

Reasons to Colonize: Religious Freedom (God)

Did those who went to the Americas to escape religious persecution establish religious freedom?

The Catholic Church

Europe is made up of many different countries who do not always get along. However, up until the 15th Century, these countries did have one thing in common - **Catholicism** was the main (and generally only) religion in all of them.

The Catholic Church is led by the **Pope**. In many ways, the Pope was the most powerful person in Europe during this time period.



NOTE: This is NOT the Catholic Church TODAY.

Martin Luther



Martin Luther was a priest in the Catholic Church. From his study of the Bible he felt there were some problems with the practices of the Catholic Church that needed to be fixed.

1. Indulgences
2. The Bible vs. the Pope
3. Salvation by Works or Faith?

In 1517, Martin Luther wrote a paper explaining these problems and nailed it to a church door in Germany. This paper was called the **95 Theses**.

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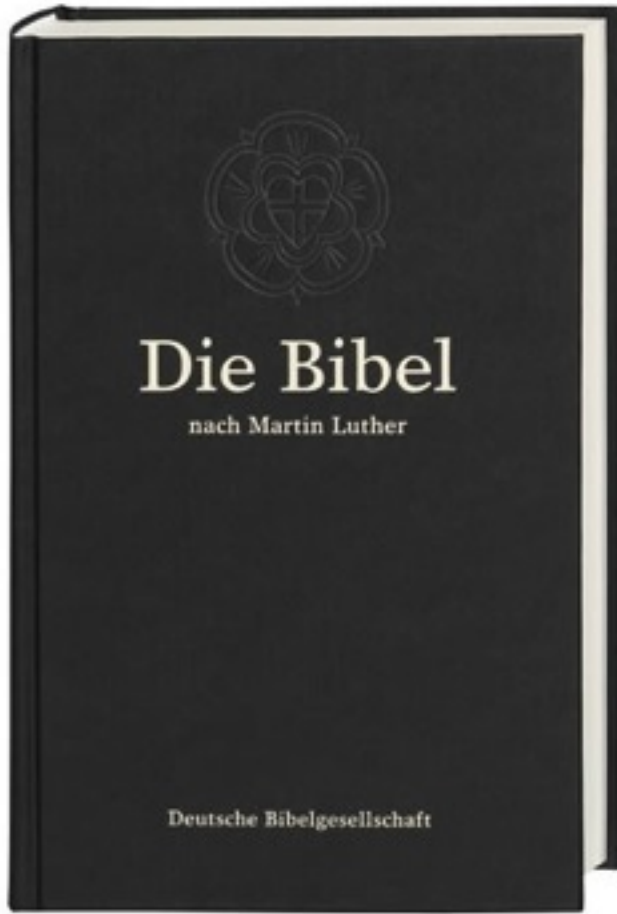
95 Theses - Indulgences

Martin Luther felt the *clergy* (teachers in the Catholic Church) was getting too rich from Indulgences.

Indulgences were money a person could pay money to receive forgiveness for a sin. Luther also felt this was not sincere repentance.

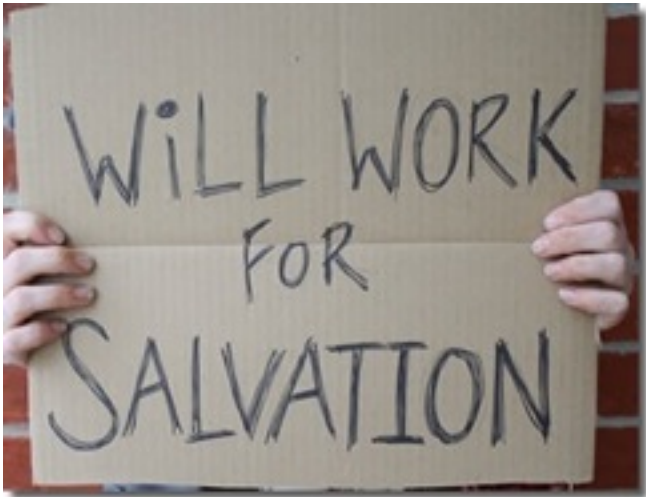
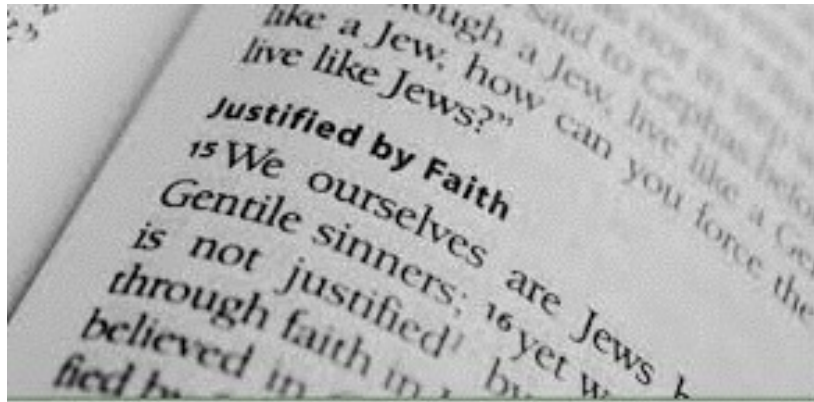


