

**A Reformation Reader**  
***Primary Texts with Introductions***  
Second Edition with Companion Website  
**Edited by Denis R. Janz**

**Study Guide**  
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This study guide has been designed to help you read *A Reformation Reader* more effectively. Every chapter begins with a brief introduction to the texts suggesting themes to notice and issues to consider as you read them. There are also questions to guide your reading and to help you relate the texts to one another. Finally, related websites are noted for each chapter. These contain further information, primary documents, biographies, or graphics of the main figures and places from the period.

Other student resources available on the companion website, found at [fortresspress.com/janz](http://fortresspress.com/janz), include a research guide, a glossary of Reformation terms, and a guide to internet sources for Reformation and Luther Studies.

## Chapter 1 The Late Medieval Background

### *Chapter Summary*

This chapter provides an overview of the late medieval background of the Reformation. The texts illustrate many different aspects of late medieval Christianity, including the institutional church, biblical interpretation, devotion and morality, the theology of justification, and the perception of women and their roles. This chapter will give you a sense of the complexity of late medieval Christianity and a context for understanding the theological debates of the sixteenth century.

Pope Boniface's bull *Unam Sanctam* (2) offers a clear statement of the medieval **papacy's** view of itself and of the church in general. These claims provide a theological foundation for the sale of indulgences. Analyze the theology and practice of **indulgences** as found in Clement VI's bull *Unigenitus* (12), Sixtus IV's bull *Salvator noster* (13), and *Instructio summaria* by Albert of Mainz (14). Note that these texts are from different periods and represent an evolution in the claims associated with the sale of indulgences. In the sixteenth century, Protestant reformers not only challenged the sale of indulgences but challenged its underlying theology of salvation and view of the church. Desiderius Erasmus' *In Praise of Folly* (16) serves as a reminder that **criticism** of the Roman Catholic Church did not necessarily lead to a break with it. Summarize his portrayal of various groups within the church and try to determine the beliefs and values that shape his criticism.

Jacobus Faber Stapulensis' Introduction to the *Commentary on the Psalms* (8) is an example of late medieval interpretation of the Bible. His definition of the "literal sense", one of the four traditional ways of interpreting Scripture, is tied to his effort to understand the Old Testament or Hebrew Scriptures in light of Christ. In doing so, he adopts the conventional strategy of attacking Jewish **exegesis** as blind and improper. He is part of a complex exegetical tradition that the sixteenth century reformers utilized and critiqued.

Three texts from the sections on **Spirituality, Moral Instruction, and Eating, Sleeping, and Dying** give you a glimpse of late medieval devotional practices and morality. All of them offer a vision of the holy life and seek to persuade Christians to live in accordance with this vision. In Thomas à Kempis' popular devotional book *The Imitation of Christ* (1), notice how Christ is portrayed and what the imitation of his life means for the Christian seeking to follow his example. The sermon manual *Fasciculus Morum* (9) preaches against the vices of sloth and lechery. Observe the variety of sources that the author employs and how they are used in the sermon, particularly his interpretation of Scripture. In his catechism *Mirror for Christians* (15), Dietrich Kolde offers advice on how Christians should eat, sleep, and die. As you read these texts, it might be helpful to consider their underlying assumptions about God, humans, and the role that each plays in salvation.

The theological doctrine of justification, or "being put right with God," is central to Christianity and becomes a hotly contested issue in the sixteenth century. The debate on justification has a much longer history, however. In the section on **Theology**, Thomas Bradwardine's *The Cause of God against the Pelagians* (10) and Gabriel Biel's *The Circumcision of the Lord* (11) offer competing late medieval views of justification. Bradwardine refers back to an earlier dispute between Augustine and Pelagius on this same issue, identifying his opponents with the heresy of Pelagianism in order to discredit them. Compare Bradwardine

and Biel's views on the role of God's grace and human free will in justification and pay attention to the ways they defend their respective positions. Luther will study and eventually reject Biel's Nominalist understanding of justification.

Kraemer and Sprenger's *Malleus Maleficarum* (5), Agrippa's *Declaration on the Nobility and Preeminence of the Female Sex* (6), and de Pizan's *The Book of the City of Ladies* (4) discuss **the status of women**. All of them interpret the creation story found in Genesis 2–3 to defend their position, in part because the Christian tradition has often turned to Eve as the model for all women. The *Malleus Maleficarum* offers an extreme version of the traditional view of women as intellectually and morally inferior to men. This view also holds that women, at least since the Fall, are destined to be subject to men and confined to the private sphere. In his colloquy, *The Abbot and the Learned Lady*, Erasmus partially counters that view by asserting the moral and intellectual superiority of an educated woman over that of an ignorant abbot.

### *Questions for Reflection*

1. Text 1: What does Thomas à Kempis mean by describing the holiest Christian life as an imitation of Christ? (What should Christians do? What should they believe?)
2. Text 2: What claims does Boniface VIII make for the church in general and the papacy in particular?
3. Texts 4–7: Compare the statements on women offered by Kraemer and Sprenger, Agrippa, and de Pizan. What evidence do they provide to support their views? What does Erasmus' colloquy reveal about his view of women and their appropriate roles?
4. Text 8: What does Stapulensis mean by the "literal sense" of Scripture? Why does he define the literal sense in this way?
5. Text 9: What strategies are utilized by the author of the *Fasciculus Morum* to persuade people to live more virtuous lives? In your opinion, how effective would they have been?
6. Texts 10 and 11: Compare Bradwardine and Biel on the role that God and humans play in justification. Which view do you find most persuasive and why?
7. Texts 12–14: How was the practice of granting indulgences defended theologically? What was the procedure for receiving an indulgence? What differences do you observe in comparing these texts?
8. Text 15: What practices does Kolde's *Mirror for Christians* recommend? What beliefs about God, Mary, human beings, and salvation justify these practices?
9. Text 16: What criticisms does Erasmus offer of theologians, monks, clergy, and laypeople? What strategies does he utilize in his critique and how effective would they have been?
10. Summarize the various beliefs and concerns of late medieval Christians. How would you compare them to those of Christians today?

