

Prayer

Bible Reading: Deuteronomy 6:20-25

Introduction to the Class

Lecture

Assigned Reading - for this week: chapter 1 "How Men and Women Lived 400 Years Ago"

The Tudors and the Stuarts by M.B. Synge

Margaret Bertha Synge (1861-1939)

-daughter of Church of England minister

-never married

-this text more favorable toward the Roman Catholic religion than I am

Quiz from both

Test - last day of semester

Introduction to the Course

We examine how God graciously granted religious liberty to England, out of which liberty grew the English-speaking Baptist churches, and the 1689 Confession, and much of the religious liberty that we enjoy today here in Texas.

Influences/sources

-Dr. James Renihan, president of IRBS

-Dr. Keith Wrightson, professor at Cambridge, now Yale

We start our study at about the year 1500, just a little more than 100 years ago, just before the rise of two of the two most influential figures in these things.

Martin Luther (1483-1546)

1512 - Became Doctor of Bible at Wittenburg

1517 - 95 Theses

1521 - Excommunicated

Henry VIII (1491-1547) (1509-1547)

1527 - Petitioned Pope for Annulment of Marriage

1534 - Act of Supremacy

We plan to conclude our study at the year 1689, near the beginning of the reign of William and Mary, who came to the throne in the 1688 Glorious Revolution, and who signed the 1689 Toleration Act or Act of Toleration.

So, we will see some of what God did in the politics and religion of England to grant us the religious liberty in which the 1689 Confession Baptists could legally and publicly own the true Christian faith, and in which religious liberty we also live today.

This week: the state of religion in England in 1500.

Next week: the state of religious liberty in England in 1500.

The State of Religion in England in 1500 and Before

What was it like in church five hundred years ago? One of the Baptist churches that arose in the next century catalogued the state of things in 1500, out of which God brought them by degrees. Looking back, they said that these things had characterized the Roman Catholic church, which dominated Europe, five hundred years ago now.

-the pope, acknowledged to be the head of the church, vicar of Christ on earth

-under the pope was a hierarchical system governing all the churches in Europe

-transubstantiation - the belief that when you take the Lord's Supper, when the priest says the Latin phrase that we now lampoon with the phrase "hokus pokus," the bread and wine really become the body and blood of Christ in substance

-purgatory - the doctrine that even the faithful disciples of Jesus Christ had to spend time after death having their sins purged away by fire before they could be fit to enter paradise. Those Christians who had died with much sin unconfessed might have to spend as much as hundreds of years in the fires of purgatory before being allowed into heaven.

-the teaching that man's works merit salvation - you do enough good works, you can merit entry into heaven

-and that some Christians accomplish works of supererogation; they have done more good works than needed to earn their way into heaven, and so, their good works, surplus to their need, go into a treasury of merit in heaven, which the pope in Rome can dispense, especially if someone buys from him a papal indulgence, and he then dispenses to him the merit necessary for him to go to heaven

-the countries of Europe were full of monks, friars, abbots, nuns, living abnormally---abstaining from the normal marriage relationship and from the normal human comforts

-there were shrines, special holy places, to which people made pilgrimages, and at which they gave donations, hoping for some special blessing from God

-the church worship services were said and sung in Latin, which the majority of the people did not understand

-the advocacy of saints---people praying to Christians who had died, whose souls were in heaven, so that those saints in heaven would talk to Jesus on their behalf, so their prayers would be granted

-especially the adoration of Mary

-there was the praying for the deceased; why pray for the deceased? because they were in purgatory, and needed to get out

-there were idolatrous holy days, invented by the men of the church

 primarily their three great masses

 Michaels-mass

 Christ---or pymass

 Candles-mass

 as well as a multitude of saints' days

 St. Allsouls

 St. Mid-summer

- and the pastors in the churches
 - referred to as priests
 - were carnal, idle, and spiritually blind
 - cared not after the flock but the fleece; that is, they were looking to their own gain from every quarter
 - the well educated ones often did not actually minister in the churches, but simply received the living and bore the title
 - the ones who actually ministered in the churches, many were illiterate, and ministered simply by reciting the Latin ceremonies from memory
- as to the Lord's Day, it was generally profaned rather than hallowed
- the people were required to bow at the name of Jesus, and superstitiously did so
- they superstitiously bowed at the table in the front of the church, called the altar, which bowing was not masked, but plain and open idolatry
- there was the sprinkling of children, instead of the baptism of the Lord's disciples
 - if in the church, with the sign of the cross and other ceremonies
 - but sometimes by the women at home when a baby was born
- there was the use of pictures and images in worship, which our Baptist forbears called a scrap and relic of idolatry
- the clergy defended that practice
- the people were made to kneel at the Lord's Supper, even as they received only one of the two elements
- prayers were not made in earnest as the pastors' own prayers, but were read from a prayer book
- the Bible was in Latin, not English; it was illegal to have a Bible in English; most people could not read English, let alone Latin
- there was no sermon from the Bible in the worship service, nor any Bible study class

