imperfections” (as
seen from a later time) had played an essential role in this communication. In

a rare concession, Loisy added, “This purely relative truth carries no prejudice to the absolute value of the principles which are the base of biblical teaching.” The errors and historical limitations of the Bible only concerned the relative expressions of its religious truth, not the absolute principles that these expressions were intended to convey.”

For the Catholic Church, the stakes could not have been higher. The Holy See saw Loisy’s teachings — especially his teachings on the errancy of the Bible — as one of the greatest threats in Church history. As Maude Petre, a British Roman Catholic nun involved in the controversy on the side of Loisy, explained:

“We must remember, in fairness to those who were not always fair, that the impact of historical criticism on the traditional teaching of the Church was terrifying; that it seemed a case of saving the very essence of the Christian faith from destruction. Not, perhaps, since the startling revelation of Copernicanism, had the shock been greater.”

For his teachings, Loisy was excommunicated vitandus on March 8th, 1908. An excommunication vitandus, according to the Catholic Dictionary, is a rarely used Catholic form of shunning: “(Vitandus) is the most severe form of excommunication, seldom imposed and only then expressly by the Holy See. It means that, as a remedial measure, the faithful are not to associate with the person “except in the case of husband and wife, parents, children, servants, (or) subjects”. Before Loisy was excommunicated, Pope Pius X made the thoughts of the Holy See clearly known when he issued the encyclical Pascendi Dominici Gregis — Encyclical of Pope Pius X on the Doctrines of the Modernists on September 8th, 1907. In Pascendi Dominici Gregis, Pius’ launched a withering criticism of the historical and textual criticism used by the modernists. Pius wrote:

“The result of this dismembering of the Sacred Books and this partition of them throughout the centuries is naturally that the Scriptures can no longer be attributed to the authors whose names they bear. The Modernists have no hesitation in affirming commonly that these books, and especially the Pentateuch and the first three Gospels, have been gradually formed by additions to a primitive brief narration - by interpolations of theological or allegorical interpretation, by transitions, by joining different passages together. This means, briefly, that in the Sacred Books we must admit a vital evolution, springing from and corresponding with evolution of faith. The traces of this evolution, they tell us, are so visible in the books that one might almost write a history of them. Indeed this history they do actually write, and with such an easy security that one might believe them to

have with their own eyes seen the writers at work through the ages amplifying the Sacred Books. To aid them in this they call to their assistance that branch of criticism which they call textual, and labour to show that such a fact or such a phrase is not in its right place, and adducing other arguments of the same kind. They seem, in fact, to have constructed for themselves certain types of narration and discourses, upon which they base their decision as to whether a thing is out of place or not. Judge if you can how men with such a system are fitted for practising this kind of criticism. To hear them talk about their works on the Sacred Books, in which they have been able to discover so much that is defective, one would imagine that before them nobody ever even glanced through the pages of Scripture, whereas the truth is that a whole multitude of Doctors, infinitely superior to them in genius, in erudition, in sanctity, have sifted the Sacred Books in every way, and so far from finding imperfections in them, have thanked God more and more the deeper they have gone into them, for His divine bounty in having vouchsafed to speak thus to men. Unfortunately, these great Doctors did not enjoy the same aids to study that are possessed by the Modernists for their guide and rule, - a philosophy borrowed from the negation of God, and a criterion which consists of themselves.9

For over a century, the Vatican has firmly supported the conclusions of Pascendi Dominici Gregis. For example, the Second Vatican Council on November 18th, 1965 affirmed the inerrancy of the Bible when Pope Paul VI promulgated Dei Verbum. Dei Verbum stated that “Scripture must be acknowledged as teaching ... without error.” In Dei Verbum, Pius wrote:

“Those divinely revealed realities which are contained and presented in Sacred Scripture have been committed to writing under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. For holy mother Church, relying on the belief of the Apostles ... holds that the books of both the Old and New Testaments in their entirety, with all their parts, are sacred and canonical because written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, they have God as their author and have been handed on as such to the Church herself. In composing the sacred books, God chose men and while employed by Him they made use of their powers and abilities, so that with Him acting in them and through them, they, as true authors, consigned to writing everything and only those things which He wanted. Therefore, since everything asserted by the inspired authors or sacred writers must be held to be asserted by the Holy Spirit, it follows that the books of Scripture must be acknowledged as teaching solidly, faithfully and without error that truth which God wanted put into sacred writings for the sake of salvation. Therefore “all Scripture is divinely inspired and has its use for teaching the truth and refuting error, for reformation of manners and discipline in right living, so that the man who belongs to God may be efficient and equipped for good work of every kind.”10