95 Theses - Bible or Pope?



Luther said the Bible was the final authority on everything - not the Pope - and needed to be printed in a language people could read. At the time, the Bible was only written in Latin. Using the newly invented *printing press*, Luther printed the first bible in **vernacular** (the language spoken by the common person). *German* was the first vernacular language the Bible was printed in.

95 Theses - Salvation



The Catholic Church taught that **Salvation** (going to heaven) came by doing good works. Luther felt the Bible taught that **Salvation** came by faith and people's works didn't matter as long as they had faith in God.

Reformation

Martin Luther only wanted the Catholic Church to **reform**, or fix the problems. However, the Catholic Church was not happy with what Luther said and he was excommunicated. People who agreed with Luther started their own church and practiced **Lutheranism**.

Other people then started forming other new churches. These churches are referred to as **Protestant** or **Anglican Churches**. These are basically all any church that is not Catholic during this time period.



Church of England

King **Henry VIII** of England was married to Catherine of Aragon. Henry wanted to inherit the throne but Catherine had only given birth to daughters.

King Henry asked the Pope to grant him a divorce but the Pope said no. When Catherine gave birth to another daughter, Henry officially broke from the Catholic Church, declared himself as the head of the **Church of England**, and granted himself a divorce.



Separatists in England

Separatists were people in England who did not agree with the Church of England and wanted to break away from it. It was declared illegal to practice any other religion in England and so the Separatists had to practice their religions in secret. If they were caught, they were sometimes executed. Separatists moved to the New World to practice their religion freely, without persecution.



Separatist Groups

Two main Separatist groups were:

1. Puritans

- Led a civil war in England against the Church in England and won - but were not able to maintain their power and had to move to the Americas.
- Settled in most of the New England area and in the Massachusetts Bay
- Believed in **Predestination**

2. Pilgrims

- Settled in Plymouth in what latter became knows as the colony of **Massachusetts**
- Believed Salvation came by only faith
- Led by William Bradford
- Story of the first Thanksgiving
- Believed in **Predestination**

William Penn

William Penn was granted land by King Charles II of England to start a colony for the Society of Friends (sometimes called Quakers).

Quakers first settled in Massachusetts Bay area near the Puritans and Pilgrims but were persecuted for their beliefs and moved. They formed a new colony called **Pennsylvania**.



Roger Williams

Roger Williams was a Puritan who didn't agree with some of the Puritan beliefs:

- Believed Puritans were too harsh toward women
- Did not believe in Predestination
- Did not believe in Salvation by faith alone

When he started sharing what he felt, he was persecuted and had to leave the Puritan colonies. He moved to Rhode Island and established the first **Baptist Church** in America. Williams stressed religious freedom within his newly formed colony.

Anne Hutchinson

Ann Hutchinson was a Puritan who did not agree with some of the Puritan teachings:

- She believed people could worship God without help of the church, minister, or Bible
- She challenged the Church's authority in people's lives

She was forced to leave Massachusetts and went to Rhode Island where Roger Williams guaranteed religious freedom

Religious Freedom?

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went to the
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escape religious
persecution
establish
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Religious Freedom?

William Penn, Roger Williams, and Anne Hutchinson are responsible for starting the important American ideal of religious freedom. This idea will eventually become a major part of *all* American colonies and will be written into the Constitution after the Revolutionary War.

