

## **Events:**

### ***Dutch Reformation***

- The Dutch Reformed Church was established at the Synod of Emden (Germany) in 1571.
- It bases its beliefs on three statements of doctrine, which make up the so-called “Three Forms of Unity” adopted by the Synod of Dort in 1618-1619:
  - Belgic Confession – written chiefly by Guido de Bres in 1561. It was based upon, but not just a revision of, Calvin’s confession of 1559. It was revised in Antwerp in 1566. De Bres was martyred in 1567.
  - Canons of Dort – formally “The Decision of the Synod of Dort on the Five Main Points of Doctrine in Dispute in the Netherlands”. These contained five articles that argued against the five points held by the “Remonstrants” (1610), Dutch followers of Jacobus Arminius (1560-1609). These included articles of (1) conditional predestination, (2) universal atonement, (3) total depravity of man (they got one right!), (4) prevenient (but resistible) grace, and (5) the ability of believers to fall from grace. The Canons of Dort were the basis for the Five Points of Calvinism.
  - Heidelberg Catechism – written by reformers Ursinus and Olevianus under direction of the German rulers and approved by the Synod of Heidelberg in 1563. It is organized in three main sections consisting of 52 “Lord’s Days” and, in its current version, 129 questions and answers. It has been translated into many languages. The Westminster Assembly used it as a basis for its catechisms.
- Other reformed churches soon followed adoption of these “Three Forms of Unity”.
- The Dutch Reformed Church was expanded into other denominations whenever and wherever the Dutch colonized: New Amsterdam (New York), South Africa and Sri Lanka.
- It existed until 2004 when it merged with three other Dutch churches to form the Protestant Church in The Netherlands.

### ***Puritans***

- The Puritans were 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century religious groups who felt that the English Reformation hadn’t gone far enough and aimed at restoring “purity” back into the worship and doctrine of the church.
- It began as an attempt to reform the Church of England after exiles returned to England in 1558 after the death of “Bloody Mary” and coronation of Elizabeth.
- The primary purpose was to restore grace to the life and worship of the believer. They took as a model the church in Geneva under John Calvin, which several of the exiles had visited.
- Most Puritans chose to remain within the Church of England (“Nonconformists”), but some chose to separate (“Dissenters”).
- Puritanism faced quite a bit of the social and political turmoil that was going on in England at the time:

Heroes of the Christian Faith  
Lesson 19 – 12/6/2009

- Elizabeth I (reigned 1558-1603) was a Protestant. She “tolerated” them, but she was not about to relinquish her rule over the church.
- James I (reigned 1603-1625) regarded their beliefs as heretical and their denial of the “Divine Right of Kings” as treasonous.
- Charles I (reigned 1625-1649) married a French Catholic and suppressed the Puritans until many of them fled to America.
- As Congregationalists, they were distinct from the Presbyterians, and this led to fragmentation during the Westminster Assembly (1643-1649).
- After the execution of Charles by the people, Parliament began to impose Puritan views on the people. Most of the people rejected them.
- Oliver Cromwell (“Protector” from 1653-1658), a moderate Puritan, helped to ease some of the rules imposed by Parliament.
- The “Restoration” of the monarchy in 1660 marked the end of Puritanism in England, but its effects continued in America – especially near Boston – until the 1800’s.
- Two important works of the period were influential in forming Puritan doctrine and both of these works traveled to America in 1620 on the *Mayflower*.
  - The Geneva Bible (1560) was the first mass-produced, English language Bible. Miles Coverdale and others wrote it while they were in exile in Geneva.
  - John Foxe’s Book of Martyrs (1563) was an account of martyrs, especially those of the English Reformation period under Henry VIII and Mary I. It helped shape Protestant views against the Roman Catholics for years.
- Famous Puritan preachers and writers in England and Scotland include: Richard Bates, Richard Baxter, William Bridge, Thomas Boston, John Bunyan, Stephen Charnock, John Flavel, Thomas Gouge, Matthew Henry, John Howe, Thomas Manton, John Owen, Richard Sibbes and Thomas Watson.
- Famous Puritan preachers and writers in America include: William Bradford, John Cotton, Jonathan Edwards, Cotton Mather, Increase Mather, Solomon Stoddard, Roger Williams and John Winthrop.

### ***Westminster Assembly***

- An assembly appointed by parliament to restructure the Church of England.
- It met 1,163 times during the years from 1643 to 1649 in Westminster Abbey.
- It was made up of 30 laymen (10 lords and 20 commoners) and 121 “divines” (or clergymen) in four groups: Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Congregationalists and Erastians (who favored state’s primacy over ecclesiastical).
- It produced four documents that were foundational for the Presbyterian Church, but that the Church of England eventually revoked it in 1660. These were:
  - Westminster Confession of Faith – a thirty-three-chapter description of Calvinist theology and doctrine. It replaced the “Thirty-Nine Articles” of the Church of England.
  - Westminster Larger Catechism – a catechism designed to be “more exact and comprehensive” than the shorter catechism.
  - Westminster Shorter Catechism – a catechism designed to be “more easie [sic] and short for beginners” than the larger catechism.

