

Morning Stars

The Imperial Church and Early Efforts at Reform

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Slide 1

1. Over the next four presentations, we will be looking at the control of what people believe and how they act on their religious beliefs.
2. We will see that freedom to believe whatever one chooses about religion is not just a matter of concern to people today, but a subject of debate for hundreds of years.
3. The recent concern over the Religious Freedom Restoration Act is just the latest chapter in an ongoing debate that formed part of the impetus for the Reformation and the First Amendment to the United States Constitution.
4. Today, we will look at the Roman Catholic Church in the Middle Ages and look at some early reformers who began seeking to gain the right for individuals to have some control over their religious beliefs and how they acted on those beliefs.
5. Those “morning stars” were unsuccessful in their own times, but set in motion the ideas that eventually led to the religious freedoms we all enjoy today.

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1. In 1054, Bishop Humbert of Silva Candida traveled to Constantinople on behalf of Pope Leo, the bishop of Rome, and delivered a bull of excommunication to the Patriarch of Constantinople in the Hagia Sophia.
2. The result was the “Great Schism” between the Roman Catholic Church and the Eastern Orthodox Churches that still continues.

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1. After the Great Schism, all of Western Europe except the Iberian Peninsula came under the jurisdiction of the Pope, who considered himself the successor to Peter.
2. Bishop Humbert then turned himself to the most important issue of his day—who should control what people believed.
3. Both the Pope and the secular authorities saw themselves as having the same mission – assuring that the people did not burn in hell, which each thought required that it control how people believed and acted.
4. **No one** at the time believed that individuals had a right to determine what they believed or how they acted on their beliefs.
5. As one author writes: **“Since Constantine made Christianity the official religion of the Roman Empire, Western Christian leaders had believed that, thanks to Adam’s bite of the apple, man was so inherently depraved, a strong one-two punch of church and state working together would be required to tame his evil impulses.”** Waldman, *Founding Faiths* at 8.
6. Both Popes and the secular authorities could cite the Bible to support their competing claims to be in charge of that mission.

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1. Popes referred to the time that Jesus took his disciples to Caesarea Philippi before he went to Jerusalem for the last time.
2. While there, Jesus had told Peter: **“I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in**

heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”

Matthew 16:19.

3. So Popes, claiming to be the successors to Peter, claimed the power to determine what people needed to believe and do to get to heaven and whatever they decided would be binding on God.

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1. Kings and emperors also looked to Peter for their claim to have power over the destiny of the souls of their subjects.
2. In the *First Letter of Peter*, the author, assumed at the time to have been Peter, says: **“Submit yourselves for the Lord’s sake to every human authority: whether to the emperor, as the supreme authority, or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right.”** *1 Peter 2:13-14.*
3. Secular authorities noted that Peter had said they ruled on behalf of God and had not said anything about obeying him or his successors.

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1. Although Popes and secular rulers based their competing claims on the Bible, the issue was more about money and power than theology.
2. One of the sources of conflict was the ability to appoint or “invest” bishops, a power claimed by both Popes and secular rulers.
3. This power brought with it the bishop’s loyalty and the ability to obtain a payment from him, a practice known as “simony” after Simon, who offered to pay Peter and John if they would give him the ability to give people the power of the Holy Spirit. *Acts 8:9-24.*

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1. In about 1058, Bishop Humbert wrote a paper nominally addressed to simony that was really an attack on the authority of secular leaders over all matters involving religion, including the investiture of bishops.
2. Humbert argued: **“Since Church and State actually form one body, Christendom – whose animating principle is the faith – it can be directed to its final goal, eternal salvation, only by the priesthood. Therefore, whenever the spiritual and temporal come into conflict – as often they must—the spiritual authority must have the final word.”** Bokenkotter, *A Concise History of the Catholic Church* at 115.
3. Since virtually every secular question was seen as having a spiritual component, Humbert’s argument was **“a demand for revolutionary change in the very structures of medieval society,”** in which the Pope could control the secular authorities. Walker, *A History of the Christian Church* at 272.
4. In 1073, Hildebrand of Sovana became Pope Gregory VII, determined to put **“Humbert’s theory into practice and assert papal supremacy in a thorough fashion.”** Bokenkotter, *A Concise History of the Catholic Church* at 116.
5. In 1075, Pope Gregory issued a decree claiming that the Pope was the only universal power and that only the Pope could appoint bishops.
6. He also decreed that the Pope had the power to depose secular rulers, who owed the Pope allegiance as Peter’s successor.

