

# DBQ: The Reformation<sup>i</sup>

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## Historical Context

The new ideas of the Renaissance helped to spur the changing views of the Catholic Church's authority over Europe. Many Europeans were directly affected by the failing church order. In small, regional churches clergymen were gradually losing respect as a result of corruption and a lack of understanding of the Christian texts. Church officials had responsibility over too many offices as a result of simony, which furthered the belief of their ineptitude. In 1517, the selling of indulgences by Johann Tetzel enraged Martin Luther who would later greatly influence the Protestant Reformation in Germany. Martin Luther became a key figure in the Reformation through the invention of the printing press in the late 15th century. Johannes Gutenberg's invention allowed the distribution of Reformation papers and translated Bibles throughout Europe. This not only affected the literacy of Europeans, but also exposed them to information, which allowed for the success of the Protestant Reformation.

## Task

Provide evidence to support or deny this statement:

"Although the Reformation is often viewed as a religious movement, it also significantly affected the political and social spheres of Europe."

## Some Recommended Outside Information

- Peasant revolts in Germany around the time of Luther
- Invention of the printing press
- Principle ideas of Luther, Wycliffe, Calvin
- Church counter-reformation
- Luther's appearance before churchmen to answer for his heresy

## The Best Essay...

- Thoroughly develops all aspects of the task evenly and in depth
- Is more analytical than descriptive (analyzes, evaluates, and/or creates information)
- Incorporates relevant information from at least **"half plus one"** documents
- Incorporates substantial relevant outside information
- Richly supports the theme with many relevant facts, examples, and details
- Demonstrates a logical and clear plan of organization; includes an introduction and a conclusion that are beyond a restatement of the theme

### Document 1

We have no one on earth to thank for this mischievous rebellion, except you lords and princes, especially you blind bishops and mad priests and monks....In your government you do nothing but flay and rob your subjects in order that you may lead a life of splendor and pride, until the poor common folk can bear it no longer.

*An Abomination of Peace* (1525), Martin Luther criticizing German lords

1. What does Luther say is the chief cause of the peasant revolts?

### Document 2

27. It is mere human talk to preach that the soul flies out [of purgatory] immediately the money clinks in the collection-box.

28. It is certain that when the penny jingles into the money box, gain and avarice can be increased, but the result of the intercession of the church is in the power of God alone.

*95 Theses* (1517), Martin Luther

1. What Church practice does Luther “put down” here?

**Document 3**



Depicts the use of the printing press, invented by Johannes Gutenberg. Allowed the spread of Reformation literature

1. What was the influence of the printing press on the Reformation?

**Document 4**

As Christ by His birthright has obtained these two dignities, so He imparts and communicates them to every believer in Him, under that law of matrimony of which we have spoken above, by which all that is the husband's is also the wife's.

*Concerning Christian Liberty (1520), Martin Luther concerning marriage*

1. What practice does Luther defend here for priests?

## Document 5

. . .In truth, the Jews, being foreigners, should possess nothing, and what they do possess should be ours. For they do not work, and we do not give them presents. Nonetheless, they keep our money and our goods and have become our masters in our own country and in their Dispersion. When a thief steals ten guldens, he is hanged; but when a Jew steals ten barrels of gold through his usury, he is prouder than the Lord himself! He boasts of it and strengthens his faith and his hatred of us, and thinks: 'See how the Lord does not abandon His people in the Dispersion. We do not work, we are idle, and we pass the time pleasantly; the cursed goyim must work for us, and we have their money: thus we are their lords and they our servants!' To this day we still do not know what devil brought them into our country; surely we did not go to seek them out in Jerusalem! No one wants them. The countryside and the roads are open to them; they may return to their country when they wish; we shall gladly give them presents to get rid of them, for they are a heavy burden on us, a scourge, a pestilence and misfortune for our country. This is proved by the fact they have often been expelled by force: from France (which they call Tsarpath), where they had a downy nest; recently from Spain, (which they call Sepharad), their chosen roost; and even this year from Bohemia, where, in Prague, they had another cherished nest; finally, in my own lifetime, from Ratisbon [Regensburg], Madgeburg, and from many other places. . . .

