

Presbyterian Story Part I

By: Douglas J. Kortyna

Introduction



- I will be highlighting the two most important figures that brought about the Presbyterian movement. They are John Calvin (Swiss Reformer) and John Knox (Scottish Reformer).
- Another key reformer was Heinrich Bullinger (Second Helvetic Confession).
- Next week I will discuss American Presbyterian history.

John Calvin (1509-1564)



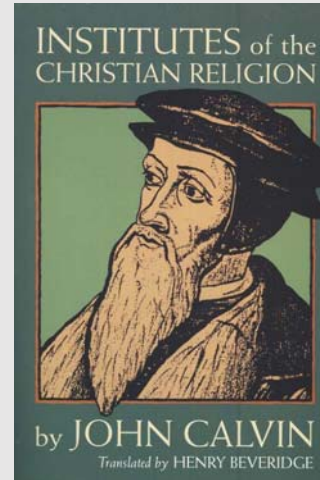
- Our tradition starts with John Calvin.
- Calvin was influenced by the church fathers. His biggest influence was Augustine.
- His followers planted churches mostly in northern Europe. Countries that were most influenced were Scotland, Netherlands, France, Switzerland, and England.

Calvin's Influence



Calvin's Work

- Calvin's most famous work was named the *Institutes of the Christian Religion*.
- He wrote many commentaries and focused on training pastors to send throughout Europe.
- His theology was known for being "God centered" and "God glorifying".



Calvin's Work

- Calvin's theology should not be thought of primarily in terms of predestination. It is an all encompassing way of life.
- His works influenced economics, theories of work, and many other spheres of life.
- Calvin has influenced Americans more than they know!



Abraham Kuyper: Dutch Prime Minister

Calvin's Theology



Calvin's home church in Geneva

- Calvin believed the mark of the church was the preaching of the gospel and the administration of the sacraments.
- His elder lead church model can be overlooked. At the time, it was revolutionary.

Calvin's View of Worship

- Another feature of Calvin's theology that is overlooked is his ideas surrounding worship.
- Mass is fundamentally "sacradotal" whereas everything in the Reformed church builds up and revolves around preaching.
- The sacraments always follow the preaching of the word of God.



John Knox



Knox Portrait

- John Knox is the face most associated with the Scottish Reformation.
- Knox was mostly known as a preacher, prophet, and church reformer. He was not a scholar like Calvin.
- Viewed life through a black and white lens. There was never any room for compromise.

John Knox: Preacher and Prophet

- John Knox was primarily an oral person. He loved to preach.
- He believed that while he was preaching he was a prophet speaking on behalf of God.
- Most of the texts he chose whenever he preached were from the Old Testament. His major emphasis was preaching against idolatry.

John Knox's Story



George Wishart

- John Knox was a personal "body guard" for the Scottish pre reformer George Wishart.
- Wishart marched around Scotland proclaiming that the people leave the Catholic church and embrace the true gospel.
- John Knox accompanied him for five weeks until he was burnt at the stake for preaching the gospel.

Retaliation for George Wishart



St. Andrews Castle

- Cardinal Beaton ordered the death of George Wishart.
- In response, several Protestant men broke into St. Andrews castle and killed cardinal Beaton.
- Should be remembered that during this time there is no separation between church and state.

Why is George Wishart So Important?



Cardinal Beaton

- Knox continually mentioned him as his inspiration to join the protestant movement and be prepared to die. Wishart (Elijah) Knox (Elisha).
- All though on the outside – because of his black and white nature – Knox appeared to have great courage. However, throughout his personal writings he seems scared to die.
- He was constantly aware that being a reformed preacher was a sentence for death.

John Knox Leaves Scotland



Edward the VI

- Upon Wishart's death, Knox left and found refuge in Newcastle England.
- Knox was very happy living in England during the boy king Edward the VI's reign.
- Upon Edward's death and Mary's ascension to the throne, Knox left for Geneva.

Knox in Geneva



Queen Mary

- Jane Dawson states “the majority of English exiles would have placed Henry Bullinger and Peter Martyr Vermingli above Calvin on their list of Reformers to consult.”
- Knox went to Geneva to discuss the legitimacy of Mary’s reign of England.
- Calvin, Bullinger, and others were not comfortable with Knox’s views on woman in power.

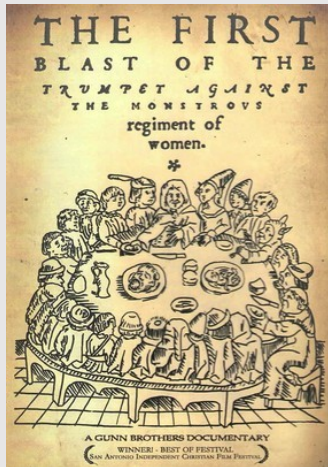
Knox in Geneva



Calvin and his followers in Geneva

- During Knox’s time in Geneva, he pastored English Protestant exiles.
- He developed a relationship with John Calvin and was being groomed in order to be sent into Scotland to start the Scottish Reformation.
- John Knox could be said to be Calvin’s most loyal disciple and Presbyterianism is the best representation of Calvin’s theology.

John Knox and Scottish Reformation



- Upon Mary's death, John Knox went to Scotland in order to launch the Scottish Reformation.
- During this time, he published the infamous "First Trumpet Against the Monstrous Regiment of Woman". In the words of Carl Truman from Westminster Seminary "the document is nutty".
- This document made Queen Elizabeth extremely mad. She shut off all correspondence with Calvin in Geneva and opted for the Protestant church in England and opted for the Protestant church in England to be influenced by Bullinger.

John Knox and Woman



Queen Elizabeth

- John Knox typically gets painted as a woman hater.
- However, most of the documents that he published against woman were public and political in nature. Throughout his ministry he wrote frequently to woman and was even financed by them.
- The relationship of John Knox and women is more complicated than is usually lead on.

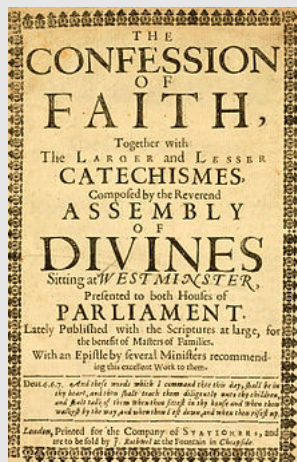
Knox and the Scottish Reformation



John Knox Preaching in front of Mary Queen of Scots

- John Knox and his followers marched throughout Scotland and took over strategic cities such as St. Andrews, Edinburgh, and Glasgow.
- John Knox preached the ideals of the new Scottish Reformation in front of the Queen and other leaders in Edinburgh.

The Scottish Confession of Faith



- The six John's penned the Scottish Confession of Faith. This confession is the most Calvinistic confession during this time period.
- During this time the first edition of the Book of Order and Book of Worship were penned too.
- Knox laid the foundation for what we know today as General Assembly, Presbytery, and local church. There was a firm rejection of the idea of bishop.

John Knox: Hero or Foe?

- John Knox should be embraced as a hero because of his high view of the Bible, preaching, and planting churches throughout Scotland.
- It should never be forgotten that God uses flawed individuals!
- Knox was a complex character. His publications on woman were very bad. However, his personal letters show another side.
- Knox should be admired for his unwillingness to compromise under difficult circumstances.

John Knox Biography

- John Knox by Jane Dawson. Yale University Press.
- Suzanne McDonald "John Knox for Armchair Theologians".
- Carl Truman has a good lecture on John Knox on Youtube.