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1. Holy Roman Emperor Henry IV correctly saw Gregory’s decree as a threat to his control over bishops, who held significant land under his domain.
2. As a result, Henry responded by investing his own bishop of Milan and denouncing the Pope.
3. When Gregory threatened to depose Henry if he did not revoke his appointment, Henry claimed that Gregory was **“at present not Pope but**

false monk” and demanded that he resign. Bokenkotter, *A Concise History of the Catholic Church* at 117.

4. In January 1076, in an assembly at Worms, Germany, bishops loyal to Henry declared their independence from the Pope.
5. The competing actions of Pope Gregory VII and Emperor Henry IV over the power to invest bishops became known as the “Investiture Controversy.”

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1. In this fight, Pope Gregory wielded a weapon that no king could muster – he excommunicated Henry IV.
2. As understood at the time, excommunication deprived Henry of **“the grace essential for salvation.”** Shelley, *Church History in Plain Language* at 185.
3. **“After some bishop read the solemn sentence of excommunication, a bell rang as for a funeral, a book was closed, and a candle was extinguished—all to symbolize the cutting off of the guilty man. If he entered a church during Mass he was expelled, or the Mass was halted.”** *Id.*

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1. For Emperor Henry, excommunication also meant that his troops, no longer believing that God would protect them, would not fight for him.
2. Henry capitulated, in one of the most humiliating experiences any ruler has had to endure.
3. In January 1077, he traveled over the Alps to the Pope’s retreat in Canossa in northern Italy, begging forgiveness and offering allegiance to the Pope.
4. Wearing a hair shirt, he waited barefoot in the snow outside the castle for three days until Gregory finally gave him absolution and restored him to grace.

5. Machiavelli later wrote that **“Henry was the first prince to have the honor of feeling the sharp thrust of spiritual weapons.”** Moynahan, *The Faith* at 218.
6. **“Over the next century, popes were to excommunicate eight emperors; Gregory had fashioned a new power.”** *Id.* at 219.
7. Even the threat of excommunication could bring the most powerful **“princes to their knees.”** Shelley, *Church History in Plain Language* at 185.

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1. In 1095, 20 years after Gregory’s decree that the Pope was the only universal power, Pope Urban II made a formal call for Christians to join in a war to throw the Muslims out of the Holy Land, an idea first proposed by Gregory VII.
2. The Pope promised the people that their sins would be forgiven if they joined this effort, a promise that would form the basis of the later practice of selling “indulgences.”
3. As one author writes: **“By the act of proclaiming the First Crusade, of which he himself, through a papal legate, was to be the leader, Urban made of the papacy, in effect, the visible and actual head of the Christian people”** Walker, *A History of the Christian Church* at 278.

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1. One of the first voices to speak against the papal claim to control beliefs was a French merchant named Valdes **“who gave his property to the poor in 1173 and became an itinerant preacher.”** Moynahan, *The Faith* at 279.
2. Four hundred years before Martin Luther, Valdes, known to history as “Peter Waldo,” taught that **“the Bible, and especially the New Testament, is the sole rule of belief and life: whatever lacks warrant in Scripture is**

not justified in the church.” Walker, *A History of the Christian Church* at 307.

3. So his followers could determine the truth for themselves, he commissioned a translation of the Bible into French, the first non-Latin version in Europe.
4. His followers, who became known as “Waldensians,” **“rejected Masses and prayers for the dead as unbiblical.”** *Id.*
5. Valdes did not consider ordination necessary to preaching and believed that women had the right to preach.
6. When Valdes refused to stop preaching after being ordered to do so, he and his followers, who became known as Waldensians, were excommunicated in 1184.
7. But Valdes, not afraid of excommunication, kept preaching.

