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## Learning For Life: Reformation 500

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### Week Three Review

#### **On the Precipice of 1517:**

“The entire structure of Western nations and Christendom was by 1500 in such a state of delicate equilibrium that the interjection of any serious controversy might tip the scales and lead to widespread revolution...nearly every economic, social, political and religious group had its reform program.”

# Week Three Review

## The Social/Cultural/Religious Context

1. The Advent of the Printing Press
2. The Decaying Code of Chivalry
3. Population Changes
4. Demographic Changes
5. Changing Religious Views:
  - The wealthy became more inclined to spend their money on relics and pilgrimages than to give to social causes or charities.
  - Increased interest in mysticism: “It is significant that the strong inclination toward mysticism in the late Middle Ages, which placed more emphasis upon Christian ethics and learning than upon the Church and the sacraments, found its origin and greatest support in the urban centers of the Rhine and the Low Countries.”

- Declining interest in/support of monasticism.
- Christian humanism on the rise in Germany. It was generally characterized by the optimistic belief that society could be reformed and Christendom unified.
- The increasing emphasis on the “inwardness of religion.”
- An increasing belief in the fundamental goodness of humanity, and de-emphasis of the Augustinian doctrine of original sin.

## 6. Changing Nature of the Church:

- In general--despite some notable exceptions--the influence and authority of the church and church leaders were already in decline before Luther's time.
- Greater differentiation than ever between the clergy and the laity.

- There was less “cradle-to-grave” control of the poorer classes.
- Many clergy became seen as “hoarders of wealth” too consumed by secular matters.
- Lower level clergy--though typically people of integrity--often fared little better economically than their poorest parishioners, and were so poorly educated they did not understand the Latin that they read in the services.
- The church was becoming increasingly secularized.
- Growing opposition to the papacy, especially amongst monarchs and people of political means.
- The growth of heresy.
- Emerging Renaissance values were leading to questioning of the church.
- Increasing Simony (selling of church offices).
- Corruptions Associated With Indulgences.

## Week Three Review: Summary

“The important economic, social and political changes of the late Middle Ages caused great stress and strain within the Church. In order to survive as an institution, it was compelled to adjust itself to the new economy with its new forms of wealth, the new social structure with its new interests and the ambitious territorial rulers with their desire for increasing wealth and influence. Compromises, which were inevitable, led to a growing secularization and its attendant corruption and immorality. The demand for the reform of this secularized Church was not new, but it increased throughout the fifteenth century until reform was accepted as necessary by most conscientious Christians. So many people had a stake in the venality and corruption, however, that no renovation was possible until the demand for reform was led by persons who believed that they were carrying out the will of God and at the same time had the support of the new religious, cultural and political forces.”

## Protestantism

- √ The term "Protestant" most often refers to those present at the Holy Roman Imperial Diet of Speyer in 1529, where Charles V's brother, Ferdinand, essentially forbade any further religious reforms and mandated Catholicism in all Holy Roman Empire states.
- √ In the Edict of Worms in 1521, Martin Luther and his followers had been outlawed. The first Diet of Speyer in 1526 suspended that edict; the second Diet of Speyer in 1529 overturned that suspension.
- √ Lutheran members of the Diet "protested". Elector John of Saxony, Margrave George of Brandenburg, several dukes, Philip of Hesse, representatives from fourteen imperial cities, etc., entered a legal appeal.
- √ Their Motto: "The Word of God abideth forever."