### ***Links to Further Information***

To augment your reading in this book, you might also consult some of the many websites that house or link to primary documents from the Reformation period or further background to the movements and figures of the time:

#### **Collections of Primary Reformation Texts**

- “Internet Archive of Texts and documents: The Protestant Reformation,” from the Hanover College History Department: <http://history.hanover.edu/early/prot.htm>.
- “Reformation,” from Hans Rollmann’s “Religion, Society, and Culture” Website (including picture gallery): <http://www.mun.ca/rels/reform/index.html>.
- “Reformation Europe” on the “Internet Modern History Sourcebook” site maintained by Fordham University: <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/modsbook02.html>.
- “Electronic Sources for Research,” including hundreds of links to texts, author sites, and related cultural topics, from the Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, University of Toronto: <http://www.library.utoronto.ca/crrs/Databases/www/Bookmarks.html>.

#### **Links to Reformation Websites and Background Information**

- “The Reformation Guide,” with links to chief figures and topics, maintained by Laurence Bates: <http://www.educ.msu.edu/homepages/laurence/reformation/index.htm>.
- “The Protestant Reformation,” a narrative history, part of “The Spiritual Pilgrim,” by Miles Hodges: <http://www.newgenevacenter.org/west/reformation.htm>.
- “Renaissance,” a vast array of links that place the Reformations in the larger cultural and artistic context of Renaissance Europe, part of Nancy B. Mautz’s “Creative Impulse” page: <http://history.evansville.net/renaissa.html>.

#### **Related Websites for Chapter 1: The Late Medieval Background**

- Thomas à Kempis: <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/14661a.htm>
- Boniface VIII: <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/02662a.htm>
- Indulgences: <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/07783a.htm>
- Erasmus: <http://smith2.sewanee.edu/Erasmus/etp.html>
- <http://www.utm.edu/research/iep/e/erasmus.htm>
- <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/05510b.htm>
- Christine de Pizan: <http://www.csupomona.edu/~plin/ls201/christine1.html>
- <http://www.msu.edu/~tiemando/Pizan.htm>

## Chapter 2 Martin Luther

### *Chapter Summary*

This chapter offers an introduction to Martin Luther by focusing on his character, his theological writings, and his legacy. Luther's character and personality are central to the section titled **The Person**. In his *Preface to the Complete Edition of Luther's Latin Writings* (17), the mature Luther reflects on the tumultuous events prior to 1521. Notice how he presents himself and his role in these events. Focus in particular on his account of his Reformation "discovery," the change in his understanding of the "righteousness of God." From this new theological perspective, Luther looks back on his decision to enter the monastery and the life he lived there in texts 18 and 19. The selections from his *Table Talk* (20) offer a glimpse of Luther's personality and opinions on a variety of topics. His *Letter to Katie* (21) reveals both his affectionate relationship with his wife and the range of his concerns and interests.

The section titled **Theological Writings** offers representative texts from Luther's extensive corpus, arranged in chronological order. It begins with the *Ninety-five Theses* (22), Luther's most famous text. Pay attention to the theological convictions that inform his critique of indulgences, penance, purgatory, and the papacy. You may also want to consider why a list of theses for academic debate sparked such intense interest and controversy. In the midst of controversy, and in part as a reaction to it, Luther's theology and criticism of the church continued to evolve. In his 1520 treatise *To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation concerning the Reform of the Christian Estate* (24), Luther blames the papacy for the Roman Catholic Church's failure to reform. He argues that the temporal or political authorities should take responsibility for reform and grounds this theologically in his affirmation of the "priesthood of all believers." Compare Luther's definition of the church and his view of the proper relation between the spiritual and temporal authorities to Boniface VIII's statements in *Unam Sanctam* (2).

In his Good Friday sermon *A Meditation on Christ's Passion* (23), Luther begins by criticizing certain devotional practices and beliefs as improper ways of contemplating Christ's suffering and death. He then argues that proper meditation on Christ's passion should lead to terror. Consider the purpose of this terror and how it leads to love and faith. Analyze the role that God and humans play in this process. You might compare this text with Thomas à Kempis' *Imitation of Christ* (1).

In *The Freedom of a Christian* (25), Luther clearly articulates his central conviction that justification is through faith alone. He argues that faith is in the Word of God, which he defines preeminently as Jesus Christ himself but also the oral and written testimony to Christ found in preaching and Scripture. If justification is by faith *alone*, does that mean that Christians are free from doing good works? Notice how Luther addresses that question and, in the process, defines true Christian freedom.

Luther's theology is deeply grounded in his study of Scripture. He articulates principles of biblical interpretation in his *Preface to the New Testament* (26) and *Preface to the Old Testament* (27), particularly his fundamental distinction between law and gospel. Notice how he defines law and gospel, where they are found in Scripture, and what purposes they serve. You will also discover why Luther regards the Gospel of John, the epistles of Paul, and I Peter as the noblest books of the New Testament and thus develops a "canon within the canon."

*The Small Catechism* (28) and *The Smalcald Articles* (29) both offer helpful summaries of Luther's theology, although the respective purposes of the texts shape their content and style.

The former is intended for education of the laity and thus follows the traditional catechetical form by explicating the Ten Commandments, the creed, and the Lord's Prayer. Luther's interpretation of these basic elements of the Christian faith is prefaced by a discussion of why he is writing this catechism and how it should be taught. As a statement of faith written in anticipation of a Catholic council, *The Smalcald Articles* focus on points of disagreement with the Roman Catholic Church. In both texts, pay particular attention to Luther's understanding of baptism and the Eucharist.

