

2. The reader will then share with the rest of the class all the qualities the group has on paper. The sheet could be put up on the wall.
3. When every group has presented, discuss as a whole class the most common qualities everyone put down. Discuss why everyone thinks these qualities are so important. Perhaps mention examples of biblical characters who possess these qualities.

Remind students that these are the qualities that they feel are the most important in a leader. If we do not have some of these qualities, then we should ask God for them so that we may develop into good leaders for His church.

REFLECTION & PRAYER



We must remember that each of us has a responsibility to pass on the truth to the next generation of believers. In doing that, we must ensure that what we pass on is the original truth, not something that we invented for our convenience, or for gain. This is the mistake that the Roman Catholic Church made. It drew farther and farther away from God and the true gospel as each generation passed, until what they preached bore no resemblance to the teachings of Christ and the apostles. We must learn from their mistakes and always keep to the true teachings of the Bible. Let us ask God to grant us wisdom and to give us strength in our endeavors. Let us pray.

Lesson 9

Lutherans, Presbyterians, and Anglicans

Listed Scriptures

2 Kgs 11–12, 22–23:30; 2 Chron 19–20, 29–31

Lesson Aim

- 1) Remind students to be diligent in keeping to the original teachings of Christ.
- 2) Show students that God has prepared a way for the true church to emerge at the right time.

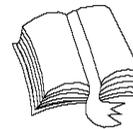
Memory Verse

“For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God.” (1 Cor 2:11)

Bible Reading For This Week (for students and teachers)

Deut 28–30; Ps 18:20–36; Mal 3–4

BIBLE BACKGROUND



Martin Luther was excommunicated by the pope in 1520 and outlawed by Emperor Charles V in 1521. However, his dramatic stand against pope and emperor fired the imagination of the people in Europe. Growing nationalistic feelings also helped him. Most people were tired of bowing to the whims of the Roman Catholic Church and the Emperor in Rome. People in Europe were beginning to gain a sense of belonging to their region or ruler. Frederick the Wise of Saxony, the most powerful ruler in Germany at the time, supported Luther and kept him safe. The people under Frederick also supported this decision.

Over the next twenty-five years, Luther wrote book after book. He wrote in German for ordinary people to read. The invention of the printing press about a century before assisted with the process of disseminating knowledge. Because of Luther’s

translation of the Bible, many lay people could read the Scriptures and see for themselves the truth of Luther's teachings. Luther published each of his disputes with Rome so that people could read and judge the issues. At last, the ordinary Christian could decide theological issues for himself for the first time in a very long time. Luther's followers multiplied.

There were many years of struggle and war as a result of the Reformation. In the year of Luther's death in 1546, one of these wars broke out. Finally, at a meeting called the Diet of Augsburg in 1555, the struggles ended, and both Roman Catholicism and Lutheranism were recognized as legal religions in the Holy Roman Empire. It was decided that the religion of the prince of the region would be the religion of the people he governed.

Luther's movement split Europe in two. It gave rise to three main traditions: the Lutheran (in Germany and Scandinavia), the Zwinglian and Calvinist (in Switzerland, France, Holland and Scotland), and the Church of England. From there, the number of Protestant churches grew, but these three main groups—Lutherans, Presbyterians and Anglicans—still form the main groups of Protestantism. There were lasting social and political effects following the years of reform. However, people rediscovered the Bible and God's saving grace in Christ. People's eyes were opened to the truth and saw the customs and practices that corrupted it. New forms of worship enabled the congregation to be a part of the services. Luther also became well known for the hymns that inspired so many of his followers. The tradition of hymn singing that is so important to Christian churches today has Luther to thank for this.

W A R M U P



You will need a small piece of paper and a pencil or pen for each student. For the first part of this game, everyone works independently. No one is allowed to see what someone else is writing. Secrecy is important!

Give the class a general issue to reflect on. For example, ask them:

- What they think being a good friend means.
- What being a good Christian means.
- What being an obedient son/daughter means.

Allow students to spend 5 minutes or so writing down their views. This can be in point form.

When they are done, put them in pairs and ask each pair to decide

if they are A or B. A will first try to guess what B wrote on the piece of paper. B has to answer "yes" or "no" to the guesses. B must not elaborate. If the guess is inaccurate, just say "no." Give A 30 seconds to guess, then switch roles.

At the end of the exercise, discuss with the whole class the percentage of accuracy in their guesses. Did most of them guess what their partner thought? Were all their guesses mostly accurate?

Now, put them in different pairings. Do the same exercise all over again, but this time, each person shares with his/her partner what they wrote on their piece of paper, so there is no need to guess. Give them a minute or so to do this, then discuss as a class again. Ask volunteers to tell the class what his/her partner feels about the issue they are writing about.