## Selected Pre-1529 Reformers

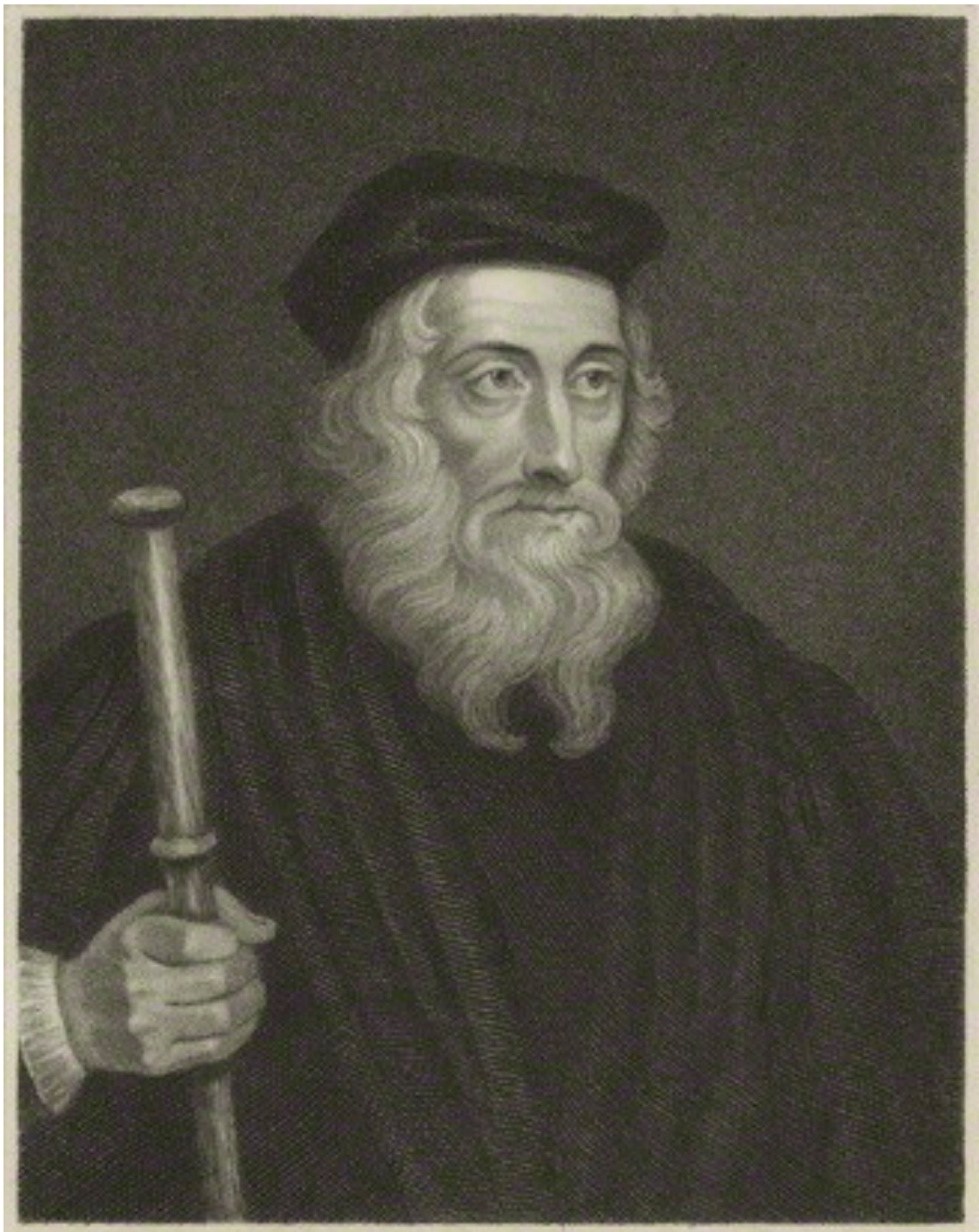
- √ Debates about the church straying theologically started in the 12<sup>th</sup> century with theologians like St. Francis of Assisi.
- Though he wanted harmony with the church, he rejected its increasing materialism.
  - He sought an authentic version of the gospel of Jesus Christ.
  - To that end, he “devoted to apostolic poverty,” and instituted his group of followers as Lesser Brothers (Friars Minor), known today as the Franciscan order.
  - Known for saying, “Preach the gospel at all times, and if necessary, use words.”

## Selected Pre-1529 Reformers

<b>Peter Waldo</b>	<b>French</b>	<b>1140--1205</b>
<b>Wessel Gansfort (Johann Wessel)</b>	<b>Dutch</b>	<b>1419--1489</b>
<b>Wolfgang Capito</b>	<b>German</b>	<b>1478--1541</b>
<b>Thomas Muntzer</b>	<b>German</b>	<b>1489--1525</b>
<b>Thomas Cranmer</b>	<b>English</b>	<b>1489--1556</b>
<b>Philip Melanchthon</b>	<b>German</b>	<b>1497--1560</b>
<b>Martin Bucer</b>	<b>German</b>	<b>1491--1551</b>
<b>Patrick Hamilton</b>	<b>Scottish</b>	<b>1504--1528</b>
<b>John Calvin</b>	<b>French/Swiss</b>	<b>1509--1564</b>
<b>John Knox</b>	<b>Scottish</b>	<b>1513--1572</b>
<b>George Wishart</b>	<b>Scottish</b>	<b>1513--1546</b>



