The Protestant Reformation
(1450-1565)
Key Concepts

• End of Religious Unity in the West.
• Split from the medieval church—it's traditions, doctrine, practices and people
• Not the first attempt at reform, but first to go “viral.”
• Return to the Bible and biblical view of salvation.
Five “solas”

- **Sola scriptura** – Scripture alone is the inspired and authoritative Word of God.
- **Sola fide** – Man is justified by faith alone.
- **Sola gratia** – Salvation comes by God’s grace alone.
- **Sola Christus** – Christ alone is the mediator between God and man.
- **Sola Deo gloria** – All glory is to be due to God alone.
Other Reformation Ideas

- The Priesthood of All Believers
- Reformed world and life view – All vocations are pleasing to God.
- “Protestant Work Ethic”
- Separation of Church and State
- Later emphasis on world missions.
- Influence in Western governments, parliament, congress, etc.
Church Problems

• Schemes to collect money
  – Payments for ordinances
  – Sale of “Indulgences” for the dead
  – Begging friars
  – Tithe on land
  – Bequeathing of property

• Corruption
  – 12-year old bishops
  – 3-year old popes
  – Moral decay
  – Illiterate priests
  – Money to monks by politicians
Church Problems

- European population was increasingly anti-clerical
- Absenteeism of church leaders
- Better educated, urban populace was more critical of the Church than rural peasantry
- Renaissance monarchs were growing impatient with the power of the Church
- Growing individualism
- Printing press, paper, outgrows Church control.  
  \((\text{Gutenberg, 1450})\)
- Growing piety and religious zeal among European masses
Martin Luther

- b. 1483
- 1505 – nearly struck by lightning. Considering it a punishment from God, he prayed to St. Anne, and promised to leave law school and become a monk.
- 1512 Ph.D in theology. Became professor at Univ of Wittenberg.
- Dominican friar Tetzel was selling indulgences in Wittenberg in 1516
Martin Luther

- He writes *95 Theses* with his ideas re justification by faith, authority of Scripture, & priesthood of all believers.
- Luther posts his *95 Theses* on the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg on October 31, 1517. By aid of the press, the *Theses* spread through Germany in 2 weeks, through Europe in 2 months.
1521, Diet of Worms – assembly of the estates of the Holy Roman Empire. The Church condemned and Luther as a heretic and criminal with Emperor Charles V presiding.

**Wartburg Castle** – Luther goes into hiding at the Castle under the protection of Frederick III, Elector of Saxony. There, he translated the NT into German.
Martin Luther

1523
Luther marries Katharina von Bora, a nun. He was 46, she was 26.

1526
Luther writes: “My Katie is in all things so obliging and pleasing to me that I would not exchange my poverty for the riches of Croesus.”

1526
Organizes a non-Roman church.
Martin Luther

1534
Luther finishes translation of OT into German.

1527
Luther writes *A Mighty Fortress Is Our God* and numerous other hymns, inspiring even J.S. Bach in his chorales.
England: King Henry VIII

- Henry VIII seeks a divorce from Catherine of Aragon, due to the lack of a male heir. The Church rejects the divorce. Due to meager English representation in the Catholic Church.

- Henry creates the Church of England and establishes his own supremacy over it. It was a “political reformation” only at first.

- 1539 – Reformers persuade Henry to publish an English Bible.
France: John Calvin

- B. 1509
- Trained as lawyer; more of a scholar than Luther
- 1530 -- From Luther’s influence, Calvin broke from Catholicism.
France

- Protestantism made illegal in France in 1534
- Persecution of the Huguenots; they flee to the Netherlands.
Menno Simons & Anabaptists

- Desire to return to the primitive, first-century Church
- Ardent missionaries who were harassed for their zeal.
- Free will
- Adult “believer” baptism
- Social and economic equality
- Pacifism
- Stressed role of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer—“inner light”
- Simplicity of life and millenarianism—living in the last days.
Counter-Reformation

- Council of Trent (1545-1563)
- 1534 – The Society of Jesus (“Jesuits”)
  Ignatius of Loyola
- The Inquisition
- Renewed religious emotionalism
- Baroque Art
- Religious warfare and a new Bible