Luther's ideas were developed and refined by others during his lifetime and in the years that followed. The section on **Lutheranism** offers selections from the most influential interpretations of his theology. In Argula von Grumbach's letter *To the University of Ingolstadt* (30), Argula must first establish her right to speak as a woman before she can defend a man condemned by the university. Analyze how she uses Scripture and Luther's theology to define her rights and responsibilities as a Christian woman of the nobility. Read the statement on justification in the *Augsburg Confession* (31) and evaluate Melancthon's defense of it in the *Apology of the Augsburg Confession* (32). Pay particular attention to Melancthon's discussion of the law/gospel distinction and his understanding of the role that God and humans play in justification. The *Formula of Concord* (33), written fifty years later, wrestles with the place of good works in the Christian life, the proper distinction between law and gospel, and the so-called third use of the law. Determine the particular questions and controversies that gave rise to these statements of faith.

### ***Questions for Reflection***

1. Texts 17–21: What do these texts reveal about Luther's personality and beliefs?
2. Text 22: What are Luther's criticisms of indulgences, penance, purgatory, and the papacy? How are these related? How would you compare Luther's statements to those found in texts 12–14?
3. Text 23: How does Luther describe true and false contemplation of Christ's passion? How is this related to his view of God and human beings?
4. Text 24: What are the three walls the "Romanists" have built and how does Luther attack them? How does Luther define the church and what remedies does he propose?
5. Text 25: What is the role of faith and works in the life of the Christian? How does Luther define Christian freedom? In your opinion, what are the strengths and weaknesses of this position?
6. Texts 26 and 27: How does Luther define law and gospel? Where are they found in Scripture and what purposes do they serve? How would you evaluate this principle of biblical interpretation?
7. Text 28: Why did Luther write the Small Catechism? What central theological concerns are found in this text?

8. Text 29: How does Luther use his understanding of redemption in Christ to critique various beliefs and practices of the Roman Catholic Church?
9. Text 30: In light of other texts in this volume, evaluate Argula von Grumbach's discussion of her rights and responsibilities as a Christian woman.
10. Texts 31–33: Compare these statements on justification, good works, and law and gospel to Luther's views. What questions and controversies are these texts addressing?
11. Summarize Luther's central beliefs. Where do you agree with him? Where do you disagree?

***Related Websites for Chapter 2: Martin Luther***

- Digital Library of Lutherhalle: <http://www-3.ibm.com/software/is/dig-lib/info/lutherpic.html>
- City of Wittenberg site: <http://www.wittenberg.de/en/>
- The Luther House, and other houses, in Wittenburg:  
<http://www.martinluther.de/english/homef.htm>
- Project Wittenberg: <http://www.iclnet.org/pub/resources/text/wittenberg/wittenberg-home.html>

### Chapter 3 Thomas Müntzer and the Peasants' War

#### *Chapter Summary*

This chapter introduces us to the powerful, violent, and remarkably widespread peasant movement that grew out of the socio-political ills of the time and was fueled by particular interpretations of the new Reformation theologies. The Radical Reformation includes a variety of individuals and groups who believed that reform could not be achieved by cooperation with the established political and social order. **Thomas Müntzer** prophesies an imminent and radical transformation of the world. This hope of a new and more just age was one of the factors leading to **The Peasant Revolt** of 1525. Some of the other reasons for this uprising are found in the grievances outlined in *The Twelve Articles of the Peasants* (37). Summarize these articles and note how elements of Luther's theology are used to justify their demands.

Müntzer was perhaps Luther's most vitriolic opponent, a former member of Luther's movement and a scholar in his own right. In *Vindication and Refutation* (34), Müntzer's correspondence with Luther takes up the familiar polemical tone of the day. When Müntzer's preaches both to nobility (35) and peasants (36), he adds to that edgy tone an apocalyptic worldview and a class-conscience theology that seems to fan the flames higher and higher. Note his reliance on mystical revelation and analyze his description of this transformation and how it will occur.

In the section on **The "War,"** we see that the peasants not only become more violent but also more organized, and a fascinating dialogue develops between Luther and the peasant leaders. In the *Twelve Articles of the Peasants* (37), peasant leaders Lotzer and Schappeler propose a basic but also rather modern list of grievances and demands, essentially calling for egalitarian treatment across the community. Luther responds to this call for radical social transformation with his *Admonition to Peace* (38), in which he reprimands both the nobility and the peasants for their unreasonable behaviors toward and demands upon one another.

Despite Luther's appeal for peace, violence continues on a large scale, as reported here in Pastor Herholt's *Massacre of Weinsberg* (39) and Count von Solm's Report (42). As we read in the two other reports (40 and 41), women have joined the fight, taken on rather prominent roles, and are gathering in large numbers to defend their cause. In many cases, the nobility restored order by extremely harsh penalties, such as the beheadings and mutilations Michel Gross describes (43). Luther impatiently responds just a month later in *Against the Robbing and Murdering Hordes of Peasants* (44), clearly supporting the nobility now, because the peasants have continued what Luther sees as pointless bloodshed and rebellion.

In the section about **The Aftermath**, when the violence finally had ceased and the dust had settled, many attempted to put the event into perspective. Valerius Anshelm of Bern suggested that nothing was gained by the revolt and claimed that, in fact, much was lost, including the good name of the gospel (45). Hermann Mühlport's letter places blame for the upheavals on both sides, but more importantly he takes on Luther's own writings and attitudes toward the peasants and calls him to task for his inability to grasp the difficulty of peasant life.

The dramatic and sad story of the Peasants' War raises many vital questions about communities of faith and their socio-political allegiances. Preached in the wrong times or in the wrong places, many religious ideas can be dangerous. This brief altercation leaves us wondering how we can find more irenic ways of bringing theological truths into the public square.