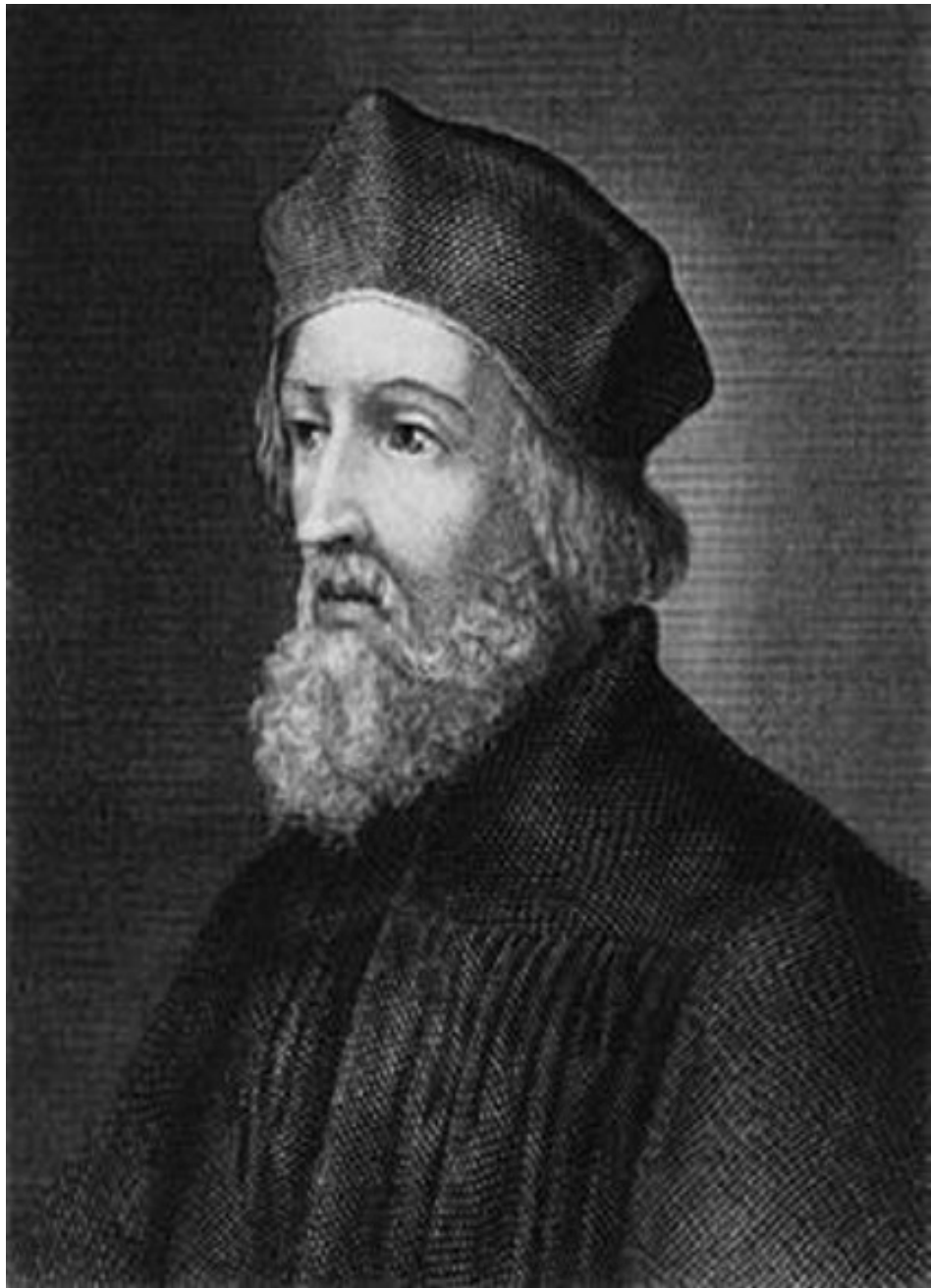




## Selected Pre-1529 Reformers

### **John Wycliffe                      English                      1320's--1384**

- √ An Oxford University philosopher/theologian.
- √ Much more “confrontational” than other early reformers, including very vehement writings denouncing the Pope who had condemned many of his writings. He was protected by powerful individuals, the Duke of Lancaster and Queen Joan, the wife of Edward III.
- √ Wycliffe opposed transubstantiation.
- √ He would not defend church corruption (simony), including the ownership of English land by the Papacy, and decried the increasing secularization of Christianity.
- √ One of the first to advocate that the faithful could develop a relationship with God without the mediation of a priest.
- √ The first to translate the Bible from the Latin *Vulgate* into English (late fourteenth century), though it was error prone and written in antiquated English. Took students one month each to produce a translation.
- √ Strongly held that the Scriptures are the foundation of all doctrine, and not to be placed “alongside” church traditions.
- √ “The significance of Wycliffe cannot be overlooked. His movement towards Scripture and Church as spiritual society were the foundation stones on which the later Reformation would be founded.”
- √ He suggested that human freedom was non-existent. We are entirely pre-destined. He had a deep distrust of human nature.
- √ Known as the “Morning Star of the Reformation” and founder of the Lollards. In 1428 his body was disinterred and burned.



## Selected Pre-1529 Reformers

**Jan Hus (John Huss)      Czech      1369--1415**

√ Priest from Prague.

√ Followers (called Hussites) came to dominate the Kingdom of Bohemia, and formed the early roots of the Moravian Church. They defeated five papal crusades between 1420 and 1431.

√ Like Luther and Wycliffe wanted to reform the Catholic church rather than destroy it.

√ He wrote *Six Errors*, and attached them to his church door.

√ Some reforms he championed included celebrating the liturgy in Czech, lay people receiving communion, priests being allowed to marry, and the elimination of the theologies regarding indulgences and purgatory.

√ Also denounced the immoral, extravagant lifestyles of the clergy (including the pope himself), but he also made the bold claim that Christ alone is head of the church. In his book *On the Church* he defends some degree of clergy authority but claims that God alone can forgive sins. He also claimed that no pope or bishop could establish doctrine contrary to the Bible.