Heroes of the Christian Faith  
Lesson 19 – 12/6/2009

- Directory of Public Worship – a book of order for worship services that was intended to replace the Book of Common Prayer, but it was heavily criticized and was never widely adopted.

### ***The Age of Reason***

- The so-called “Age of Reason” was a period of time following the Renaissance during the 17<sup>th</sup> century during which theology gave way to “reason”. By the 18<sup>th</sup> century, it had given way to the so-called “Age of Enlightenment”.
- It is generally regarded as the beginning point of modern “secularism”.
- Emphasis was removed from the teachings of special revelation as taught by the Scriptures and placed more on reasoning and empirical evidence.
  - “Deism” was a popularly held belief that, if there was a God, then he must have created the world like a “watchmaker”, wound it up and let it run. There was no need for him to “interfere” in the affairs of man since his world was perfectly made.
  - Traditional theology was thought to be totally irrelevant and made up of myths and legends. It was thought that all miracles were fabricated.
  - It was further thought that only knowledge that could be observed and measured had any meaning or value.
  - God wasn’t quite dead – that would wait for Nietzsche in the 19<sup>th</sup> century – but He was made to be unnecessary.
  - The “state” was given primacy over the “church”.
- Some of the more outspoken philosophers during this period (there are many others) include:
  - Rene Descartes (1596-1650)
  - Isaac Newton (1642-1727)
  - John Locke (1632-1704)
  - Voltaire (1694-1778) – pen name for Francois-Marie Arouet

### **Heroes:**

#### ***John Knox (c. 1510-1572)***

- Born sometime between 1505 and 1515 in southeast Scotland. Died in 1572.
- Knox is considered to be the founder of Presbyterianism.
- Before 1546, little is known about Knox. He was a priest and notary in or around St. Andrews by 1540 or 1543, and he tutored the sons of two lords in the area, and they introduced him to the ideas of the reformation.
- Knox converted to Protestantism sometime around 1546-47 probably through his association with reformer George Wishart, who was finally captured and burned at the stake in 1546. He encouraged Knox to flee and return to tutoring students since “one is sufficient for a sacrifice”.
- Soon after that, Knox preached his first sermon in the St. Andrew’s castle, which had been captured in an uprising following Wishart’s execution. It contained overtones of the reformation, and he soon became a leader in this congregation.

Heroes of the Christian Faith  
Lesson 19 – 12/6/2009

- In 1547 the French, who were under orders from the church, laid siege to and captured those holed up in the castle. For 19 months, until 1549, Knox and the others served as galley slaves to the French.
- After escaping in 1549, Knox fled to England where he met Thomas Cramner, joined the Anglican Church, and became a driving force in helping change the Book of Common Prayer to have a more Protestant flavor.
- Knox was forced to flee England in 1554 when Mary Tudor, a Roman Catholic, ascended the throne. He went to Geneva where he first met John Calvin. Soon after that, he was asked to lead a church of English refugees in Frankfurt.
- An attack on the practices with the Church of England forced him to return to Geneva in 1556. Shortly after that, at the bidding of his wife, he returned to Edinburgh, Scotland. He worried some of the local bishops, but through the influence of several noblemen, he was allowed to preach freely.
- He returned to Geneva where he led a church under Calvin's authority for two years. During this time, he wrote a pamphlet against the "monstrous regiment" of women (Mary Tudor in England and Mary Stuart in Scotland) ruling the people. He again returned to Scotland in 1559.
- Knox became a key leader in a revolt against the local Queen Mary of Guise. This led to a revolution in Scotland that not only involved the Scots, but also the English (from Elizabeth Tudor, who supported the Protestants) and the French (hired by Mary). Mary died suddenly in 1560, and the Treaty of Edinburgh ended the fighting.
- The Scottish parliament fully reformed Scotland in 1560 by abolishing the pope's authority, condemning practices contrary to the reformation, and abolishing the Mass. Knox was chosen as one to write the new Scot's Confession and the new Book of Discipline for "the Kirk". It was during this time that he introduced a "Presbyterian" form of church government.
- From 1561 to 1564, Knox had several unpleasant encounters with Mary Stuart (Mary Queen of Scots) in which he first preached and would then be summoned to see her. But he was never convicted or charged with treason.
- Knox served as the minister of St. Giles Cathedral in Edinburgh from 1560 until 1572. During this time, fighting and political intrigue continued. He continued in his preaching and writing until he became quite feeble. Shortly after he inducted his successor as pastor, he died and was buried at St. Giles.
- Knox's legacy to church history was his ideas. These led to the Presbyterian Church rather than the Anglican Church becoming the ruling church in Scotland after the Catholics. He wrote several books and pamphlets including:
  - "The First Blast of the Trumpet Against the Monstrous Regiment of Women" (1558), which was referenced above.
  - The History of the Reformation in Scotland (1559-1566), a four-volume work initially (expanded to five volumes after his death) commissioned by the Scottish nobility.