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1. Innocent III, who became Pope in 1198, issued a decree officially calling for complete subordination of the state to the Church.
2. **“Innocent III told the princes of Europe that the papacy was like the sun, while the kings were like the moon. As the moon received its light from the sun, so kings derived their powers from the Pope.”** Shelley, *Church History in Plain Language* at 185.

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1. One of those princes was King John of England, famous for agreeing to the Magna Carta, the foundation of the view that the sovereign’s power is limited and depends on consent of the governed.
2. Most Americans never hear the rest of that story.
3. In 1207, King John had appointed a new Archbishop of Canterbury, in opposition to the candidate of Pope Innocent III.

4. The Pope then imposed an “interdict” on the people of England, barring the priests and people from participating in most religious activities, and then excommunicated King John.

5. Under pressure from his subjects to lift the interdict, in 1213 King John **“capitulated to Innocent by becoming his vassal, receiving England back as a fief, and paying [Innocent] a sizable annual tribute.”** Shelley, *Church History in Plain Language* at 186.

6. As a result, when King John signed the Magna Carta with his barons in 1215, Pope Innocent annulled it as beyond the king’s authority and barred the king from observing its terms, under threat of excommunication.

7. **“Pope Innocent III successfully applied or threatened the interdict 85 times against uncooperative princes.”** *Id.* at 185.

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1. With his power over secular rulers established, Pope Innocent set out to assure his ability to control people’s beliefs even if excommunication did not work.

2. In 1199, he declared heresy to be **“treason against God,”** punishable by death. Moynahan, *The Faith* at 278.

3. As one author states: **“The rationale for this cruel punishment was familiar and, on the whole, acceptable to medieval people: heresy, as treason against God, is far more heinous than treason against the king, itself punishable by death.”** Walker, *A History of the Christian Church* at 309.

4. Relying on this rationale, Innocent III became the first Pope **“to apply force on a considerable scale to suppress religious opinions.”** Bokenkotter, *A Concise History of the Catholic Church* at 131.

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1. During his papacy, a group of Christians in northern Italy and southern France called “Cathars” believed, like the Gnostics and other

Christians before them, that the material world had been created by an evil God that was not the God of the New Testament.

2. They believed that all flesh was evil and that all sexual relations were impure and satanic.

3. The Cathars advocated celibacy and banned the eating of meat, milk and eggs, which they associated with the evils of reproduction.

4. **“They accepted Christ’s Sermon on the Mount as their ethic, and denounced war or any use of force, even against infidels.”** Durant, *Heroes of History* at 174.

5. They renounced the ownership of property and the swearing of oaths.

6. They rejected the concept of hell and thought that all men would be saved.

7. Because of what they thought was their own purity, Cathars claimed **“that they alone were the ‘true Christians’ leading an ‘apostolic life.’”** Walker, *A History of the Christian Church* at 304.

8. In 1209, Innocent III declared that the Cathars were heretics and ordered a crusade against them, promising the crusaders that they would be relieved from the consequences of any past sins.

9. Knights acting on behalf of the Pope attacked the Cathars and quickly **“slew 20,000 men, women, and children in indiscriminate massacre.”** Durant, *Heroes of History* at 176.

10. This crusade, known as the Albigensian Crusade, eventually killed between 100,000 and 200,000 people.

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1. With the Cathars eliminated, **“[i]n 1215 the Fourth Lateran Council, under Innocent III’s leadership, provided for the state’s punishment of heretics, the confiscation of their property, excommunication of those unwilling to move against the heretic, and complete forgiveness of sins for those cooperating.”** Shelley, *Church History in Plain Language* at 211.

2. Bishops were given the job of finding suspected heretics and presenting them to secret church courts, in which the names of the accusers were not provided and the accused had the burden of proving his or her innocence.