Ask the class the differences between the two times they worked with a partner. Hopefully, they will see that the first time was a "hit and miss" situation; they could not really know what the other person was thinking but could have guessed correctly. The second time though, they knew exactly what their partner thought because they could read what their partner had written. They were able to really know what their partner was thinking because they were told by the source of the information—their partner.

That is the way with understanding God. In order to understand His will, we need to go to the source of the information—God Himself, through reading the Bible, or through prayer. Unfortunately, people tend to guess what God thinks, and act according to their "best guess." However, we as humans can never truly understand God because He is so much greater than we are. That is why there are so many churches in the world today. Everyone thinks they understand God, but most people do not go to God Himself. This is what we need to guard against.



Part 1

Reforms in the Old Testament

Reform is not a new idea that came about with Martin Luther. There have been many reformers in the Old Testament. Below, we look closely at two of them. However, the Bible readings for this week will also lead us to other royal reformers. Read the following passages, and using point form notes, fill in the boxes for each passage (see student workbook):

2 Kings 12:1–16 (Jehoash's reform)

- What type of reform was made (i.e., things that were done to correct the situation)?
- Was there anything missing in the reformation (i.e., things that should have been done that were not)?

2 Chron 19:4–11, 20:31–37 (Jehoshaphat's reform)

- What type of reform was made (i.e., things that were done to correct the situation)?
- Was there anything missing in the reformation (i.e., things that should have been done that were not)?

As we see above and from the Bible readings for this week, there were many reformers amongst the kings of Judah. However, not everything was done perfectly, or the way God would have wanted it. Leaders often make important changes that affect the people under their charge. In the church it is important that these changes serve to draw us closer to God and help us understand His will better. Unfortunately, people often try to understand God's will through their own human wisdom. This week's memory verse reminds us that only the spirit of God knows the things of God. Therefore only God is able to show us the right way in any reform, large or small.



Part 2

The Three Main Branches of the Protestant Reformation



A. Lutheranism

Lutherans separated themselves from the Roman Catholic Church by declaring:

- The pope has no divine right to spiritual matters. The Roman Catholic Church believed that the pope had the final say in spiritual matters, including matters regarding doctrines.
- The pope was not infallible. That is, the pope is also human and can make mistakes. The Roman Catholic Church believed that since the pope was a spiritual descendent of St. Peter, God would inspire him so that his decisions were all correct.
- Scripture, not a priest or the church, had final authority over conscience. So in matters of morality, in right or wrong, believers need to turn to scripture for final decisions, although they may go to the priest or the church for guidance.

Lutherans believe that our sins are forgiven through the grace of the Holy Spirit, not by any good works we do, or by going through any church rite. This was a key idea of the Reformation.

There are two sacraments: baptism and the Lord's Supper (Holy Communion). Lutherans believe that in the Holy Communion, Christ is really present in the bread and wine (they do use wine) in some miraculous way. They ordain their priests, and their Sunday service consists of prayer, meditation, and readings from the scripture. Unlike Roman Catholic priests, Lutheran priests are allowed to marry.

Although there were criticisms that Luther did not go far enough to break with Roman Catholic practices (he retained the crucifix, candles and other physical elements of the Roman Catholic Church), the above features were quite revolutionary. The faith of the people no longer depended on one powerful individual (such as the pope). Believers were considered equal, sharing the ideal of priesthood. In the Roman Catholic Church of the time, ordinary believers always felt that the priests were closer to God, and therefore forgiveness and salvation came from God through them. There was no involvement by the congregation in the Roman Catholic Church, as everything was done by the priests and the clergy. In contrast, the Lutheran congregation was actively involved in worship through singing.

B. Presbyterianism

Presbyterians are known as Calvinists. The word “Presbyterian” comes from the Greek word *presbuteros*, meaning “elder.” This refers to the people who direct the operations of the church.

Presbyterians are Protestants who trace their beginnings to John Calvin and France. Calvin wrote “The Institutes of the Christian Religion,” in which he outlined the belief system of the Protestant churches. He then moved to Geneva, Switzerland, where he preached his beliefs. The Calvinist faith spread rapidly across Europe. One of his converts was a Scot by the name of John Knox, who spread Calvinism in Scotland. Presbyterianism then spread to North America and the rest of the world.

Calvin emphasized the sovereignty of God in his teachings. Humans are completely dominated by and dependent on God. Our lives are unconditionally predestined. Presbyterians try to live a morally strict and clean life to show a good example. Calvin’s reform ideas included education, liberation of the oppressed and the establishment of democratic forms of government in church and state.

