

SHORT ANSWER

10 minutes for these questions (4 points each)

1. Define indulgence.
An indulgence is a pardon from the temporal penalty of sin, which was sold by the Roman Catholic Church for money. This practice is not supported by Scripture.
2. Define synergism.
In theology, the idea that people participate in their conversion. While some believe that the Holy Spirit alone can bring about a person's conversion and others claim that conversion involves the Spirit and the Word of God, synergists would add that the consenting will of man is also needed.
3. Define monergism.
The theological position that the Holy Spirit alone can act to bring about the conversion of people. Apart from God, no person contributes anything to the conversion of a person's soul.
4. Define antinomianism.
Literally, in Greek, "lawlessness." The idea that Christians have no more need of the Mosaic law or-by extension- any secular laws or authority.
5. In 1517, Luther posted the Ninty-Five Theses on the door of the Wittenberg Castle Church, which acted as the university's bulletin board.
6. Based on his reading of the Gospels and the Letters of Saint Paul, Luther came to believe that people are justified solely through faith in God's promise that Christ died for their salvation. Luther argued from Scripture that man is not justified through works.
7. In 1521, Luther was given a hearing before Holy Roman Emperor Charles V at Worms, Germany.
8. At the hearing before Charles V, Luther refused to recant his criticisms against the church's practice of indulgences.
9. In January 1521, Pope Leo X excommunicated Luther and declared him a heretic.
10. What was the Augsburg Confession?
Luther's colleague and friend, Philipp Melanchton, presented a formal statement of what the Reformers believed, called the Augsburg Confession, to the emperor Charles V in 1530. It eventually became the basic statement of Lutheran doctrine.

ESSAY QUESTION

20 minutes for one of these questions. (60 points)

1. What political, cultural, and religious conditions in Germany combined to favor Luther's attempts at reform?

Points an Excellent Answer Might Include

- Disunity of the Holy Roman Empire, enabling local Protestant lords to shield Protestants from government attempts to ferret them out
- General Renaissance spirit of inquiry
- Willingness to question previously-accepted wisdom and authorities
- Availability of the printing press to disseminate new teachings
- Study of the Bible in its original language, exposing errors in church teaching
- Spiritual impoverishment of Roman Catholic doctrine
- Worldliness of popes, scrambling for the political power that they felt themselves losing
- Sale of indulgences (absolution for money) to finance popes' worldliness
- Resultant hunger for spiritual truth

Sample Answer

In the providence of God, the Reformation came at just the right time. The political, cultural, and religious conditions in Germany all combined to favor Luther's attempts at reform.

Politically, the Holy Roman Empire prepared a place where Luther's young reform movement could be harbored in safety. For centuries, the independent kingdoms that made up Germany had been ruled in name by one elected emperor. However, because the emperor tried to rule Italian territories also, he could not pay enough attention to his holdings to keep them unified. By the time of Luther, there were hundreds of German states ruled in fact by powerful local lords. A number of these lords individually decided to favor the Protestants, and the Holy Roman Emperor did not have the power or support to ferret them out. The political disunity of the Holy Roman Empire helped the Reformation survive long enough to take root.

Culturally, Germany was caught up with the rest of the world in the Renaissance. The northern Renaissance, especially, focused on studying ancient biblical languages and cultures. People began to study the Bible in its original language. The printing press had also been invented in Germany some sixty years prior. The accessibility of the Bible, the opportunity to spread new teachings by printing, and the general spirit of inquiry fostered by the Renaissance helped Reformation teachings to catch on like wildfire.

Religiously, Germany shared in the general darkness and disillusionment of the Catholic Church. Popes, losing their political power, scrambled for worldly wealth and prestige. In Germany, papal officials had resorted to selling indulgences. People were buying absolution for money. The corruption of the church had reached a point where it could not be ignored, at a point when people were also learning to question assumptions and think for themselves. This painful religious poverty made people all the more eager to hear the invigorating Christian message of the Reformers.

God used the conditions in Europe in general and Germany in particular to help the Reformation take hold. From the disunity of the German states to Renaissance curiosity to religious poverty, many different conditions combined to uniquely favor Luther's attempts at reform.

2. How was the Reformation the child of the Renaissance? Support your answer with three facts from your studies.

Points an Excellent Answer Might Include

- Interest in ancient cultures (northern Renaissance: the early church, exposing changes in the church over the centuries)
- Knowledge of ancient languages (northern Renaissance: Greek and Hebrew to read the Bible, exposing erroneous church teachings)
- Availability of ancient texts (northern Renaissance: the Bible)
- Willingness to question intellectual authorities
- Printing press, to disseminate Luther's (and other Reformers') teachings faster than any previous "heresies" had ever spread. The church was not prepared to deal with this new phenomenon.
- Widespread literacy due to an emphasis on learning, preparing people to consider Luther's teachings for themselves

Sample Answer

In many ways, the Reformation was the child of the Renaissance. The willingness to question intellectual authorities, the availability of ancient texts, and the printing press were all direct results of the Renaissance that paved the way for the Reformation.

The Renaissance was marked overall by people feeling free to think for themselves, something that was critical to the Reformation. Instead of depending on ancient authorities for knowledge, scholars began studying the world for themselves. Scientists discovered that their experiments disproved the ancient masters. In the area of religion, this translated into people going directly to the Bible for truth, rather than accepting church teaching at face value. This spirit of inquiry and willingness to question previous wisdom was essential for the Reformation.

Another fruit of the Renaissance was the availability of ancient texts. Renaissance scholars took a renewed interest in ancient cultures and their achievements. They learned ancient languages like Latin in order to be able to read them. In the northern Renaissance, they also learned Greek and Hebrew to be able to read the Bible in the original language. In reading the Bible itself, rather than church translations and adaptations, they uncovered church errors. The availability of biblical texts enabled the Word of God to work in power among the Reformers.

One of the single greatest factors contributing to the success of the Reformation was the printing press. The printing press had caught on during the Renaissance as a way to spread knowledge quickly and cheaply. When Martin Luther and the other Reformers came along, their teachings spread like wildfire, faster than any so-called heretic's had ever traveled before. The church was not prepared to deal with this. By the time the authorities tried to quench the Reformation, it was too late. The Renaissance invention of the printing press enabled the Reformation to catch hold quickly.

In its emphasis on questioning intellectual authorities, studying ancient cultures, and becoming educated so as to think for oneself, the Renaissance laid the groundwork necessary for the Reformation to succeed. Truly the Reformation may be considered a child of the Renaissance.