## Selected Pre-1529 Reformers

**Jan Hus (John Huss)**

**Czech**

**1369--1415**

√ In 1414, he agreed to go to Constance under the protection of Sigismund, the King of the Romans (though not yet emperor of the Holy Roman Empire). The Council at Constance was allegedly to put an end to Papal schism and discuss church reform. But Hus was betrayed and imprisoned and Sigismund eventually was convinced by church leaders that it was wrong to safeguard a heretic.

√ After a mock trial (at which he wasn't even allowed to self-advocate) and 73 days of brutal prison conditions, he was bound by a chain from his neck to a stake and burned alive. He was forced to wear a tall paper hat inscribed with: "leader of the heretics."

√ After being given a chance to recant, he said he would if anyone could show him evidence in the scriptures that he was wrong.

√ His last words were, "Christ, son of the Living God, have mercy on us."

√ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mswfAtKa8Fk> (Erwin Lutzer).

√ Also burned at the stake after the Council of Constance was Hus' devotee Jerome of Prague (1379-1416), a scholar/professor and theologian. He believed that Jesus' direct teachings should be obeyed, even if they directly conflicted with Church doctrine.





## Selected Pre-1529 Reformers

### **Huldrych (Ulrich) Zwingli Swiss 1484--1531**

- √ Priest/Pastor in Zurich and arguably the leader of the Reformation in Switzerland.
- √ He was highly influenced by Erasmus' writings and Christian Humanism.
- √ Like many other reformers, he attacked Church practices (like fasting during Lent), criticized clergy corruption, advocated for clerical marriages and denounced iconography. (Most of these views and others are outlined in his *67 Articles*.)
- √ He rejected Anabaptist views on baptism.
- √ He also rejected Luther's theology of the Eucharist (Marburg Colloquy).
- √ Zwingli believed scriptures to be the inspired word of God (though he acknowledged that the "human element" caused differences in the gospel accounts), and of higher authority than any church leader or teaching.
- √ During his time, Switzerland was a confederation of cantons (like states). The Reformation spread to several cantons, but some remained Roman Catholic; the tension became ripe for conflict.
- √ Zwingli's 1531 food embargo against Catholic cantons led to war. Zwingli died at the Battle of Cappel while serving as chaplain to soldiers.



## Common Themes in Early Reformers

- √ Primacy of scripture.
- √ Prevalence of corruptions in the institutional arms of the church.
- √ Ability for the faithful to develop a relationship with God without the mediation of a priest.
- √ Repudiation of the requirement that church leaders be celibate and single.
- √ Christ alone is the head of the church and God is sovereign.