*On The Jews and Their Lies* (1543), Martin Luther's anti-Semitic pamphlet

1. What are THREE evils Luther accused Jews of committing?
2. What "proves" to Luther that Jews are evil?

## Document 6

...they are starting a rebellion, and violently robbing and plundering monasteries and castles which are not theirs, by which they have a second time deserved death in body and soul, if only as highwaymen and murderers.... For rebellion is not simple murder, but is like a great fire, which attacks and lays waste a whole land.... Therefore, let every-one who can, smite, slay and stain, secretly or openly, remembering that nothing can be more pod' venous, hurtful or devilish than a rebel....

First, I will not oppose a ruler who, even though he does not tolerate the Gospel, will smite and punish these peasants without offering to submit the case to judgment. For he is within his rights, since the peasants are not contending any longer for the Gospel, but have become faithless, perjured, disobedient, rebellious murderers, robbers and blasphemers, whom even heathen rulers have the right and power to punish; nay, it is their duty to punish them, for it is just for this purpose that they bear the sword, and are "the ministers of God upon him that doeth evil...."

*Against the Robbing and Murdering Hordes of Peasants (1525), Martin Luther*

1. What stand does Luther take regarding the peasant revolts here?



### Document 8

"I cannot submit my faith either to the Pope or to the Councils, because it is clear as day they have frequently erred and contradicted each other. Unless therefore, I am convinced by the testimony of Scripture...I cannot and will not retract...Here I stand, I can do no other. So help my God, Amen."

Martin Luther's reply when summoned to appear before the Emperor at the Diet of Worms

1. Why does Luther say he cannot obey the Pope?

### Document 9

Fifteenth Rule. We ought not, by way of custom, to speak much of predestination; but if in some way and at some times one speaks, let him so speak that the common people may not come into any error, as sometimes happens, saying; Whether I have to be saved or condemned is already determined, and no other thing can now be, through my doing well or ill; and with this, growing lazy, they become negligent in the works which led to the salvation and spiritual profit of their souls.

From the Spiritual Exercises of Ignatius Loyola, part of Counter Reformation

1. With which Protestant reformer in particular would Loyola be disagreeing in this passage?

### Document 10

Paul testifies that the Church is built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, (Eph. 2:20). If the doctrine of the apostles and prophets is the foundation of the Church, the former must have had its certainty before the latter began to exist... For if the Christian Church was founded at first on the writings of the prophets, and the preaching of the apostles, that doctrine, wheresoever it may be found, was certainly ascertained and sanctioned antecedently to the Church, since, but for this, the Church herself never could have existed. Nothing therefore can be more absurd than the fiction, that the power of judging Scripture is in the Church, and that on her nod its certainty depends.

*Institutes of the Christian Religion*; Book 1, Chapter 7, Section 2(1559), John Calvin

1. What does Calvin show here to be the only source of Christian Truth?

## Document 11

By the insinuation of many, if they are indeed worthy of belief, deploring it deeply, it has come to our ears that John de Wycliffe, rector of the church of Lutterworth, in the diocese of Lincoln, Professor of the Sacred Scriptures (would that he were not also Master of Errors), has fallen into such a detestable madness that he does not hesitate to dogmatize and publicly preach, or rather vomit forth from the recesses of his breast, certain propositions and conclusions which are erroneous and false. He has cast himself also into the depravity of preaching heretical dogmas which strive to subvert and weaken the state of the whole church and even secular polity, some of which doctrines, in changed terms, it is true, seem to express the perverse opinions and unlearned learning of Marsilio of Padua of cursed memory, and of John of Jandun, whose book is extant, rejected and cursed by our predecessor, Pope John XXII, of happy memory. This he has done in the kingdom of England, lately glorious in its power and in the abundance of its resources, but more glorious still in the glistening piety of its faith, and in the distinction of its sacred learning; producing also many men illustrious for their exact knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, mature in the gravity of their character, conspicuous in devotion, defenders of the Catholic Church. He has polluted certain of the faithful of Christ by sprinkling them with these doctrines, and led them away from the right paths of the aforesaid faith to the brink of perdition.

*Pope Gregory XI: The Condemnation of Wycliffe (1382), Gregory XI condemning John Wycliffe for questioning the Catholic Church. Wycliffe, an English theologian and reformer, was a precursor of the Protestant Reformation*

1. Of what does Wycliffe stand accused?

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<sup>i</sup> <http://www.angelfire.com/band2/reformation/>