Reform and Power

Trace how religious ideas changed communities and governments

SS24.8.10b "Describe the political, religious, and social contributions of reformers in Europe, including Martin Luther and John Calvin."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one religious contribution by each reformer, circle one social change linked to each, and write P beside one political change linked to each. Use your marks to trace how their ideas affected life beyond church.

When Reform Reached the Town

1. In 1517, Martin Luther challenged the sale of indulgences, which some church officials offered in exchange for payments. An indulgence reduced punishment for sins, but Luther argued that people receive salvation through faith, not by buying church favors. He taught that the Bible should guide Christian belief and translated it into German so more readers could examine it themselves. Printing presses carried his ideas across Europe. His challenge to church authority sparked debate beyond worship: some people began to question who had the right to make decisions for them.

2. Some German princes supported Luther and protected him from punishment. They also gained more control over churches in their territories, reducing the pope's influence there. Luther did not call for all people to choose their rulers, and he opposed a major peasants' revolt. Still, the spread of his teachings changed everyday life. Protestant congregations encouraged people to learn scripture, and communities founded schools to teach reading. Religious change could strengthen a ruler's power while also expanding education for some ordinary families.

3. John Calvin, a French reformer, settled in Geneva, Switzerland, where he shaped the city's religious life. He taught that God had already chosen who would be saved, a belief called predestination. Geneva's leaders worked with church officials to enforce strict rules for public behavior, including worship and conduct. Calvin supported schooling so children could study Christian teachings. His writings traveled far beyond Geneva and influenced Protestant communities in Scotland, France, and the Netherlands. In those places, believers formed organized churches, sometimes challenging rulers who rejected their faith.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Describe one religious contribution by Luther and explain a social change connected to his teachings.

2. How did support for Luther change the political power of some German princes?

3. Describe a religious contribution by Calvin and a social change he supported in Geneva.

4. What political change sometimes followed the spread of Calvin's ideas beyond Geneva?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine your town council is deciding whether to support reforms inspired by Luther or Calvin. Write a four- to five-sentence speech recommending one reformer's ideas, explaining a likely religious effect, a social effect, and a political effect for your town.

ANSWER KEY

Reform and Power

GRADE 8 · SS24.8.10b

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one religious contribution by each reformer, circle one social change linked to each, and write P beside one political change linked to each. Use your marks to trace how their ideas affected life beyond church. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Describe one religious contribution by Luther and explain a social change connected to his teachings.	**Luther taught that the Bible should guide belief. As people studied scripture, communities founded schools to teach reading.**
2	How did support for Luther change the political power of some German princes?	**Princes who supported Luther gained more control over churches in their territories, reducing the pope's influence there.**
3	Describe a religious contribution by Calvin and a social change he supported in Geneva.	**Calvin taught predestination, the belief that God had already chosen who would be saved. He supported schooling so children could study Christian teachings.**
4	What political change sometimes followed the spread of Calvin's ideas beyond Geneva?	**Believers formed organized churches that sometimes challenged rulers who rejected their faith.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Council members, I recommend adopting Calvin's reforms in our town. His belief in predestination would change what people hear and discuss in church. We could open a school so children can study Christian teachings. If our leaders and church officials worked together, they might set rules for public conduct. These changes could unite some residents, but strict rules might also cause disagreement.

Accept other accurate contributions and effects supported by the passage. For the speech, look for a recommendation and distinct religious, social, and political effects applied to the imagined town.