3. **“The definition of heresy was extended to include opposition to any papal pronouncement as well as to sacrilege, blasphemy, sorcery, sodomy, and the refusal to pay papal taxes; it was made ‘the duty of every Catholic to persecute heretics.’”** Moynahan, *The Faith* at 278.

4. The Waldensians were deemed heretics and many were killed, but they continued underground and **“are the only medieval sect that has survived.”** Walker, *A History of the Christian Church* at 308.

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1. In 1252, Pope Innocent IV officially sanctioned torture as a way of getting confessions from suspected heretics.

2. His bull stated: **“[B]odily torture has ever been found the most salutary and efficient means of leading to spiritual repentance.”** Moynahan, *The Faith* at 278.

3. **“As each bout of torture began, the inquisitor intoned: ‘Tell the truth, for the love of God.’”** *Id.* at 279.

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1. Upon a finding of heresy, the prisoner was turned over to the secular authorities for the punishment required by the Church, usually burning at the stake.

2. Burning was used to make sure the condemned heretic could never be bodily resurrected.

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1. By 1250, all of Aristotle’s writings had been translated by Muslim scholars and introduced into the Christian West.

2. Aristotle had taught that the application of logic to what was learned by the senses could lead to truth.

3. Because the Church taught that truth depended on its teachings and not on logic, the teaching of Aristotle “**precipitated a grave crisis for the intellectual leaders of the West.**” Bokenkotter, *A Concise History of the Catholic Church* at 162.
4. The Church initially tried to ban the works of Aristotle, but that proved impossible to enforce.
5. What followed was a “**period of unparalleled intellectual activity,**” in which Christian apologists called “Scholastics” justified the traditional teachings of the Church by purporting to use Aristotelean logic. *Id.* at 163.

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1. Thomas Aquinas was the most important of the medieval Scholastics.
2. He was an Italian monk, who had been a professor of theology at the University of Paris.
3. The most important arguments of Thomas supported and explained existing Church doctrines that became important issues during the Reformation.

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1. Although the New Testament contains no mention of an intermediate state between heaven and hell, Greek ideas of a place where souls of the dead could be purified before obtaining their final reward had found their way into Christian thought.
2. In the sixth century, Pope Gregory the Great accepted the existence of this intermediate state but did not give it a name.
3. “[T]his place of purging in wise fire, with its promise of an eternal entrance to heaven, was by the twelfth century given a name—**Purgatory.**” MacCulloch, *The Reformation* at 11.
4. To prove the existence of purgatory, Thomas referred to *2 Maccabees* 12:46: “**Therefore he made atonement for the dead, so that they might be delivered from sin.**”

5. *Second Maccabees*, was one of the Greek books in the *Septuagint*, the Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures that were not part of the Hebrew Scriptures.

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1. Using what he considered assailable logic, Thomas argued:
 - a. The dead in hell are doomed to be there forever, so actions on their behalf are pointless;
 - b. The dead in heaven don't need to be delivered from sin because they are sinless;
 - c. Therefore, there must be some place where support of the living would be helpful that is neither heaven nor hell and that place must be purgatory.
2. **“The wicked, said Thomas, pass into hell. The faithful who have wisely used the means of grace pass immediately to heaven. But the mass of mankind, who while Christian in desire and participants in the sacraments, have followed Christ inadequately, must suffer further purification in purgatory before attaining the joys of heaven.”** Shelley, *Church History in Plain Language* at 203.

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1. By the time of Thomas, it had long been Church doctrine that the forgiveness of sins must be accompanied by some act of penance as determined by the priest.
2. This practice was based on Jerome's translation into Latin of the Greek word *metanoieite* in *Matthew* 4:17, in which Jesus warns his followers of the coming Kingdom of Heaven.
3. Jerome translated the word to mean “do penance,” although all modern translations render the word “repent,” a word requiring only a change in the heart.
4. As a result of the requirement of doing some act of penance to be eligible for heaven, people often found themselves in a “merit deficit,” where their sins outweighed the acts of penance they had actually accomplished.