State of Religious Liberty in England in 1500 and Before

-from Foxe on John Badby

Sunday, March 1, 1409, in Worcester, a man named John Badby was brought before a council of the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Archbishop of York, and many other church and government officials. He was being tried for the crime of heresy being heretically taught and openly maintained that is, that the sacrament of the body of Christ, consecrated by the priest upon the altar, is not the true body of Christ by the virtue of the words of the sacrament; but that after the sacramental words spoken by the priests to make the body of Christ, the material bread doth remain upon the altar as in the beginning, neither is it turned into the very body of Christ, after the sacramental words spoken of the priests.

Badby had already been convicted of heresy by his own bishop, and had now been referred to this great council for a final verdict and sentencing. He was questioned again about this doctrine, and said That after the consecration at the altar, there remaineth material bread, and the same bread which was before; notwithstanding, said he, it is a sign or sacrament of the living God.

"When all these things were thus finished, and all the said conclusions were often read in the vulgar tongue, the aforesaid archbishop demanded of him, whether he would renounce and forsake his opinions and such-like conclusions or not, and adhere to the doctrine of Christ and catholic faith? He answered, That, according to that he had said before, he would adhere and stand to those words, which before he had made answer unto. Then the archbishop oftentimes required the said John, in the bowels of Jesus Christ, that he would forsake those opinions and conclusions, and that henceforth he would cleave to the Christian faith; which thing to do, in the audience of all the lords and others that were present, he expressly denied and refused.

Two weeks later, the council reconvened. They questioned John Badby again, and the same articles, as he had before spoken and deposed, he still held and defended, and said, that whilst he lived he would never retract the same. The archbishop then proceeded to confirm and ratify the former sentence given before by the bishop of Worcester against the said John Badby, pronouncing him for an open and public heretic.

These things thus done and concluded by the bishops in the forenoon, in the afternoon the king's writ was not far behind, by the force whereof John Badby, still persevering in his constancy unto the death, was brought into Smithfield, and there, being put in an empty barrel, was bound with iron chains fastened to a stake, having dry wood put about him. And as he was thus standing in the pipe or tun, (for as yet Perillus's brazen bull was not in use among the bishops,) it happened that the prince, the king's eldest son, was there present, who, showing some part of the good Samaritan, began to endeavour how to save the life of him, whom the hypocritical Levites and Pharisees sought to put to death.

In this mean season, the prior of St. Bartholomew's in Smithfield brought, with all solemnity, the sacrament of God's body, with twelve torches borne before, and so showed the sacrament to the poor man being at the stake. And then they demanding of him how he believed in it, he answered, That he knew well it was hallowed bread, and not God's body. And then was the tun put over him, and fire put unto him. And when he felt the fire, he cried, Mercy! calling belike upon the Lord; and so the prince immediately commanded to take away the tun, and quench the fire. The prince, his commandment being done, asked him if he would forsake heresy, to take him to the faith of holy church? which thing if he would do, he should have goods enough; promising also unto him a yearly stipend out of the king's treasury, so much as should suffice his contentation.

But this valiant champion of Christ refused the offer of worldly promises, being no doubt more vehemently inflamed with the Spirit of God than with any earthly desire. Wherefore, when as yet he continued unmovable in his former mind, the prince commanded him straight to be put again into the pipe or tun, and that he should not afterward look for any grace or favour. But as he could be allured by no rewards, even so was he nothing at all abashed at their torments, but, as a valiant champion of Christ, he persevered invincible to the end, not without a great and most cruel battle, but with much greater triumph; the Spirit of Christ having always the upper hand in his members, in spite of the fury, rage, and power of the whole world. For the manifestation of which torment, we have here set forth the picture of his burning, in such manner as it was done.