### ***Questions for Reflection***

1. Texts 34–36: Was Thomas Müntzer a misunderstood “theologian of revolution,” or an apocalyptic dreamer, or a delusional fanatic?
2. Text 37: Does Christianity endorse and stabilize an intrinsically unjust system, or does it criticize and undermine such a system? Do you sympathize with the peasants, or do you find their position unreasonable in the real world?
3. Text 38: Do you agree with Luther’s appeals and criticisms? Might things have turned out differently if Luther had endorsed the cause of the peasants?
4. Texts 39–43: Are you surprised by the brutality of the movement and the responses to it? Was the cause worth the suffering?
5. Text 44: What do you think of Luther’s final rejection of the peasant cause? Was the entire episode his fault in the first place, or were some of Luther’s theological principles grossly misinterpreted by Müntzer and other leaders of the peasants?
6. Texts 45–46: What is your final assessment of the peasants’ movement? Do agree that the nothing was gained by the peasants? Is it dangerous for some to read Luther’s theological writings without properly understanding the context of his arguments?

### ***Related Websites for Chapter 3: Thomas Müntzer and the Peasants’ War***

- <http://www.zum.de/whkmla/region/germany/peaswar.html>
- <http://home.newadvent.org/cathen/11597a.htm>
- <http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1850/peasant-war-germany/index.htm>
- Radical Reformation: <http://www.mb-soft.com/believe/txc/radrefor.htm>
- <http://www.educ.msu.edu/homepages/laurence/reformation/Radical/Radical.htm>

## Chapter 4 Zwingli and the Anabaptists

### *Chapter Summary*

This chapter begins by illustrating central themes in the life and theology of **Ulrich Zwingli**, one of the founders of Reformed Protestantism. In his Letter to Uttinger (47), Zwingli defends himself against charges that he seduced the daughter of a high official. Analyze his response and what it reveals about him and his culture. In his sermon *Of Freedom of Choice in the Selection of Food* (48), he takes a decisive and public step toward reform by arguing that Christians are not required to observe the Lenten fast. Consider how his views on fasting reflect deeper theological convictions. As you read his Petition to the Bishop of Constance (49), pay attention to the various arguments he advances in support of married clergy. Compare the Catholic and Protestant versions of his death (55) and evaluate how different theological convictions shaped these accounts.

Zwingli articulates his understanding of the nature and authority of Scripture in *Of the Clarity and Certainty of the Word of God* (50). How do his convictions about the Word of God allow him to reject human interpretation of the biblical text? Compare his definition of the gospel to that found in Luther's prefaces to the Old and New Testaments (26 and 27). The *Sixty-seven Theses* (51), prepared for a public debate in Zurich, outline Zwingli's vision of reform. Note how his beliefs about Christ, Scripture, and the church shape his critique of the mass, fasting, clerical celibacy, excommunication, penance, and other practices. Compare this text and its view of the spiritual and temporal authorities to Luther's treatise *To the Christian Nobility* (24) and Boniface VIII's bull *Unam Sanctam* (2).

Zwingli defends his understanding of the Eucharist in his book *On True and False Religion* (52). Relate his dualisms of sense/faith and body/spirit to his statements on Christ's body and blood in the Eucharist. In his Letter to Vadian (53), he describes his debate with Luther at the Marburg Colloquy. Speculate on how Luther's account of this event might have differed from Zwingli's version, referring to Luther's statements on the Eucharist as found in *The Small Catechism* (28) and *The Smalcald Articles* (29).

The Radical Reformation also encompassed a number of distinct groups with similar beliefs, commonly referred to as Anabaptists, discussed here in the section titled **Anabaptist Origins**. *The Beginnings of the Anabaptists* (56) describes the genesis of the Swiss Anabaptist movement among disillusioned followers of Zwingli, explaining why they practice adult baptism and the consequences they suffer for doing so. In *Concerning Heretics and Those Who Burn Them* (57), Balthasar Hubmaier overturns the common wisdom of his age, both in his definition of heresy and in his rejection of burning as a punishment for it. He defines baptism and its relation to the church in *A Christian Catechism* (58). Consider why his understanding of baptism and the church leads him to reject infant baptism. Compare his understanding of baptism to that found in *The Beginnings of the Anabaptists* (56) and Luther's *Small Catechism* (28) and *Smalcald Articles* (29).

Anabaptist beliefs are also found in three quite different texts: the statement of faith in *The Schleitheim Confession* (59), the description of Michael Sattler's interrogation in his *Trial and Martyrdom* (60), and the mystical meditation of Hans Denck's *Concerning True Love* (61). Compare their statements on baptism, Eucharist, the ban, separation from the world, and oaths. It may be helpful to compare Denck's discussion of the old and new law to Luther's distinction between law and gospel (23 and 24). Are Anabaptists closer to Luther (26 and 27) or Zwingli

(50) in their understanding of the Eucharist? Reflect on why Anabaptist beliefs about baptism, the Eucharist, and authority led to persecution by other Christians.

Anabaptist women also held firmly to their beliefs and suffered martyrdom as a result. In her interrogation before the city council of Leeuwarden (65), Elisabeth Dirks refuses to identify her fellow Anabaptists and defends her views on the sacraments. Janneken Munstdorp's letter to her infant daughter (66) is both a moving personal testimony and a clear articulation of her beliefs. Pay particular attention to the meaning she finds in her suffering and persecution. Compare their statements to those of the other Anabaptists you have read.

