Protestant Reformation notes

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1o8oIELbNxE>

* Protestant Reformation helps us to understand the lenses through which people have viewed their lives and communities…
* PR is “a big ass deal.”
* Pre-PR mostly all Christians in Europe were RC.
* RC was dominant form of Christianity since 4th c.
* PR broke Christianity into many groups. Examples….
* Changed people’s way of looking at themselves and the world and forced governments to grant religious freedom.
* More a political revolution than religious.
* Medieval ages Church dominated European civilization.
* E.g.: caretaker of souls
* Parish priest: baptizing, marrying, hearing confessions, last rites.
* Social services: alms to poor, orphanages, education. Priest was only who could read bible, since it was in Latin.
* Church owed more than 1/3 land in Europe. Thus most powerful economic and political force on continent.
* Pope claimed authority over all kings and queens in Europe as successor to Roman Emperor.
* Undone by Martin Luther.
* Studied Law, storm, he prayed to St. Ann. Became a monk, took vows.
* 1505 sent to Rome on diplomatic mission. Noticed prostitutes, corrupt priests, openly ridiculing church doctrine.
* L obsessed with own sinfulness. Teachers sent him to Wittenberg.
* Reads “just shall live by faith,” not good works or any action the RC church required. Sola fide.
* John Tetzel came to Witt to sell indulgences. Donation to church for promise from Pope to decrease sinner’s time in Purgatory.
* 3 marks, ½ year’s wages.
* Luther didn’t like this, so wrote 95 theses against indulgences. Put on church door. Oct. 31, 1517.
* Debates with other religious men. Said Church didn’t have power to save souls and then, that church wasn’t infallible but made lots of mistakes. Said priesthood was human invention and that individual Christians didn’t even need priests. “Priesthood of all believers.”
* Becomes a revolution.
* 1521, Called before Holy Roman Emperor, Charles V at Diet of Worms.
* Luther must be wrong, accd’g to Charles V.
* Others had criticized the Church but Luther was influential because of advent of printing press. So people had access to his beliefs. 1517-1526, 2,000 + editions appeared in print, plus posters, flyers, cartoons, etc. All over the place. Caused a stir.
* New translation of bible into German. Now non-priests can read the bible.
* Luther thought everyone would be able to see religions “original simplicity.”
* But now everyone had ideas and more spin-offs were created: Calvinists, Anabaptists, etc. Anglicans, Puritans, Methodists, Baptists, etc. Each thought they were correct.
* Ana-Baptists (Amish and Mennonites)—didn’t believe in infant baptism.
* People started fighting with each other
* German Peasant revolution: echoed Luther’s language.
* But Luther chooses elite, not peasants. Christian liberty was spiritual concept, not meant to promote equality of classes. Rebellion suppressed, 100,000 killed.
* Urge people to kill the rebels and also said kings and queens were put in place by good, so was against elected officials.
* Some rulers choose Luther.
* Albert of Prussia, liked the theology. Established Luther church. Political reasons.
* Protestantism allowed rulers to collect church land and collect church taxes and use that money for themselves. (Queen in England)
* But some rulers really did believe in Protestants.
* Both religious and political movement.
* More religious toleration in Europe.
* Max Weber calls it the foundation of European capitalism.
* Most crucial aspect: Protest and Reform.
* Leaders of American civil rights movement, American Protestant clergy, saw history of protests that resulted in reforms (Luther, Gandhi, Thoreau).