



Lou Cannon's *Reagan*, Reagan's D-Day Speech, 1984; Medieval Hermeneutics; The Reformers: Luther, Zwingli, & Calvin; Mel Couch: Reformation Hermeneutics

In 1302 (Pope) Boniface \ban'e-fes\ VIII's bull decreed that submission to the pope "is absolutely necessary to salvation." Since Rome interpreted the kingdom of God as the church, the pope wielded dogmatic control over people's eternal destiny. With the "keys to the kingdom" he exercised the power to open and close the gates of the kingdom based on people's allegiance to him. (p. 143)

14. In the late fifteenth century, the biblical legitimacy of Catholic doctrines that had emerged from the third century onward came into question. Three men who challenged Roman orthodoxy became prominent figures in the Protestant Reformation. A brief summary of each will be helpful.
15. Martin Luther, an Augustinian friar and ordained priest, initiated the movement in Germany:

McHenry, Robert (ed.). *Merriam-Webster's Biological Dictionary*. (Springfield: Merriam-Webster Publishers, 1995), 652:

On a mission to Rome in 1510-11, Luther was unfavorably impressed by conditions. As professor of biblical exegesis at Wittenberg (Germany), he began to preach the doctrine of salvation by faith rather than by works. He attacked the church's sale of indulgences and, on October 31, 1517, nailed to the church door at Wittenberg his 95 theses questioning the value of the indulgences and condemning the means used in selling them. He went further than the indulgence issue by later denying the supremacy of the pope.

16. Before we do our synopsis of the next individual we need a little information about the Kappel Wars. For this we consult:

***Encyclopaedia Britannica: Micropaedia*, 15th ed. s.v. "Kappel Wars"; 5:702:**

Kappel Wars, the name given to two incidents of the Swiss Reformation, taken from the monastery of Kappel \kə'pel\, on the border between the cantons [or "states"] of Zurich \soo'rik\ and Zug \souk\. The first incident arose when five Catholic member states of the Swiss confederacy formed the Christian Union, which allied itself with Austria to prevent Zurich from spreading Protestantism over the common (territories ruled by the Swiss confederates jointly). Zurich thereupon launched an expedition against the Christian Union, but the fighting was negligible, and an armistice signed at Kappel on June 24 (1529) was followed by an agreement whereby the Catholic districts renounced their Austrian alliance and conceded freedom of religion in the common territories.

The five Catholic confederates, however, soon felt that Protestantism was in fact being forced on the Thurgau \tour'gow\ (territory); and in the autumn of 1531 they suddenly declared war against Zurich. Zurich's hastily raised troops were defeated in the Battle of Kappel, October 11, 1531, and Zurich's Protestant leader, Huldrych Zwingli, was killed. The second peace of Kappel, November 23, 1531, upheld the claims of Catholicism throughout the controversial areas.

17. Huldrych Zwingli was a significant figure in the Reformation's development in Switzerland. A summary of this reformer is also provided by:

McHenry, *Merriam-Webster's Biological Dictionary* 1129:

By his preaching, Zwingli established the Reformation in Switzerland in 1522. He became the leader in political and religious affairs throughout Switzerland and was conferred [graduated] at Marburg \mär'burk\ [Germany, Europe's first Protestant university] with Saxon reformers, including Luther, in 1529. Zwingli accompanied Zurich troops as chaplain in their campaign against Catholic cantons [i.e., states] and was killed at the battle of Kappel [Switzerland], October 11, 1531.



18. John Calvin, a French theologian, was instrumental in the development of Protestantism in France and Switzerland:

ibid. 170:

(Calvin) adopted Protestantism in 1534 and settled in Basel *l*bäz' eŋ, Switzerland where he published his famous *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. In Geneva in 1541 he succeeded in establishing the organized Reformed church. In 1559 he founded at Geneva a theological academy that became the University of Geneva. His writings brought into one body of doctrine the scattered unsystematic reformed opinions of the period.

1. With this summary of just three men of prominence of the Protestant Reformation, let's return to Couch and note some details about translations that emerged from the Reformation and the hermeneutical debates that accompanied them:

Couch, *Dictionary of Premillennial Theology* 163:

Hermeneutics, Reformation. The historical sparks that ignited the sixteenth-century Protestant Reformation were many, but the hermeneutical debate was at the center. The Reformation was a time of social and ecclesiastical upheaval, but it was primarily a hermeneutical revolution. It introduced a revolution in the interpretation of Scripture the effects of which continue to the present.

Growing dissatisfaction with the allegorical method fueled a desire for a better interpretive approach. Thus, the stage was set for the Reformers' rejection of allegory and adaptation of the literal historical-grammatical method.

The Renaissance, beginning in the fourteenth century in Italy and extending into the seventeenth century across Europe, had a direct impact on the Reformers. There was a revival of interest in classical writings and particularly in their historical character, including the Bible and its historical background. The Renaissance also witnessed a renewed interest in the study of ancient languages, including Hebrew and Greek, providing scholars with a fresh glimpse into Scripture.

In 1506 the philologist Johann Reuchlin *\rawik' leen* began to publish several books on Hebrew grammar. In 1516 Desiderius Erasmus *\des-i-dir' ē-as i-raz' mus*, the leading humanist of the Renaissance, edited and published the first modern edition of the Greek New Testament with a fresh Latin translation appended to it. The publications of Erasmus, in particular, introduced a new era in biblical learning and went far toward supplanting the Scholasticism of the previous ages by better methods of exegetical and theological study.

The increasing interest in the early Greek and Hebrew manuscripts exposed many translation errors in the Latin Vulgate, undermining the absolute authority it had enjoyed in supporting church doctrine. The Roman Catholic Church had staked its own authority in part on the Vulgate. Now, doubts about the accuracy of the Vulgate cast shadows of doubt on the authority of the teachings of the church.