In *A Meditation on the Twenty-fifth Psalm* (64), Menno Simons finds his own spiritual life reflected in the text of the psalm. Notice how he describes the role that he and God play in his struggle against "the world, the flesh, and the devil." Compare his interpretation of Scripture to Peter Walpot's exegesis in *True Yieldedness and the Christian Community of Goods* (67). Evaluate the arguments that Walpot uses to defend shared ownership of goods in the Christian community and consider why this is so central to his understanding of the church. It may be helpful to review briefly the documents included in this section on **Anabaptist Origins**, identifying common themes as well as points of difference.

### *Questions for Reflection*

1. Texts 47–49: What do these texts reveal about Zwingli's personality and beliefs?
2. Text 50: What does Zwingli say about the Word of God? What authorities does he contrast in this text? How would you compare this to Luther's view?
3. Text 51: What beliefs does Zwingli defend in these theses? How are they related to the practices that he criticizes?
4. Texts 52–54: What is Zwingli's understanding of the Eucharist? How does he defend this view? How does he describe his differences with Luther on this issue?
5. Text 55: Summarize the differences in these two accounts. Why were the details of Zwingli's death so important to both Catholics and Protestants?
6. Text 56: How does the author describe the relationship between Zwingli and the Swiss Anabaptists? Why do the Anabaptists practice adult baptism?
7. Texts 57–58: How does Hubmaier define heresy? Why does he reject the burning of heretics? How does he define baptism and its relation to the church?
8. Texts 59–61: Summarize Anabaptist beliefs as found in the *Schleitheim Confession*, The Trial and Martyrdom of Michael Sattler, and Hans Denck's *Concerning True Love*. Speculate on why other Christians persecuted them for their beliefs.
9. Texts 62–63: What do these texts tell you about the reasons for the Peasant's War? Do their demands seem reasonable? Why would they have been regarded as radical and threatening?

10. Text 64: How does Menno Simons describe himself and God? What role did each of them play in his conversion?

11. Texts 65–66: What advice does Janneken Munstorp give to her daughter? What theological reasons does she offer for her persecution and suffering? Why is Elisabeth Dirks arrested and killed? What beliefs does she defend and are they similar to other Anabaptist beliefs you have encountered?

12. Text 67: How does Peter Walpot defend complete economic “communism” among Christians? Do you find his argument persuasive? Why or why not?

### ***Related Websites for Chapter 4: Zwingli and the Anabaptists***

#### **Ulrich Zwingli**

- <http://www.wsu.edu/~dee/REFORM/ZWINGLI.HTM>
- <http://www.educ.msu.edu/homepages/laurence/reformation/Zwingli/Zwingli.Htm>
- <http://www.mb-soft.com/believe/txc/zwingli.htm>

#### **The Anabaptists**

- Who Are the Mennonites? <http://www.mhsc.ca/>
- Anabaptist/Mennonite History: <http://www.bethelks.edu/services/mla/guide/index.html#history>

## Chapter 5 John Calvin

### *Chapter Summary*

John Calvin—the man, the reformer, and the theologian—is the focus of this chapter. The section titled **Calvin on Himself** offers a rare glimpse of the reformer’s reflections on his life and work. In his preface to the *Commentary on the Psalms* (68), Calvin begins by explaining the benefits of reading the Psalms. He then applies this to his own life by identifying himself with King David, traditionally viewed as the principal author of the Psalms. He interprets the struggles of his own life in light of the afflictions David endured. Calvin gives us additional insight into his personality and theology in his Letter to Melancthon (69). Notice how he describes and reacts to the difficulties he mentions in this letter to a friend.

The section on **Practical Matters** offers Calvin’s vision of the godly Christian community and the specific measures he recommends to realize it. The *Geneva Ordinances* (70) are laws intended to regulate behavior in Geneva. What do the actions that Calvin recommends and condemns, and the penalties he prescribes for disobedience, reveal about his understanding of reform? In his Letter Concerning a Pious Woman (72), Calvin offers advice to a woman who is being persecuted by her husband for her religious beliefs. Notice the reasons he gives for directing her to stay with her husband and the conditions under which Calvin would allow her to leave. This letter indirectly offers insight into his understanding of the nature and purpose of marriage. As you read his Letter on Usury (73), evaluate the arguments he advances in addressing this issue.

**The Servetus Affair** describes one of the most infamous events in Calvin’s Geneva, the execution of Michael Servetus as a heretic. In his Letter to Servetus’ Judges (74), David Joris tries to convince them not to kill Servetus. Compare his arguments to those of his fellow Anabaptist, Balthasar Hubmaier in *Concerning Heretics and Those Who Burn Them* (57). In his Letters to the Geneva Council (75), Servetus describes the treatment he received while in prison. Notice the reasons given for executing him in the Verdict and Sentence for Michael Servetus (76).

The section on **Theology** consists of representative texts from all four Books of Calvin’s masterpiece, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. In the selections from Book I, God as Creator, Calvin begins by arguing that Knowledge of God (77) cannot be separated from knowledge of ourselves. As you determine what he means by this, notice the qualities he ascribes to God and to humans. Calvin then explains that Scripture (78) is needed for knowledge of God. Notice how he argues that the revelation found in creation is not sufficient to direct humans to God the Creator. He further establishes the necessity and priority of Scripture by rejecting the tradition of the church and arguing for the sole authority of Scripture. He declares that Scripture authenticates itself by the testimony of the Holy Spirit. Compare his views on the authority of Scripture to Zwingli’s statements in *Of the Clarity and Certainty of the Word of God* (50).

In Book II, God as Redeemer, Calvin uses Paul’s interpretation of Christ as the second Adam to relate Original Sin (79) to God’s salvific work in Christ (80). He begins by discussing true self-knowledge and why this depends on knowledge of creation and the Fall. He then defines original sin and its consequences. He argues that original sin is handed on by transmission and not by imitation, in part because of his correlation between Adam and Christ. He concludes by maintaining that the guilt and punishment of original sin justly belong to us. He then describes

the benefits of Christ's saving work for humanity in terms of the traditional categories of Christ as prophet, priest, and king. Note how Calvin describes each of these offices and their benefits for humanity.