5. Under the prevailing view, confirmed by Thomas, people dying with such a merit deficit ended up in purgatory, where people could pray for their entry to heaven.
6. But Pope Urban II had promised that people would go directly to heaven if they joined the First Crusade, effectively wiping out any merit deficit by papal decree.
7. Innocent III, who also promised that service in his crusades would wipe out sin, allowed people unable to join him to extinguish their merit deficit by paying money to the Church to support those were able to go.
8. Thomas provided the “**classic interpretation**” of these practices. Walker, *A History of the Christian Church* at 347.
9. According to Thomas, when Jesus and the saints died, they had a collective merit surplus, which they donated to the Church.
10. These surplus merits “**constitute[d] a treasury of good works from which a portion may be transferred to the needy sinner by authority of the church in the person of the pope (who may at will share his authority with the bishops).**” *Id.*

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1. Thomas also applied his logical analysis to the question of papal power over secular rulers.
2. Since Jesus had given the keys of heaven to Peter and given him the power to make agreements binding on God, the Pope alone had that power and secular authorities were subordinate to the Pope.
3. As a result, secular authorities had to conform their laws to pronouncements of the Pope and were also obligated to execute people deemed heretics by the Church.

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1. In 1302, during a dispute with French King Philip IV, Pope Boniface VIII issued a bull entitled “*Unam Sanctum*.”
2. Relying on the teaching of Thomas Aquinas, Boniface decreed that “[t]he Pope can be judged by no man but by God alone; no earthly

power can claim independence of the Pope, and insofar as any act has moral implications, it is subject to his judgment.” Bokenkotter, *A Concise History of the Catholic Church* at 181.

3. Philip rejected this idea and had the Pope arrested as he was excommunicating the king.
4. A subsequent French Pope, Clement V, cancelled the excommunication, giving the king a victory over papal authority.
5. As a result, Boniface is considered **“the high-water mark of papal claims to supreme jurisdictional authority over civil powers.”** Walker, *A History of the Christian Church* at 371.
6. But the Pope’s power of excommunication still cowed most secular rulers.

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1. In 1309, Clement V moved the headquarters of the church from Rome to Avignon, on the Rhone River in what is now France.
2. Subsequent Popes built this magnificent palace for themselves in Avignon.
3. Here is one description of Avignon: **“[A] great palace was built, fit for a Pope and his five hundred household staff, with masters of the kitchen, food, drink, and stables, and chapels, audience halls, libraries, a vaulted treasury whose cargo of precious metals and stones was cunningly concealed beneath the flagstones, and a banquet hall supplied by a vast kitchen with an octagonal chimney piece.”** Moynahan, *The Faith* at 298-99.
4. Not everyone was pleased with this splendor.

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1. Marsilius was born in Padua, Italy, and trained as a physician.
2. Like Thomas Aquinas, Marsilius studied the works of Aristotle, but came to exactly the opposite conclusions.

3. In 1324, he published *Defender of the Peace*, which Pope Clement VI later declared **“was the most heretical book he had ever read.”** Walker, *A History of the Christian Church* at 373.
4. Marsilius first took on the basis of the papal claim of ultimate authority deriving from powers Jesus gave Peter, whom Popes claimed was the first Bishop of Rome.
5. Marsilius asserted that Peter had never been to Rome and was never the Bishop of Rome.
6. He denied that Peter was given any special authority that Popes could inherit even if they were properly considered his successors.
7. Marsilius then stood the Church’s claim of authority **“on its head”** in a way that predated the Declaration of Independence by more than 400 years. Ozment, *The Age of Reform: 1250-1550* at 153.
8. He wrote that all authority, both temporal and spiritual, had been invested by God in **“the people,”** who delegated their power to the king **“to rule their temporal lives”** and to the Pope **“to direct their spiritual lives.”** *Id.*
9. **“The authority of the state was drawn from the people, who had the right to depose an unjust ruler.”** Moynahan, *The Faith* at 363.
10. **“Marsilius saw in papal power of excommunication and interdict, and in claims to a ‘plentitude of power’ even over temporal things, the ‘fall’ of the church from its original spiritual mission.”** Ozment, *The Age of Reform: 1250-1550* at 152.
11. Under his view, the correct model for the Church was the model of Jesus and his disciples, **“who had renounced all worldly possession and submitted themselves to reigning political authority.”** *Id.* at 153.
12. Marsilius claimed that the Church had no power to enforce divine laws because the only sanction for violating those laws is in the afterlife.
13. According to him, the sole duty of the clergy, following the example of Jesus, **“is to teach, warn, reprove, and thereby guide people to a salvation that is wholly otherworldly.”** Walker, *A History of the Church* at 374.

