

# The Spread of the Protestant Reformation



## Peasants' War or German Peasants' Revolt (1524-1525)

### Twelve Articles, 1525

peasants wanted to end feudalism  
created their own list of demands  
(e.g. serfdom, tithes, restrictions on hunting rights)

Luther was disgusted by their use of violence  
believed that people should obey their political  
authorities

German princes had supported Lutheranism:  
could now confiscate Church lands  
had just gained land  
didn't want to lose it to peasants (!)

German princes violently stamped out the revolt,  
killing as many as 100,000 peasants

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## Northern Germany

Holy Roman Emperor Charles V sought to maintain religious and political unity  
he allied with the pope to try to "stamp out heresy"  
(maintain Catholicism and stop Protestantism)

### League of Schmalkalden

1531: newly Protestant (Lutheran) princes in Northern Germany  
formed to fight Charles V's drive to re-Catholicize all of Germany

*Francis had wanted to  
become the Holy Roman  
Emperor and resented  
Charles for being given the  
position*



France and the HRE  
were fighting the  
Habsburg-Valois Wars  
(1521-1555) over Italy  
despite being Catholic,  
Francis allied with the  
League against HRE

Charles was finally victorious over the League in 1547  
Catholic unity in Germany never occurred again  
played an important role in the long-term political fragmentation of Germany

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## Peace of Augsburg (1555)



Temporarily ended the struggle in Germany over Lutheranism

Provisions:

Princes in Germany could choose either Protestantism or Catholicism

Protestants living in Catholic states were allowed to move to Protestant states and vice-versa.

Resulted in permanent religious division of Germany

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## Anabaptists

### Zurich, Switzerland

1525:

voluntary group formed as an association of believers

- refused to take civil oaths, pay taxes, hold public office, or serve in the military

- did not believe in childhood baptism

- believed the end of the world was near

1532:

- John of Leiden led a radical Anabaptist group that took control of the German city of Münster

- polygamy was instituted (John had 16 wives)

- some women served as leaders of the movement

- all books except the Bible were burned

- killed some Lutherans and Catholics

1534:

- combined Protestant/Catholic army retook Münster

- executed Anabaptist leaders



John of Leiden and several other prominent Anabaptist leaders were captured and imprisoned. In January 1536 John of Leiden and two other followers were tortured and executed in the marketplace of Münster. Their dead bodies were exhibited in cages, which hung from the steeple of St. Lambert's Church; the cages still hang there, though the bones were removed later.

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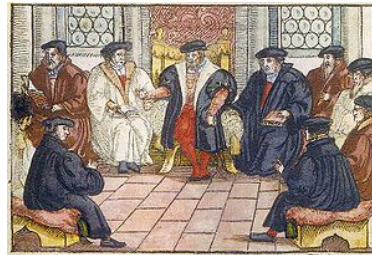
## Ulrich Zwingli

Zwingli adopted Lutheranism and became a pastor in Zurich in 1518

attacked the custom of fasting during Lent  
saw the Eucharist as only symbolic

promoted clerical marriage  
introduced a new communion liturgy in 1525 to replace the usual mass

established what amounted to a theocracy in Zurich  
removed statues, paintings, altars, bones of local saints, etc.



Colloquy of Marburg  
(1529)

Zwingli officially split with Luther  
over issue of Eucharist

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## John Calvin

Frenchman who studied the priesthood and law in France  
was threatened with arrest after writing a controversial attack on Paris Catholics



wrote the *Institutes of the Christian Religion* in Geneva in 1536

believed in predestination:  
the belief that God already knows who is saved  
“good works” is not what gets someone into heaven  
they are a sign that one has been chosen for salvation

God reveals if one has been chosen for salvation by a “conversion experience”  
church members who have had their conversion experience are known as the “elect”  
they become model Christians, or “visible saints”

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## Calvinism

by 1540 Calvin had established a theocracy in Geneva: only Calvinists were allowed to live there



Calvinism became the most militant and uncompromising of all Protestant sects

### the Consistory:

lay elders called presbyters who acted as judges had the power to impose harsh penalties for those who did not follow God's law (Calvinism)

activities such as drinking, singing, dancing, usury, and gambling were expressly prohibited

### Protestant Work Ethic:

emphasized the importance of hard work pointed to the financial success that often accompanied it as a sign that it pleased God

Calvinism had a far greater impact on future generations than Lutheranism:

Scotland: Presbyterianism (a Calvinist spin-off) became the dominant religion

France: French Calvinists called Huguenots

England: Puritans

did not spread to Ireland, Spain, or Italy (heavily Catholic)

