Faith in Print

Trace how criticism and new ideas spread during the Reformation

MWH.C.2.3.A "Explain reasons for the growing discontent with the Catholic Church, including the main ideas of Martin Luther and John Calvin, and the role of William Tyndale."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two sources of discontent with the Catholic Church, circle one main idea each from Luther and Calvin, and box Tyndale's role in changing access to Scripture.

Who Should Speak for Faith?

1. In 1517, a visitor to a German town might hear a preacher offer indulgences in exchange for donations. Church teaching held that indulgences reduced remaining punishment for sins already forgiven, but some sellers made them sound like a quick way to free souls from punishment. Critics also objected to wealthy church offices, poorly trained clergy, and leaders who seemed more interested in money than spiritual care. Many Christians still valued the Catholic Church's worship and teachings. Their complaints did not all lead them to leave it. Yet printing presses carried arguments far beyond a single town, making disputes over religious authority harder to contain.

2. Martin Luther, a German monk, protested the sale of indulgences in 1517. He argued that people are made right with God through faith, not by buying favors or earning salvation through good works. He held that the Bible, rather than church officials, was the highest authority for Christian belief. Luther did not reject good works; he saw them as a result of faith, not a price paid for salvation. His writings, copied by printers, challenged the idea that church leaders alone could settle questions of belief. Supporters formed new churches, while Catholic leaders defended their teachings and practices.

3. John Calvin, a French reformer active in Geneva, also treated the Bible as the chief authority. He emphasized God's sovereignty and predestination, the belief that God had already chosen those who would be saved. Calvin taught that disciplined living should reflect faith, not purchase salvation. Meanwhile, English scholar William Tyndale translated the New Testament from Greek into English and helped translate parts of the Old Testament from Hebrew. His printed books reached English readers despite bans and the risk of arrest. By making Scripture available in English, Tyndale helped people examine religious claims without relying only on Latin texts read by clergy.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Why did the sale of indulgences trouble some Christians, and what other problem with church leaders added to their discontent?

2. How did Luther's ideas about salvation and authority challenge the practices or claims described in the passage?

3. What belief did Calvin share with Luther, and what idea did Calvin especially emphasize?

4. How did Tyndale's work change the way some English readers could respond to religious claims?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a five-sentence printer's note for readers who have heard conflicting religious claims. Explain how one church practice fueled criticism, contrast Luther's and Calvin's emphases, and explain how Tyndale's work might affect how readers judge those claims.

ANSWER KEY

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HIGH SCHOOL · MWH.C.2.3.A

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two sources of discontent with the Catholic Church, circle one main idea each from Luther and Calvin, and box Tyndale's role in changing access to Scripture. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Why did the sale of indulgences trouble some Christians, and what other problem with church leaders added to their discontent?	**Some sellers made indulgences sound like a quick way to escape punishment. Critics also objected to leaders who seemed more interested in money than spiritual care.**
2	How did Luther's ideas about salvation and authority challenge the practices or claims described in the passage?	**Luther argued that faith, not purchases or good works, makes people right with God. He placed the Bible above church officials as the highest authority for Christian belief.**
3	What belief did Calvin share with Luther, and what idea did Calvin especially emphasize?	**Both treated the Bible as the highest authority for Christian belief. Calvin especially emphasized predestination, the belief that God had already chosen those who would be saved.**
4	How did Tyndale's work change the way some English readers could respond to religious claims?	**Tyndale's English translations let readers examine Scripture without relying only on Latin texts read by clergy.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Some Christians objected when indulgences were offered for donations because sellers could make release from punishment seem purchasable. Luther said faith, not payment or good works, makes people right with God, and he placed the Bible above church officials in questions of belief. Calvin likewise made the Bible central, but he stressed God's prior choice of who would be saved. Tyndale's English New Testament gave English readers a way to examine Scripture for themselves. A person comparing these claims could turn to that translation rather than accept every claim from a preacher or reformer without question.

Accept other passage-supported sources of discontent, such as poorly trained clergy or wealthy church offices. In the printer's note, look for an accurate contrast between Luther and Calvin and a clear explanation of how Tyndale's translations affected access to Scripture.