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1. Marsilius was excommunicated for heresy in 1327.
2. In 1328, Louis of Bavaria captured Rome and was crowned Holy Roman Emperor.
3. Relying on the teachings of Marsilius that emperors trumped Popes, Emperor Louis deposed the Avignon Pope, John XXII, and appointed Nicholas V as an Antipope in Rome, with Marsilius as his imperial vicar.
4. Pope John XXII soon excommunicated his rival in Rome.
5. For Nicholas, the threat of burning forever in hell overcame Marsilius' ideals of religious and political freedom and he promptly submitted to Pope John's authority.
6. Marsilius' argument that the Popes lacked power and that the people ruled had withered under the deadly fire of excommunication.
7. But his writings survived and scholars believe they influenced the views of John Locke that eventually found their way into the Declaration of Independence and influenced American views of religious freedom.

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1. In 1343, relying on the teaching of Thomas Aquinas, Pope Clement VI announced from Avignon that the treasury of merits that Jesus had left to the church could be drawn on by all church members to forgive their sins while they were still alive.
2. His imagery was vivid — because Jesus could have saved humanity with a single drop of blood, the rest of the blood he spilled was available to save those who needed it.
3. And since these extra merits had been left to the church, the church could sell them, leading to the sale of indulgences.
4. Popes had the authority to spend the money from the sale of indulgences as they saw fit and they often saw fit to give it to themselves or their relatives.
5. Much of the money went into the papal palace in Avignon.

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1. John Wyclif was an English priest who had gained a reputation as a brilliant scholar at Oxford.
2. In 1366, the English Parliament asked for his opinion about whether England had a duty to continue paying the tribute to the Pope that King John had agreed to.
3. Like Marsilius, Wyclif argued that the king owed no allegiance to the Pope.
4. Also like Marsilius, Wyclif could find no basis for the grand life style of the Popes.
5. In the 1370s, soon after the sale of indulgences began, he wrote: **“If Christ would not have so much as a little house in which to rest his head, . . . how should Christ’s vicar be so great a Lord in this world?”** Placher, *A History of Christian Theology* at 173.
6. Because Augustine had taught that only certain people were destined to be saved, Wyclif thought the Church should not be selling indulgences that could not change God’s plan.
7. He wrote: **“Prelates deceive men by feigned indulgences or pardons, and rob them of their money. . . . Men be great fools to buy these bulls.”** Durant, *Heroes of History* at 248.

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1. In 1378, the citizens of Rome rioted, demanding a Roman Pope.
2. Under pressure, the cardinals chose a Roman Pope, who sought to terminate French influence and returned the Papacy to Rome.
3. Four months later, the same cardinals decided they had made a mistake and elected another Pope, who returned to Avignon.
4. Both Popes excommunicated each other and placed the other’s countries under interdict, resulting in what is called the “Great Schism.”
5. Each Pope claimed the loyalty of about half of Europe, as you can see on this map.

6. Wyclif reacted to this Great Schism with sarcasm: **“I always knew the pope had cloven feet. Now he has a cloven head.”** Moynahan, *The Faith* at 301.

7. Wyclif also began a series of writings **“rejecting the whole traditional structure of the medieval church.”** Walker, *A History of the Christian Church* at 379.

