

TWENTY CENTURIES

A Survey of Church History



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- The Synod of Dordt (1618-19)
- The King James Bible (1609)
- The Puritans and the English Civil War
- The Westminster Assembly
- Catholic Restoration and Puritan Ejection
- Puritan Movement in New England
- Covenanters vs. Crown in Scotland
- Protestant Restoration in The Glorious Revolution

The Synod of Dordt



- **Jacob Arminius (1560-1609) and the Remonstrance**
 - Jacob Arminius was a Reformed minister who objected to some key tenets of Calvinism
 - After his death, his followers (Arminians) produced their *Remonstrance*, with five key points:
 - 1) Conditional Election
 - 2) Unlimited Atonement (general redemption)
 - 3) Depravity of Man
 - 4) Free Will in receiving Grace
 - 5) Conditional Perseverance
 - The Remonstrants also expressed a willingness to make peace with Roman Catholic Spain



The Synod of Dordt



- **The Synod of Dordt (1618-19)**
 - National synod of the Dutch Reformed Church, with participants from all over the Reformed world.
 - Arminian leaders were summoned to defend their teaching biblically. Upon their refusal, they were convicted of heresy, deposed from office, and ultimately exiled from Holland
 - The Five Points of Calvinism:
 - 1) Total Depravity
 - 2) Unconditional Election
 - 3) Limited Atonement
 - 4) Irresistible Grace
 - 5) Perseverance of the Saints



The King James Bible



- **The King James Bible (1604-11)**
 - Upon the death of Elizabeth I, who had no children, the thrones of England and Scotland were united under James I. In his effort to establish the episcopalian structure of the Church of England, he sought a new translation. Also Puritans desired a more accurate.
 - The instructions given to the translators made clear that they were to oppose the Geneva Bible, favored by the Puritans, because of its Calvinist study notes.
 - The King James (or Authorized) Version was not a new translation but a revision of the Bishop's Bible of 1568. While the church never endorsed the KJV, the suppression of the Puritans caused it to prevail by the century's end.

The Puritan Movement in England



● Puritans vs. the Church of England

- Under the reign of Elizabeth I (1558-1603), a thorough-going reform was forbidden in England. However, the Scottish Presbyterians were able thoroughly to reform their church. This combination motivated Reformers in England to renew their efforts at reform.
- The Puritan concerns:
 - 1) Rejection of ceremonies mandated by Book of Common Prayer
 - 2) Emphasis on Calvinist doctrine and strong opposition to Arminianism
 - 3) Emphasis on experiential piety and personal holiness v. religious externalism
 - 4) Pursuit of public policy that would vigorously respect biblical values
- Some famous Puritans of the 17th century: Thomas Goodwin, John Owen, Thomas Watson, John Milton, Richard Baxter, John Bunyan, and Matthew Henry

The Puritan Movement in England



- Puritans vs. the Church of England, cont.
 - After the ascension of King James I (Stuart), Archbishop Laud mandated conformity to non-biblical practices and doctrine and suppressed Puritans.
 - Separatists, under Wm. Brewster and Wm. Bradford, fled to Holland in 1609 and, in 1620, sailed to America on the Mayflower
 - In 1630, the Puritan Migration began, in which tens of thousands of Puritans fled to Boston in order to secure freedom of religion. This began the large Puritan Congregationalist movement in New England.
 - In 1640, a Puritan dominated Parliament sought to end the migration by limiting royal power. This led to the English Civil War



The English Civil War (1642-51)



- **Parliamentarians vs. Royalists**
 - Parliament was alarmed by Charles I's marriage to a Roman Catholic and the apparent threat of a reversion to papism.
 - When Charles I sought to impose Anglicanism in Scotland, the Scots rallied around the National Covenant and routed several English armies. Unable to raise money without Parliament's consent, Charles appealed to the Catholic lords in Ireland. When Charles' cabinet proposed invading England with a Catholic army from Ireland, Parliament rebelled.



The English Civil War (1642-51)



- **Parliamentarians vs. Royalists**
 - Under the leadership of Oliver Cromwell, the Parliamentary forces defeated the royalists. Charles I was deposed and beheaded for treason.
 - After victory, Cromwell ruled as Lord Protector (1649-58) as virtual dictator of England. His excesses and corruption turn the nation against Presbyterianism and Puritan rule.