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It is generally held that the most important pronouncement of the Second Vatican Council was the Council's decree that replaced the Latin liturgy with a vernacular liturgy. However, Pope Benedict XVI declared in 2005 that Dei Verbum should also be considered “one of the most important Documents of the Second Vatican Council.” This non-modernist approach is consistent with some of Benedict’s previous pronouncements on the reforms made by Vatican II. In an interview given while he was still a Cardinal, Benedict described his feelings about the results of the Second Vatican Council. According to author Vittorio Messori:

“Ratzinger’s judgment on this period has been clearly formulated for a long time: “It is incontestable that the last ten years have been decidedly unfavorable for the Catholic Church.” “Developments since the Council seem to be in striking contrast to the expectations of all, beginning with those of John XXIII and Paul VI. Christians are once again a minority, more than they have ever been since the end of antiquity.” He explains his stark judgment (which he also repeated during the interview—but that should not cause any surprise, whatever judgment we might make of it, for he confirmed it many times) as follows: “What the Popes and the Council Fathers were expecting was a new Catholic unity, and instead one has encountered a dissension which — to use the words of Paul VI — seems to have passed over from self-criticism to self-destruction. There had been the expectation of a new enthusiasm, and instead too often it has ended in boredom and discouragement. There had been the expectation of a step forward, and instead one found oneself facing a progressive process of decadence that to a large measure has been unfolding under the sign of a summons to a presumed ‘spirit of the Council’ and by so doing has actually and increasingly discredited it.” Thus, already ten years ago, he had arrived at the following conclusion: “It must be clearly stated that a real reform of the Church presupposes an unequivocal turning away from the erroneous paths whose catastrophic consequences are already incontestable.”

Some of these new paths taken by Vatican II included involvement by the laity in the mass, providing both the host and the chalice to the laity at Communion, and affirming all human beings should have the right to religious freedom and liberty. In addition, as part of Vatican II the Pope and the Patriarch of Constantinople issued a joint pronouncement looking forward to better relations between Catholic and Orthodox Christians.

The turning away from “erroneous paths” was precisely the position taken by the Protestant Niagara Conference in 1875. The conference decried the path of the modern Protestant Church saying, like Ratzinger, that a Church could not argue uno flatu for modernism and traditional belief. To counter the modernist viewpoint, the Niagara Conference issued “five points of fundamentalism” that affirmed the inerrancy of the Bible, the divinity of Jesus, his virgin birth, Jesus' role as an atonement for human sin, the belief in true physical resurrection, and a belief in...
the coming physical return of Christ.15 For the Niagara Conference, this was just the beginning. As historian Gary Dorrien wrote:

“In 1875 conservative evangelicals launched the Niagara Bible Conference, the prototype for hundreds of conferences at which conservatives defended the fundamentals. Three years later the Niagara Conference listed 14 fundamentals, one of which, dispensational eschatology, was of very recent vintage in Christian history. From the beginning the fundamentalist movement asserted that all Christian doctrines rested on the doctrine of biblical inerrancy: if the Bible contained any errors, it could not be God’s Word; and if it was not God’s verbally inspired Word, it could not be a secure source of religious authority. A few fundamentalist theologians, notably James Orr, rejected inerrancy doctrine, but the movement as a whole opted overwhelmingly for it . . . “16

This back to fundamentals approach also attracted Southern California oil millionaire Lyman Stewart. From 1910 to 1915 Stewart and his brother Milton were the secret backers of a book publishing venture called “The Fundamentals”. Hoping to provide the Christian world with “testimony to the truth”, Stewart hired A.C. Dixon, the fiery pastor of the Moody Church in Chicago, as the project’s editor. Dixon than assembled some of the best-known conservative scholars and writers of the time to produce twelve paperback volumes of back to the fundamentals theological thinking. In all, over three million volumes were distributed for free to “every pastor, missionary, theological professor, theological student, YMCA and YWCA secretary, college professor, Sunday School superintendent, and religious editor in the English-speaking world”. But while the distribution was widespread, the public impact of “The Fundamentals” was not. In fact, few theological publications seemed to even take notice.17

What “The Fundamentals” did achieve was to become a symbolic point of reference for the “Fundamentalist Movement”. In the 1950’s, that movement would be attacked by an unlikely source: Billy Graham. Graham and a group of evangelical leaders would split off from the Fundamentalists because of the movement’s “extreme” views. Historian A. McGowen described what happened:

“As a result of ... theological, sociological, political, separatist and anti-intellectual factors ..., by the 1950s the word ‘fundamentalist’ had come to be identified with a particularly narrow form of evangelical Christianity. As a result of this rather negative image and particularly because of the view of Scripture adopted by those within the fundamentalist movement, certain evangelicals who shared the essential concerns highlighted in The Fundamentals no longer wanted to be identified as ‘fundamentalists’. They believed that the name had been hijacked by a group of people who were theologically narrow, socially exclusivist and politically extremist. Those who took this view coined for themselves the name ‘neo-evangelical’. This group included such distinguished evangelical leaders as

Carl F.H. Henry, Harold John Ockenga, B.J. Carnell and Billy Graham. They founded a new magazine called Christianity Today and sought to develop an evangelicalism that was, among other things, more intellectually respectable. They also founded Fuller Seminary. Ultimately, this group simply became known as ‘evangelicals’. The crucial point ..., however, is that the new evangelical movement as represented by Henry, Graham and others, did not abandon use of the word ‘inerrancy’. Despite their rejection of the anti-intellectual attitude of fundamentalism and despite their affirmation of the importance of biblical scholarship, including textual scholarship, they retained the same commitment to inerrancy as the fundamentalists. The inerrancy of Scripture remained a key concept in binding together those who were opposed to various strands of post-Enlightenment liberal theology.\(^\text{18}\)

There was one group, however, that did not require a belief in the inerrancy of the Bible as an article of faith. The Pentecostal Movement, whose origins are traced to the streets of Los Angeles in 1906 and preacher William Seymour, held a more Calvinist belief. Historian Samuel Solivan described the Pentecostal position:

“The Pentecostal movement in its inception did not posit a doctrine of inerrancy, as did its fundamentalist contemporaries. Classical Pentecostalism did not ground the authority of the Scripture on inerrancy of its composition, as did the fundamentalists. On the contrary, they followed the clue given by Calvin in recognizing the internal witness of the Spirit in the Word and its transforming power in one’s life. Because Pentecostalism was and continues to be rooted in the life of the poor, the literary medium was regarded with suspicion. In contrast, the literary character of the Scriptures as text was of great importance to the dominant culture, and is propagated through formal theological education. Pentecostals, on the other hand, represented the underside of the culture, that was suspicious of formal theological education and its emphasis on reason. They were already employing what liberation theologians call a ‘hermeneutic of suspicion’. They had learned that other so-called authoritative books, such as law books, had been used to define and control them. No, the letter of the text was not only authoritative. From their origin Pentecostals turned to another criterion for dealing with the issues of biblical authority, one that seems quite modern considering our present liberation ethics. Transformation, both personal and collective, were the canon against which questions of authority were to be determined. The verification of Scripture’s claims was not to be found in the internal claims made by the Scriptures themselves, but in the external power of the Holy

Spirit transforming people’s lives in the light of those claims.”

The on-the-ground implementation of this Pentecostal belief was detailed in cultural terms by historian Donald Dayton:

“The white fundamentalist preoccupation with the question of inerrancy made the Bible a cultural icon. In contrast, black Christians, while appealing to biblical authority, rarely have developed rigid doctrines of inerrancy. As Henry Mitchell writes in Black Preaching, black preaching employs an “intuitively flexible approach” to the Bible. “A Black preacher is more likely to say, ‘Didn’t He say it!’ than to be officious about what ‘the word of God declares!’ James S. Tinney has suggested that, even though black and white pentecostals may share common ground in an emphasis on tongue-speaking, black pentecostals do not attempt to define themselves with an appeal to the fundamentalist view of Scripture, nor have they felt as inhibited by classical trinitarianism. He argues that the fundamentalist view of Scripture “falls on deaf ears in the black community,” and consequently Oneness doctrines (Jesus Name, Apostolic) have had greater popularity among black than white pentecostals. Though black and white pentecostals may have differed in their approach to the Bible, they occupied, at least in the early years of the modern Pentecostal revival, common ground. The Azusa Street mission led by William J. Seymour was interracial in nature, and many of the early white Pentecostal clergy were ordained by black pentecostals.”

The pan-ethnic nature of Pentecostalism is also seen in the explosive growth of Pentecostalism in Latin America. According to the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, Pentecostalism has become a key part of Latin America’s religious and political landscape. In their 2006 report on Latin America, the Pew Forum noted:

“Especially since the 1960s, the region has witnessed dramatic growth in the number of pentecostals. According to 2005 figures from the World Christian Database, pentecostals represent 13%, or about 75 million, of Latin America’s population of nearly 560 million. Charismatic members of non-pentecostal denominations, who in Latin America are overwhelmingly Catholic, number an additional 80 million or so, or 15% of the population. As recently as 1970, pentecostals and charismatics combined represented no more than 4% of the region’s population.”