They have two main sacraments: baptism for infants and adults, and the Lord’s Supper (Holy Communion). The Communion is open to all baptized Christians and not just Presbyterians. The consecrated bread and wine in the Holy Communion are symbols representing Christ’s body and blood.

Presbyterians believe in the Trinity. The Bible is the foundation of their faith. They believe that they are saved “by faith alone, by God’s grace only, through scripture only.”

The churches are governed by elders who are elected by their congregations. The congregation also elects and ordains pastors. All elders and pastors would gather to form presbyteries for mutual support and cooperative governance. They do not believe in a hierarchical structure of church governance. It is a policy for Presbyterians to seek community with all Christian churches.

C. Anglicanism

The Church of England is the mother church of the Anglican Communion. The church was created in the sixteenth century by King Henry VIII, who wished to annul his marriage to the elderly Catherine of Aragon (his first wife) so he could

marry Anne Boleyn. The Pope refused to grant the annulment, so King Henry took over the English church and made himself head of the church. He broke with Rome and thus formed the Anglican Church. He then had the Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Cranmer, pronounce his first marriage null and void before proceeding to marry Anne.

The Church of England spread throughout the British Empire. Its influence spread into India and North America, where it evolved into the Episcopal Church, an independent church that came about after the American Revolution.

Anglicans retain many elements of traditional Catholic worship. However, they also accept basic insights from the Protestant reform. The Anglican Church has few firm rules and allows great flexibility in the interpretation of doctrines. It considers the Bible to be divinely inspired and sees the Lord’s Supper as the central act of Christian worship. Anglicans respect the freedom of individuals, permitting a great deal of variety, independent thinking and religious liberty. They recognize both the Nicene and Apostles’ Creeds. They also have a *Book of Common Prayer* that is used in worship.

C H E C K F O R U N D E R S T A N D I N G



You will need chart paper and markers for each group. Work in groups of three. Draw a circle in the middle of the chart paper and write the word “similarities” in the circle. Now divide the rest of the space into three sections: Lutherans, Presbyterians, Anglicans. Each student will write in one section. Using the information given above, highlight the key teachings of one of these Protestant churches. (So each student will work on a different one.)

Once this is done, the group will look at the key points that each group member has written down and identify points that are similar in all three groups. Write these similarities in the center. Use another color to highlight points that are specific to each group, and not found in the others.

Once each group has completed the task, they should copy the information in a Venn diagram with three circles. Write similarities in the common space in the center, and differences in the area belonging to the individual group. If there are any overlaps between only two groups, these could be written in the appropriate overlapping section of the diagram. Keep this diagram for review.



Defending the Basic Doctrines

Provide each student with a copy of the Basic Doctrines of our church. Also have copies of our church publication, "Q & A on the Basic Beliefs" (at least one per group). Divide the students into at least two groups. You can have more groups if you have a big class. You will need at least 3 or 4 students per group.

Each group takes on one basic doctrine to defend. It could be water baptism, foot-washing, Holy Communion or Holy Spirit. As you have at least 2 groups, there will be at least 2 basic doctrines for the debate. Give students time to prepare for the debate that will take place in two weeks' time. These are the rules:

1. Each group has one basic doctrine to defend. The group must be able to answer any criticism of their basic doctrine.
2. The other groups will prepare arguments against this doctrine.
3. During the debate, the group defending the doctrine will speak first. They must explain what the doctrine is about, and convince the other groups that they have the truth.
4. The other groups will then criticize the teachings of the doctrine. There should be one group speaking at a time, and the defenders must have the opportunity to answer to the charges.

Set a time limit for each basic doctrine. Once one group has finished, the next group will take their place and present the next basic doctrine. Since each group must prepare their own doctrine to defend, as well as some critical points for other doctrines that people outside our church might ask us, the preparation may take time. Students have this time, and next week to prepare.

Ask students to think about all the questions their friends may have asked them about our church doctrines and see how they answer them. They can also use the "Q & A on Basic Beliefs" to help them in their preparations.

We might face criticisms of our faith in our daily lives. We have to prepare ourselves for such occasions. This activity will help us to think about our faith, and how we might apply it when someone challenges us. The teacher should be prepared to help the students in their preparation. Perhaps the other teachers or a minister could be present during the debates to help out in case there are any complicated questions that arise.



With so many Christian denominations today, we must be firm in our own faith. We must be sure that we really know what we believe in, and be able to stand up to those beliefs. The only source of true understanding comes from God. Let us pray and ask Him to grant us a deeper understanding of His truth.