

Overview of 17th Century Developments in Christianity

Historical Theology

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I. REMEMBERING WHY WE STUDY CHURCH HISTORY

II. ENGLISH AND SCOTTISH REFORMATIONS

- A) These reformation movements began early in the 16th Century but largely culminate with King James VI of Scotland being crowned King James I of England and later bringing about the King James Bible in 1611 although there would still be other notable events including the English Civil War (1642-1649) and the execution of King Charles I in 1649.
- B) Notable individuals include: Henry VII, Henry VIII, William Tyndale, Thomas Cromwell, Thomas Cranmer, Queen Mary, Queen Elizabeth, King James, John Knox, King Charles I, King Charles II

III. ANABAPTIST MOVEMENTS DEVELOP

- A) On the European Continent the Anabaptist movements began in the late 16th century and continued developing throughout this century. Several still exist today notably the Hutterites, Menonites and Amish.

IV. FRENCH REFORMATION

- A) France remained primarily Catholic throughout the 16th and 17th centuries with the Wars of Religion raging between Catholics and Protestant Huguenots from 1562 until the Edict of Nantes in 1598 produced peace until the Huguenot Rebellions began in 1620. The Edict was revoked by King Louis XIV in 1685 and persecution became increasingly severe although there were periods and regions where the persecution was less severe until everyone became collectively exhausted with the persecution in the 1750s and their eventual legal

recognition in 1787. Throughout this time many Huguenots fled France.

V. SYNOD OF DORT

A) Jacobus Arminius (1560-1609) was a Calvinist who began to question some points of Calvinist teaching specifically having to do with unconditional election, limited atonement and irresistible grace. He died before coming to agreement with the Calvinist world, but not before passing on his beliefs to a group of Dutch Reformed believers. His teachings had spread far enough that, in 1618 a Synod was convened at Dordrecht, called the Synod of Dort, in order for church leaders to hash out and settle the problem of Arminianism. Arminius' followers wrote a document called *Remonstrantiae* containing 5 points of disagreement between Arminianism and Calvinism. The members of the Synod responded with a document that has come to be known as the "5

Points of Calvinism," and commonly remembered by the acronym TULIP.

VI. AMYRALDIANISM

A) Sometimes called "4 Point Calvinism" today, Amyraldianism is a belief that Christ's atoning work for sin was not limited to the Elect but unlimited and available to all, but Total Depravity meant men still lacked faith to believe in Christ with the exception being those to whom God elected to grant faith. This, or variations of it have been presented by various theologians since the late 16th century, but generally the greatest credit for laying it out as a system goes to Moses Amyraut (1596-1664), a Huguenot, persuasive orator, pastor and professor of theology at University of Saumur. William Penn, founder of Pennsylvania, was among his students and based his beliefs on freedom of religion in part on Amyraut's teaching.