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1. Wyclif taught that the Bible and not the Pope should be the authority for people.

2. His writings inspired the translation of the Bible into English so it could be understood by average people.

3. This picture shows him reading the newly-translated Bible to people who could not read the Latin in the Bibles used by the Church at the time.

4. Wyclif could find no biblical basis for the doctrine of “transubstantiation,” which held that the communion host literally became the body of Jesus when it was eaten.

5. Based on the teachings of Augustine, Wyclif taught that the true church consisted only of those predestined to be saved, a teaching later picked up by John Calvin.

6. According to Wyclif, **“[a] pope who grasps worldly power and is eager for riches is presumptively not of the elect and is therefore a veritable Antichrist.”** Walker, *A History of the Christian Church* at 379.

7. In 1382, a church council condemned 24 of Wyclif’s propositions as heresies, starting with his denial of transubstantiation.

8. After Wyclif died in 1384, the Church banned the publication or use of English translations of the Bible.

9. As one author writes: **“The Church had no desire to share the secrets of its trade.”** Moynahan, *The Faith* at 304.

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1. Wyclif's followers were disparagingly known as "Lollards" or "Mumblers" and many were persecuted and killed.
2. One of the most famous was an English knight, Sir John Oldcastle.
3. In 1417, he was suspended from a gallows over a fire, enabling him to be hanged for treason and burned for heresy at the same time.
4. The Lollards were effectively extinguished by this execution, but later writers acknowledged their contribution to the Reformation.
5. Wyclif became known as the "Morning Star of the Reformation."

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1. John Wyclif's writings inspired John Huss (or Hus) of Bavaria, the most famous priest in Prague in the early 1400s.
2. Huss, whose name means "goose" in Czech and whose statue in Prague is shown here, spoke out against **"priests . . . who shamefully squander pay for requiem Masses in fornication, in adorning their concubines, priestesses, or prostitutes . . . from the tithes and offerings of the poor."** Placher, *A History of Christian Theology* at 174.
3. When the Pope sent agents to Prague to sell indulgences to raise money for a crusade against the king of Naples, Huss **"preached against the Church's collection of money to spill Christian blood"** and **"called the Pope a money-grubber, Antichrist."** Durant, *Heroes of History* at 254.
4. Huss taught that **"[t]he life of the true church is one of Christ-like simplicity and poverty. The only law of this church is the Bible, above all the New Testament."** Walker, *A History of the Christian Church* at 382.
5. For about 200 years, the Catholic Church had refused to allow parishioners to drink the Communion wine and articulated the doctrine of "concomitance," in which the blood of Christ was in both the bread and the wine.
6. Huss taught that all Christians should receive the wine as well as the bread in the Eucharist and that the priests should give up their wealth.

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1. **“In June 1410, church authorities publicly burned seventeen of Wyclif’s writings in Prague, and . . . John XXIII, excommunicated Huss.”** Ozment, *The Age of Reform: 1250-1550* at 167.
2. From 1412 to 1418, a council was held in the German city of Constance, which succeeded in unifying the Church under one Pope, Martin V.
3. The council had other business that was not so pleasant.
4. It tried John Huss and condemned him as a heretic.

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1. Huss was burned at the stake on July 6, 1415, the anniversary of which is a national holiday in the Czech Republic.
2. There are many versions of his last words, including this one: **“As the official executioner was about to light the pyre at the feet of the reformer, he said, ‘Now we will cook the goose.’ ‘Yes’, replied Huss, ‘but there will come an eagle in a hundred years that you will not reach.’”**
<http://www.johnpratt.com/items/docs/lds/meridian/2010/luther.html#fn5>
3. Since Luther wrote his famous theses about a hundred years later, there are some claims that Luther or his followers made up this story, but there is no doubt that Huss died singing hymns.

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1. The council at Constance also condemned the dead John Wyclif as a heretic.
2. Since he couldn’t be burned at the stake, the council ordered that his bones be dug up and burned and his ashes thrown into the river, as shown in this sixteenth century drawing.

