

Cornerstones of Congregationalism I: The Protestant Reformation

First Congregational Church of Naperville

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Outline

I: Causes of the Reformation

Four Reformations: (1) Lutheran; (2) Reformed (or Calvinist); (3) Radical (or Anabaptist); (4) Catholic (aka counterreformation)

Lutheran and Reformed Reformations = "Magisterial Reformation"

Martin Luther (1483-1546) Wittenberg, Germany
Huldrych Zwingli (1484-1531), Zurich, Switzerland
John Calvin (1509-64), Geneva, Switzerland

Reformed Movement: reform morals and worship of church (in a city) but not necessarily doctrine

Lutheran Movement: reform theology (in a university faculty) and is concerned with doctrine

Zwingli seeks reform of a community; Luther seeks reform of the individual

Renaissance humanism = the most important tributary flowing into the Reformation

Zwingli's ideas were humanist; Luther's were misunderstood to be humanist

II: Character of the Reformation

Two great themes: (1) justification = "being right with God"; (2) sola scriptura

95 theses--31 October 1517

predestination: Luther--God saves sinners despite demerits; Calvin--God saves sinners irrespective of demerits

three concepts of tradition: (0) no tradition (Radical); (1) Bible--doctrinal continuity (magisterial); (2) church--historical continuity (Catholic)

Vulgate--Latin Bible--Jerome (4th-5th centuries)

doctrines rejected by Radicals: infant baptism; trinity; divinity of Christ

Infant baptism for Zwingli--allegiance to and membership in a community

Infant baptism for Luther--way of generating faith in an infant

Luther retains mass; Zwingli rejects mass--communion (3-4 times a year only)

For additional information: Alister E. McGrath, Reformation Thought: An Introduction 2d ed. (1993); McGrath, A Life of John Calvin: A Study in the Shaping of Western Culture (1990).