

rooted in Catholicism, particularly the Catholic intellectual tradition; he was not willing to give up many Catholic ceremonies and he certainly was not willing to accept Zwingli's doctrine of reading Christian scriptures with unwavering literalness. The most important doctrinal issue they disagreed on was the nature of the Eucharist. Luther, like the Catholics, believed that the bread and wine of the Eucharist was spiritually transformed into the body and blood of Christ, while Zwingli believed that the Eucharist only *symbolized* the body and blood of Christ.

John Calvin was another reformer, whose weird and fearful doctrines have had their effect not only during his age, but on the succeeding ages. He was born at Noyon, in Picardy, in 1509. He studied for the Church, but gave up his studies early, because of his infamous morals. He advocated the teachings of Luther at the Sorbonne, in Paris. He appeared in Basle in 1534, where he wrote his "Institutes of Christian Religion." He drew many followers at Geneva, where he set up his new worship in 1538. Expelled by the patriots, he returned in 1541, and became almost a civil and ecclesiastical tyrant.

Balsec was banished for assailing his doctrine of predestination.

Pierre Ameaux was cast into prison because he had spoken disrespectfully of him.

He ordered the execution of Jacques Gruet in 1548 because he threatened him.

Valentini Gentilis. Who combated Calvin's view of the Trinity, was beheaded at Berne in 1566.

Servetus was seized and burned at the stake by Calvin's order in 1553.

His system was an absolute predestination and taught that free-will no longer had an existence and that God was the author of man's sin. "Man falls into sin," he said, "The providence of God ordering it." He denied transubstantiation, though speaking equivocally of the effect of the sacrament.

Calvin criticized his followers who followed his example:

The pastors, yes, the pastors themselves who mount the pulpit ... are at the present time the most shameful examples of waywardness and other vices. Hence their sermons obtain neither more credit nor authority than the fictitious tales uttered on the stage by the strolling player. ... I am astonished that the women and children do not cover them with mud and filth.¹

These were the prideful men who initiated the chaos, which still exists in Christianity.

Printed with ecclesiastical approval.

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Pamphlet 049

The formentors of rebellion Luther, Calvin and Zwingli

Victor R. Claveau, MJ

The three principle "Reformers" of the rebellion against the Catholic Church were Martin Luther, Ulrich Zwingli, and John Calvin.

Mention the Reformation and the rotund figure of the ex-Augustinian friar rises up before the imagination. Martin Luther, the "Father of the Reformation" was born Martin Luder, son of Hans Luder and Margaret Ziegler in Eisleben, Saxony on Nov. 10, 1483. Luther ever manifested the coarse traits of the medieval Saxon peasant in his speech and manner. He was sensitive, morose, gloomy and subject to bouts of depression. His parents were strong-willed, hot-tempered and at times abusive. His memory of their punishments remained with him throughout his life.

"In order to justify separation from the Papacy and the tearing apart of the unity of Christendom, the Protestant Reformers and their disciples developed a new conception of Church history in which the cardinal article of faith was the identification of the Pope as Antichrist; and the Middle Ages were seen as the time when his power over mankind was at its greatest. This was of course a revolutionary attitude involving a great deal of bitterness and hostility against the Catholic Church."²

Luther's basic doctrine was a denial of free will. Man's nature, he said, had been corrupted by the

¹ Marcy, Christianity and its Conflicts, 344-345.

² John J. Mulloy, *Christianity and the Challenge of History*, (Front Royal, Virginia: Christendom Press, 1995), p. 144.

fall of Adam and that we are quite incapable of willing, except as guided by God. Our works, good or bad are not our own.

Pride, and a lust for power spurred Luther on, he made a bargain with the German princes--a bargain much like that of Judas with the high priests.

It was therefore a period of unusual turmoil and unrest. There was opposition to foreign domination, jealousies and mutual hatreds at home, new inventions and discoveries offering vast opportunities to ambition, a hungry peasantry, greedy landlords, and scheming, petty rulers. The Church was demoralized and the State was anxious for dominion even of a person's spiritual life. These were the conditions, which prepared the way for the huge upheaval which men call the Reformation. Such then was the general process, which led to the unraveling of the unity of Christendom. Once begun, like a pebble rolling downhill which causes an avalanche, the Protestant revolt led to the existence of the numerous churches, sects, cults and the religious confusion which exists in the world today.

Æcolampadius, (a Greek rendering of his original name Hausschein) an apostate monk, introduced the Reformation into Basel (1527) and set an example to the other monks by taking a wife.³ As one of Luther's own disciples, and a leading Reformer, Æcolampadius, wrote of him as follows:

“He is puffed up with pride and arrogance, and is seduced by Satan.” The same brother Reformer adds in another place, “that he was

possessed not by one, but by a whole troop of devils.” “and that he wrote all his works by the impulse and the dictation of the devil, with whom he had dealings, and who in the struggle seemed to have thrown him by victorious arguments.”⁴

The connection between the progress of Lutheranism and the corruption of public morals could not be put more strikingly than in the words of Luther himself. Luther saw the seeds of the revolt he initiated grow to fruition and he was appalled.

“Our evangelists,” says Luther “are now sevenfold more wicked than they were before the Reformation. In proportion as we hear the gospel, we steal, lie, cheat, gorge, swill, and commit every crime. If one devil has been driven out of us, seven worse ones have taken their place, to judge of the conduct of princes, lords, nobles, burgesses, and peasants—their utterly shameless acts, and their disregard for God and his manaces. Under the papacy, men were charitable, and gave freely; but now under the gospel, all alms-giving is at an end, everyone fleeces his neighbor, and each seeks to have all for himself. And the longer the gospel is preached, the deeper do men sink in avarice, pride, and ostentation. The peasants, through the influences of the gospel, have become utterly beyond restraint, and they think they may do what they please. They no longer fear neither hell or purgatory, but content themselves with saying, ‘I believe, therefore I shall be saved; and they become proud, stiff-necked mammonists,

⁴ Jean Marie Vincent Audin, *History of the Life, Writings, & Doctrines of Luther*, Trans. William B. Turnbull, ESQ., (London: C. Dolman) 1854, Vol. 1., P. 188

and accursed misers, sucking up the very substance of the country and the people.”⁵

Zwingli was a priest in the diocese of Constance. He followed in the steps of Luther in Switzerland, though he was forced to resign the care of souls because of his open immorality. He began his preaching against the Catholic Church in 1519 and against indulgences and the Holy See.

In 1522 he demanded permission to marry from the Bishop of Constance. That year he married a widow without permission from the Church. “Your Lordship,” he candidly said, “knows very well how disgraceful my conduct heretofore has been, and how my crimes have been the ruin and scandal of many.

Helzer, one of his confederates, was subsequently beheaded for his numerous adultries.

Zwingli incited the Protestant cantons in Switzerland to rebellion. and he himself died at Cappel in 1531, He died with a sword in hand in a battle against Anabaptists having gone to the battle in complete armor as a soldier, and baring the standard of the city in the battle..

While Zwingli ambitiously set out to build perhaps the most strict Protestant society, in religious, social, and moral terms, he soon parted company with Martin Luther over major doctrinal issues. Luther always had his heart

⁵ Marcy, E. E., Christianity and its Conflicts. New York: D. Appleton and Company. 1867, pp. 342-343.

³ Laux, John. Church History. Rockford, Illinois: TAN Books and Publishers, Inc. 1989, p. 435.