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1. After the death of John Huss, his followers and those with similar views formed a new church, which declared its independence from the Roman Catholic Church in about 1458, 60 years before Luther.

2. The Moravian Church today is the spiritual descendant of that church and considers itself the first Protestant denomination. See <http://www.moravian.org/history/>.
3. In 1999, Pope John Paul II apologized for the execution of Huss, praising his courage in the face of death.
4. Pope Francis sent a special envoy to events in Prague on July 5-6, 2015, marking the 600th anniversary of Huss's death.
5. A recent survey identified Huss as one of the 10 most important Czechs in history.
6. During his early days as a monk, Martin Luther was influenced by sermons of Huss that had found their way to Germany.

Slide 40

1. The number of indulgences that the Church could sell to forgive the sins of the living was limited by the number of living.
2. In 1476, Pope Sixtus IV **“permitted the living to buy and apply indulgences to deceased loved ones assumed to be suffering in purgatory for unrepented sins.”** Ozment, *The Age of Reform: 1250-1550* at 217.
3. The church claimed authority to affect the souls of the dead based on the teachings of Thomas Aquinas that the Pope **“has direct jurisdiction over all souls, and can exercise his Episcopal rights in every territory.”** Walker, *A History of the Christian Church* at 348.
4. As one author states: **“A door was thus opened to the unscrupulous to present an indulgence as a quasi-automatic and easy means of salvation.”** Bokenkotter, *A Concise History of the Catholic Church* at 214.

Slide 41

1. Until Sixtus IV, inquisitions had been under control of the Pope.
2. On November 1, 1478, Sixtus IV yielded to pressure from King Ferdinand of Aragon, giving the king ability to name his own inquisitors and carry out his own inquisitions.

3. The initial intent was to detect insincere conversions of Jews to Christianity to avoid persecution.
4. On March 31, 1492, after Ferdinand and Isabella had captured Granada from the Muslims, completing the reconquest of Spain, they issued the “Alhambra Decree,” ordering all Jews to leave Spain within four months unless they converted to Christianity.
5. By July 31, 1492, up to 800,000 Jewish residents had fled Spain to avoid execution without trial.

Slide 42

1. This represented a significant departure from previous practices – Popes had found heresy only when baptized Christians had fallen away from Church orthodoxy.
2. Now, non-Christians were to be killed unless they changed their beliefs or left the country.
3. As one author states: “[W]estern Christianity before 1500 must rank as one of the most intolerant religions in world history: its record in comparison with medieval Islamic history is embarrassingly poor.” MacCulloch, *The Reformation at 676*.

Slide 43

1. In the writings of Peter Waldo and Marsilius and Wyclif and Huss are all the basic ideas about religious and political freedom that we take for granted today.
2. In those same writings are the basic ideas underlying the Protestant Reformation, including the right of people to read the Bible in their own language.
3. Why didn’t those ideas catch fire when they were first articulated as they did when they were later repeated?
4. Many scholars believe the answer is easy – these early reformers all came before the invention of the printing press.

5. As one author noted with respect to Wyclif's followers: **“One of the reasons that the Lollards had failed to consolidate widespread support while a century and a half later their evangelical successors did, was the fact that they could not produce enough copies of their literature to distribute.”** MacCulloch, *The Reformation* at 72.

6. At the time of Wyclif, even a few handwritten pages of the letters of Paul in English were worth **“a carload of hay.”** Moynahan, *The Faith* at 304.

7. By the time of Martin Luther and John Calvin, wide dissemination of ideas was not a problem and both made effective use of the printing press in bringing about the Protestant Reformation in Germany and Switzerland.

Slide 44

1. Next week, we will talk about that Reformation.

2. As we will see, the Reformation did not, by itself, result in the right of individuals to control their religious beliefs.

3. Instead, it largely resulted in a transfer of the power to control belief from the Pope to the increasingly powerful secular authorities, which continued the suppression of what they deemed to be heretical beliefs.

4. The story of how we came to be in control of our beliefs comes later.

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