In Book III, God as Sanctifier, Calvin describes sanctification as the work of the Holy Spirit empowering the elect to live a holy Christian life. He refers to the Holy Spirit (81) as the bond that unites people to Christ and his benefits. The Spirit enables them to live a holy Christian life (82), defined by self-denial as the necessary prerequisite for love of God and neighbor. It is a renunciation of one's own will in complete devotion to the will of God. The power of God's will is most evident in predestination (83). Notice how Calvin defines predestination, specifies its benefits, and grounds it in his interpretation of Scripture.

In Book IV, Calvin discusses the church, the Lord's Supper, and civil government as external means of God's grace. As you read the section on the church (84), evaluate Calvin's critique of the Roman Church, particularly of apostolic succession as a mark of the true church. How does he define the true church and defend himself against charges of heresy and schism? In his discussion of the Lord's Supper (85), Calvin argues that the bread and wine feed the body while Christ's body and blood feed the soul. He describes the physical elements as signs or analogies of the spiritual. Analyze how he uses this analogy to define the benefits of this sacrament. Finally, notice how Calvin characterizes the purpose of civil government (86) and its relation to spiritual government. It may be helpful to consider his *Geneva Ordinances* (70) in light of this text.

Calvin was not the only person with a vision of reform for Geneva. Marie Dentière supported Farel's early efforts at reform by preaching to nuns at the Poor Clares convent and publishing a sympathetic history of the evangelical movement in Geneva. In her letter to Queen Marguerite of Navarre (87), she argues that reform must include expanded roles for women in the church. Compare this to Calvin's definition of the purpose and status of church laws as outlined in the *Institutes* (77–86), particularly its implications for women.

### ***Questions for Reflection***

1. Texts 68 and 69: What struggles and concerns does Calvin reveal in these texts and how does he interpret them theologically?
2. Texts 70–73: What do these texts tell you about Calvin's vision of Christian community and how to achieve it? Do you think these measures would be effective? Why or why not?
3. Texts 74–76: What do these texts reveal about the treatment of Servetus and the reasons given for executing him? What arguments does David Joris offer in Servetus' defense?
4. Texts 77 and 78: How is the knowledge of God related to knowledge of ourselves? Why is Scripture needed for knowledge of God the Creator? How and why does Calvin argue that the authority of Scripture is from God and not from the church?
5. Texts 79 and 80: How does Calvin define original sin and its consequences? How does he argue that this sin is not God's fault? How do Christ's offices as prophet, king, and priest benefit humanity? How is Calvin's understanding of original sin related to his view of Christ?

6. Texts 81 and 82: How does Calvin describe the work of the Holy Spirit? Why does he envision the Christian life as one of self-denial?
7. Text 83: How does Calvin define predestination and its benefits? Why does Calvin reject both curiosity and silence with respect to this doctrine? Where does he find predestination in the Bible?
8. Text 84: How does Calvin define the true church? What are his specific criticisms of the Roman Church? How does he use Scripture, particularly the history of Israel, to make his points?
9. Text 85: What does Calvin mean by the spiritual presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper? How would you compare his view of the Eucharist to that of Luther (25 and 26) and Zwingli (35)?
10. Text 86: How does Calvin define the purpose of civil government? Compare this to the statements on civil or temporal authority found in texts by Boniface VIII (2), Luther (21, 25) and the Anabaptists (43, 45).
11. Text 87: Why does Marie Dentière write a letter to the Queen of Navarre? How does she use Scripture to defend her position on women's roles in the church? Compare her letter to Calvin's statements on the purpose and status of church laws and speculate on whether or not he would support the ordination of women today.

***Related Websites for Chapter 5: John Calvin***

- John Calvin: <http://www.wsu.edu/~dee/REFORM/CALVIN.HTM>
- John Calvin, from the old Catholic Encyclopedia (1908): <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/03195b.htm>
- John Calvin—life and works, from “Christian Classics”: <http://www.ccel.org/c/calvin/>

## Chapter 6 The Reformation in England

### *Chapter Summary*

This chapter traces the **Origins** of the English Reformation to **Henry VIII's** Act of Supremacy (88). This Act declares the King of England and his successors “the supreme head on earth of the Church of England.” Determine what powers and privileges are granted to the King and compare this to Boniface VIII's *Unam Sanctam* (2). The Act of Six Articles (89) begins by describing King Henry's role and purpose in securing the passage of this act. Notice the Roman Catholic beliefs and practices this act reaffirms and the penalties it imposes for disobedience. Speculate on how Luther, Zwingli, and Calvin might respond to this document, particularly to its statements on the Eucharist.

**Thomas Cranmer** served as the “explicator” of the Reformation, particularly during the reign of Edward VI. In his Preface to the Great Bible (90), a recent English translation, Thomas Cranmer offers several reasons why lay people should read Scripture. Notice how he describes the benefits of reading Scripture, the proper way to do so, and the sources he cites in defending his position. Pay particular attention to his response to the assertion that lay people will not be able to understand the biblical text. Compare his statements on Scripture to those found in Luther (26 and 27), Zwingli (50), and Calvin (78). In *A Sermon of the Salvation of Mankind* (91), Cranmer defines the role of God and humans in justification and articulates his understanding of the atonement. Compare his comments on justification, particularly his discussion of faith and good works, to Luther's statements in *The Freedom of a Christian* (25).