Conclusion: Christianity in the Twentieth Century

There were many questions for Twentieth Century Christians, but chief among them was “Is the Bible the inerrant word of God?” Charles Augustus Briggs set the stage for the twentieth century with the following questions:

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century by asserting that the Bible did, indeed, have errors. The Presbyterian Church had Briggs removed for his error. Alfred Loisy agreed with Briggs and described the Bible’s “relative inerrancy”. The Catholic Church disagreed, and had Loisy excommunicated and shunned for his errors. In Pascendi Dominici Gregis and Dei Verbum the Holy See reaffirmed the belief in a Bible without error. The Protestant Niagara Conference agreed as did oilman Lyman Stewart and Billy Graham. But the question on the street asked by William Seymour wasn’t “Is the Bible inerrant?”, but rather, “Is your Christian life inerrant?” Thanks to the rapid growth of Pentecostalism, the latter viewpoint may predominate for Christians at the end of the Twenty-First Century.
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There should be no beggars ... according to Billy Graham

Like Hudson Taylor, Billy Graham advocates a direct approach to helping the needy. According to Graham, there would be no beggars if individual Christians did their part. Here are two questions from readers taken directly from Graham’s official website. The answers are from Graham:

Q. I know the Bible says we ought to help the poor, and I guess I agree with that, but can’t governments do this better than churches? It’ll take a lot of money to fight poverty in places like Africa, for example, and churches simply don’t have that kind of money. — P.R.

A. We sometimes forget that Jesus Himself was very poor, and so were His disciples. On one occasion, He said, “Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head” (Luke 9:58).

After all, He could have chosen to come into this world as a rich man—for He was God, and the whole world belonged to Him. But He didn’t, and one reason was because He wanted to show His compassion for the whole human race, rich and poor alike. And if we are His followers we should have that same kind of compassion. Centuries before Christ was born, God commanded His people “to be openhanded toward your brothers and toward the poor and needy in your land” (Deuteronomy 15:11).

I’m thankful for the work governments and others are doing to fight poverty and disease in many parts of the world; the task is too great for any one agency. But Christians should be in the forefront—and one reason is because they come with compassion, and with the good news of Christ’s power to change lives.

Pray for Christian groups that seek to bring Christ’s love and mercy to those who hurt. ... And be generous in your giving. Above all, ask God to help you see the world the way He sees it, with all of its misery and despair—but also with hope in Christ.

Q. Some people in our community want to use some space in our church basement to start a community food bank. I think it’s a good idea, but a couple of people in our church oppose the plan. They say it might bring in the wrong kind of people and create problems. What would your opinion be? — L.K.

A. If your church can help needy families in your community in this way, then I would certainly encourage it. Jesus said, “I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me” (Matthew 25:40).

After all, the real issue isn’t what my view about this is, but what God’s view is—and the Bible makes it very clear that He is concerned about those who are hungry or needy. If He is concerned about them, shouldn’t we be also? Of course we should. The Bible says, “He who gives to the poor will lack nothing, but he who closes his eyes to them receives many curses” (Proverbs 28:27). It also says, “Blessed is he who is kind to the needy” (Proverbs 14:21).1

This book has explored the many threads of the Protestant Reformation and the Catholic Counter-Reformation as they wove their way into our modern world. The Church has been examined as a political force, a military force, a reforming force, a counter-reforming force, an empire, a series of states, a city/state, a corporate profit-center, a dynamic religious center, an archaic religious center, but — only infrequently — was the Church seen as a center for the original faith of the Jesus Movement.

In the Gospel of Matthew in the New King James Version of the Bible, Jesus is quoted as using the words “everlasting punishment”. This is the only time those two words are used together in the entire Bible.¹ So, who does the author of Matthew reserve for this unique eternal damnation? The answer is simple. Anyone and everyone — including a church — who allows humans to go hungry. As quoted in Matthew 25:

“When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on His right hand, ‘Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.’ Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?’ And the King will answer them, saying, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.’ Then He will also say to those on the left hand, ‘Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels: for I was hungry and you gave Me no food; I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink; I was a stranger and you gave Me no food; I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink; I was a stranger and you did not take Me in, naked and you did not clothe Me, sick and in prison and you did not visit Me.’ Then they also will answer Him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to You?’ Then He will answer them, saying, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.’ And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”²

There is no doubt that the Church has evolved over nearly two millennia. However, as detailed in the Gospel of Matthew, the goal of every Christian is simply this: There should be no beggars. Nevertheless, according to the United Nations, there are 925 million hungry people on the planet today.³ It is apparent that, despite its many “reforms”, the global Christian Church has a very long way to go.

² Matthew 25: 31-46. NKJV.