The Westminster Assembly



- **The Westminster Assembly (1643-1647)**
 - Convened by Parliament in 1643 to decide on a religious settlement for England. 30 laymen and 121 “divines”
 - While all were Calvinists, they differed on the biblical form of church government, dividing into Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, and Erastians. The strong majority were Presbyterian (elder rule).
 - Already possessing the Canons of Dordt and many excellent 16th century confessions, their job was not to determine doctrine but to exposit Christian truth in a clear and thorough way.
 - Produced 4 key documents: Directory for Public Worship, Westminster Confession of Faith, Westminster Shorter Catechism, and Westminster Larger Catechism.
 - The chief problem was the Parliament had the right to approve (and change) what they wrote. This was remedied in 1644, when Parliament appealed to Scotland to help them with the war (which was going badly). The Scots agreed only if their “Scottish commissioners” could serve as advisers to Parliament, effectively granting the Scots divines a final say on the documents. The *Solemn League and Covenant* gave Parliament the troops to win the war and the Westminster Divines the political cover to exposit Christian doctrine rightly.
 - Westminster Standards were adopted over all of England until revoked in 1660, were enduringly embraced in Scotland, and provides the confessional standard for conservative Presbyterian churches today.

Catholic Restoration and Puritan Ejection



- **The Restoration of Charles II (1660) and Puritan Ejection (1662)**
 - Alarmed by Cromwell's harsh rule, the Scots invited Charles II to be restored to the throne, if he would affirm the National Covenant, renounce Roman Catholicism, and promise religious liberty.
 - Charles II was restored to the throne, with full royal powers, after his promises to respect religious liberty.
 - Charles did not keep this promise, since the chief principle of his dynasty was the royal power required state control of the church.
 - In 1662, a resurgent king imposed the *Act of Uniformity*, imposing Episcopalianism and high church liturgy upon the church and expelling the Puritan ministers from their pulpits. Men like John Bunyan, Samuel Rutherford, Thomas Watson, and Richard Baxter were imprisoned. Puritan ministers not permitted within 5 miles of their former churches.

Puritan New England



- **Puritan New England**

- Beginning in 1630, the Puritans of New England flourished and built a congregational establishment in Massachusetts.
- Rhode Island Colony became a refuge for dissidents and exiles. Founded by the Baptist Roger Williams in 1636.
- Sought to build a “city on the hill” which involved strong restrictions on various behaviors. Under this impulse, American Puritanism became more formal and less evangelical at the very time when English Puritanism was fighting formalism and was persecuted for the gospel.
- Required membership in a Puritan church to vote or hold office.
- Resolved tension regarding church and state with the *Halfway Covenant* in 1662.

Covenanters vs. Crown in Scotland



- **The Killing Time in Scotland (1662-1687)**
 - Charles II sought to impose royal sovereignty over the Scottish kirk. Renounced and outlawed the National Covenant in 1662 (by which he was restored in 1660).
 - The people, energized by the National Covenant, refused to comply. The secular lords supported the king but the church and its ministers refused to yield.
 - Secret open-air preaching meetings (“conventicles”) sprang up throughout Scotland.
 - Throughout the 1660’s – 1680’s rebellions sprang up throughout Scotland and thousands of people were martyred for Crown and Covenant.
 - Masses of Scots Presbyterians fled to Pennsylvania and the Carolinas until toleration was decreed in 1687.
 - The persecution of Scots Presbyterians, and their migration to America, provided the foundation for Presbyterianism in the USA.

Protestant Restoration in England



- **The Glorious Revolution (1689)**
 - King James II was an open Roman Catholic. His daughter Mary, the Protestant wife of William of Orange, was heir to the throne until a son was born in 1688, giving the prospect of a renewed Catholic monarchy.
 - James sought to rule by personal decree and suspended the Parliaments of England and Scotland. He allied with Catholic France, and threatened the Protestants of England with Irish and French armies.
 - Fearing a reestablishment of papism and weary of turmoil and slaughter, Parliament induced William of Orange to come to England with a Dutch army.
 - Upon the success of William's landings, the Stuarts fled and William and Mary were enthroned together as England's monarchs. This "Glorious Revolution" secured the English Reformation.