Queen **Mary** sought to have the English church “return to the fold,” a process sometimes called the **Marian Reversal**. Evaluate her efforts to restore the English church to Rome in *The Marian Injunctions* (92). Note the particular measures she advocates and speculate on whether or not they would have been effective. It might be helpful to compare her efforts to restore Catholicism to Henry VIII's attempt to reaffirm it in the Act of Six Articles (89). How different are their goals and strategies? After the death of Edward VI, Lady Jane Grey served as Queen of England for nine days. Imprisoned and eventually executed for treason, she staunchly defended her Protestant convictions in a public examination by Queen Mary's chaplain (93). Notice the points at issue in this debate between a Catholic and Protestant. Compare Lady Jane's views on justification, the Eucharist, and authority to the writings of Luther, Zwingli, and Calvin.

The final split with Rome occurred during the reign of **Elizabeth I**. The Act of Supremacy (94) granted her the title of supreme governor and established her authority over the English church. Compare the powers and privileges outlined in this document to those specified in Henry's Act of Supremacy (88). In reading the Act of Uniformity (95), take note of the penalties prescribed for ministers who oppose the reinstatement of the *Book of Common Prayer*. Why would the Queen have been so interested in enforcing the use of a common book of worship?

The Elizabethan Injunctions (96) outline expectations of behavior for both clergy and lay people. Reflect on why these particular practices are required and the arguments used to justify them. The Thirty-Nine Articles (97) offer a concise statement of beliefs for the English church. Compare the statements on Scripture, justification, predestination, the sacraments, the church, civil government, common goods, and oaths to those of the Protestant reformers. Would you agree that this represents a “middle way”?



### ***Questions for Reflection***

1. Texts 88–89: Do these documents support the claim that Henry VIII was interested in “church-political change rather than religious reform”? Why or why not?
2. Texts 90 and 91: To what extent do Cranmer’s statements on Scripture and justification agree with the Protestant reformers you have read (Luther, Zwingli, and Calvin)?
3. Text 92: What measures does Queen Mary propose to restore the English church to Rome and who does she expect to implement them?
4. Text 93: What does the debate between Lady Jane Grey and Feckenham reveal about Catholic and Protestant understandings of justification, authority, and the Eucharist? Is Lady Jane’s view of the Eucharist closest to that of Luther, Zwingli, or Calvin?
5. Texts 94 and 95: What strategies does Elizabeth I use to assert her authority over the English church?
6. Text 96: What do these injunctions require of clergy and laity? What reasons are given for these requirements?
7. Text 97: Summarize the central beliefs of the Thirty-Nine Articles. How would Luther, Zwingli, Calvin, and an Anabaptist respond to these articles?
8. Henry VIII, Cranmer, Mary, and Elizabeth I all attempted to reform the English church. Compare their different visions of reforms and the methods they used to implement them.

### ***Related Websites for Chapter 6: The Reformation in England***

- “The English Reformation,” by Andrew Pettegree:  
[http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/state/church\\_reformation/reformation\\_pettegree1.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/state/church_reformation/reformation_pettegree1.shtml)
- English Renaissance literature: <http://www.luminarium.org/renlit/index.html>
- Biography of Lady Jane Grey: <http://www.britannia.com/history/ladyjane/janefram.html>
- Links to other sites: <http://www.seanet.com/~eldrbarry/heidel/englrsc.htm>
- Portraits of Early Tudor figures from the National Portrait Gallery:  
<http://www.npg.org.uk/live/room1.asp>
- Portraits of the Elizabethan Court from the National Portrait Gallery:  
<http://www.npg.org.uk/live/room2.asp>

## Chapter 7 The Counter/Catholic Reformation

### *Chapter Summary*

This chapter on the Counter/Catholic Reformation begins with **Early Reactions** to the theology of Martin Luther. The papal bull *Exsurge Domine* (98) is a list of heresies or errors attributed to Luther. Compare these declarations on indulgences, penance, purgatory, and the papacy to Luther's own statements in his *Ninety-five Theses* (22). When Luther refuses to acknowledge his "errors," Pope Leo X officially excommunicates him and his supporters in *Decret Romanum* (99). Note the reasons given for this, the penalties imposed on them, and the actions required of members of the clergy and religious orders. The Roman Catholic response continues with Cardinal Cajetan's critique of Luther's understanding of justification in *On Faith and Works* (101). Notice how Cajetan defines faith and works, particularly his description of faith informed by charity and his defense of merit and satisfaction in relation to works. Compare his discussion of the role that God and humans play in justification to that found in Luther's *The Freedom of a Christian* (25). When theological debate and excommunication failed to stop the spread of Protestantism, the Inquisition was reinstated. Paul III's bull *Licet ab initio* (103) identifies the purpose of the Inquisition and the powers granted to it.

The Roman Catholic Church did not simply respond to Luther and other Protestants. In his statement to the Diet of Nuremberg (100), for example, Pope Adrian VI acknowledges the need for internal reform. Notice how he describes the source of corruption in the church and its effects. Compare this to the abuses and remedies identified by Cardinals Contarini and Carafa several years later in *Consilium de emendanda ecclesiae* (102). How do their strategies for reform differ from those of Protestant reformers such as Luther, Zwingli, Calvin, and the Anabaptists?

The texts from the **Council of Trent** include statements on justification, the Eucharist, and penance—some of the key doctrines challenged by Protestant reformers. The decrees articulate Roman Catholic teaching while the canons describe Protestant heresies or errors to be avoided. In the Decree and Canons on Justification (105), pay particular attention to the role of grace, free will, faith, and good works in justification. How similar is this text to Cajetan's essay on justification, *On Faith and Works* (101)? Compare this decree to Luther's view of justification as found in *The Freedom of a Christian* (25). In the Canons on the Sacraments in General (106), notice the list of sacraments and the description of the conferral of grace. The Canons on the Eucharist (107) affirm Real Presence and transubstantiation as well as practices associated with the mass. Compare this understanding of the Eucharist with that found in Luther (28 and 29), Zwingli (52–54), the Anabaptists (59–61), and Calvin (85). In the Canons on Penance (108), the Council of Trent articulates a Roman Catholic understanding of this sacrament and its benefits. Compare this to Luther's statements on Confession and Absolution in *The Small Catechism* (28) and the critique of Roman Catholic penitential practices in Luther's *Smalcald Articles* (29) and Zwingli's *Sixty-seven Theses* (51).

These doctrinal issues are followed by decrees from the Council of Trent focusing on reform of the church. The Reform Decree on Establishing Seminaries (109) declares the purpose for these schools, describes who should be admitted, and outlines their course of study. The Reform Decree on Preaching (110) specifies who should preach and how often. The Rules on Prohibited Books (111) provides guidelines for determining the status of various books, prescribes a process

for enforcing these rules, and imposes penalties for disobedience. Reflect on the Council's purpose in establishing these procedures and the assumptions about the church and reform that shape them.

In this excerpt from Ignatius Loyola's *Autobiography* (112), the founder of **The Jesuits** describes his conversion and his new mission in life. Compare his transformation to the one described by Luther in his Preface to the Latin Writings (17). An Early Jesuit Report on Rome (113) describes the work of the early Jesuit community. Reflect on why they owned nothing and begged for donations. In his *Prima summa* (114), Ignatius articulates the mission of his order and its distinctive vow. Refer back to his autobiography (112) to discover one reason he refers to the members of the order as "soldiers of God." In *The Spiritual Exercises* (115), Ignatius defines these exercises and their purpose in the Christian life. As you read his Rules for Thinking with the Church, pay attention to the beliefs and practices he defends against the Protestants. How might Luther respond to his charge that too much talk about faith will lead to laziness in good works? How might Calvin counter his claim that too much emphasis on predestination will result in neglect of the works conducive to salvation? The Letter of Juan de Polanco to Antonio de Araoz (116) expresses the educational philosophy of the Jesuits. He gives practical advice for the founding of colleges and outlines the advantages they bring to the Jesuits, the students, and the people of the region. How would you compare your course of study and reasons for pursuing it to those given here? In his letter to Peter Canisius (117), Ignatius explains why the Protestants have been so successful and offers his own suggestions for countering their theology. How would you compare his remedies to those offered by other Catholic reformers?

The section on **The New World** describes the treatment native peoples received at the hands of Christians and the beliefs that were used to justify this behavior. In *Sublimis Deus* (118), Pope Paul III attempts to counter these beliefs by defining the status and rights of the inhabitants of the "new world." Francisco de Vitoria argues against using failed conversions as a justification for war and confiscation of property in *De Indis* (119). In *A Short Account of the Destruction of the Indies* (120), Bartolome de las Casas describes the horrific behavior of the Spaniards and a Cuban prince's response to it. In the battle between **Rome and England**, the papal bull *Regnans in excelsis* (121) deposed and excommunicated Elizabeth I. Note the reasons given for this action and compare its view of the papacy to that found in Boniface VIII's *Unam Sanctam* (2).

Teresa of Ávila illustrates the role that nuns played in the Catholic Reformation. In *The Book of Her Life* (122), in the section titled **A Mystical Voice**, Teresa of Ávila uses the metaphor of watering a garden to describe the four stages of prayer, offers advice to beginners in prayer, and recounts a vision she experienced while in the state of rapture. Notice how she articulates the role of God and humans in prayer and speculate on how Luther might respond to this description.

### *Questions for Reflection*

1. Texts 98 and 99: Evaluate Pope Leo X's response to Luther in his bulls *Exsurge Domine* and *Decet Romanum*. What does he identify as Luther's errors and how does he justify excommunicating him?
2. Texts 100 and 102: What abuses in the Roman Catholic Church do these texts identify and what remedies do they propose?

3. Text 101: How does Cajetan critique Luther's understanding of justification? How does he use Scripture to defend his position?
4. Text 103: How does Pope Paul III define the purpose and powers of the Inquisition?
5. Text 104: According to Jeanne de Jussie, what arguments are used to try to convert the nuns and how do they respond?
6. Texts 105–108: Summarize Catholic teaching on justification, the Eucharist, and penance as articulated by the Council of Trent. Where would Protestant reformers agree and disagree?
7. Texts 109–111: What abuses does the Council of Trent identify and what measures does it propose to deal with them? Speculate on how Protestant reformers might respond to these strategies for reform.
8. Texts 112–117: What do these texts reveal about the beliefs and mission of the Jesuit order?
9. Texts 118–120: How did Christians treat the native inhabitants of the “new world” and how did they justify their behavior theologically?
10. Text 121: What powers does Pius V claim in deposing and excommunicating Elizabeth I of England?
11. Text 122: What role do God and humans play in Teresa of Ávila's four stages of prayer? What advice does she give to beginners in prayer? What does the vision of the angel reveal about rapture, the final stage of prayer?
12. Is it possible to divide the documents in this chapter into Catholic Reformation texts and Counter-Reformation texts? Why or why not?
13. Are there central beliefs and practices that one can identify with Catholic reform as opposed to Protestant reform? If so, how would you characterize them?

***Related Websites for Chapter 7: The Counter/Catholic Reformation***

- Council of Trent from the old *Catholic Encyclopedia* (1908): <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/15030c.htm>
- From *The Life of St. Ignatius of Loyola* by Norman O'Neal, S.J.: <http://www.luc.edu/jesuit/ignatius.bio.html>
- St. Ignatius of Loyola from the old *Catholic Encyclopedia* (1908): <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/07639c.htm>
- Jesuit Resources on the Web: <http://www.jesuit.org/resources/index.html>
- St. Teresa of Avila from the old *Catholic Encyclopedia* (1908): <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/14515b.htm>
- Teresa of Avila: <http://www.karmel.at/eng/teresa.htm>