

Religious changes 1536-1539

Enquiry: Why did Henry VIII make a break with Rome?

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What are the differences between Catholics and Protestants?

The Catholic Way

England had been a Catholic country for nearly a thousand years. The key features of Catholicism were:

- Both the Bible and church services were in Latin.
- The Head of the Church is the Pope who was appointed by God.
- The only way to be forgiven for your sins is to follow the teachings of the Church. The Pope and his bishops could forgive sins. At some churches people were encouraged to show they were sorry for their sins by giving the Church gifts.
- Priests could not get married because they have devoted their lives totally to God.
- Priests should wear special clothing to reflect their special link with God.
- Catholics believed that if they did not worship in the right way then they would go to hell.



The Protestant Way

In the 1500s a growing number of people felt that the Catholic Church had lost its way. They said that it was too rich and did not spend the money given to the Church in the right way. They were particularly angry that rich people could pay a bishop or the Pope to forgive their sins.

- The Bible and church services should be in English (or the spoken language of the country) so that everyone could understand.
- What was written in the Bible was seen as more authoritative than what any human leader said.
- The only way to be forgiven for your sins is to follow the teachings of Jesus Christ. Only Jesus can forgive sins.
- Priests (also called ministers) are ordinary people who should be free to marry. People do not need priests to find God.
- Protestants believed that if they do not worship in the right way then they would go to hell.



What were the Ten Articles of 1536?

After the break with Rome there was a need to clarify the beliefs and ideas of the Church of England to help unite Catholics and Protestants. So in 1536 Thomas Cranmer, the Archbishop of Canterbury, wrote *The Ten Articles*, which some thought were a compromise (settlement of differences) between the two religions.



The *Ten Articles*

The first five articles related to **doctrines** and the other five related to **ceremonies**. The most important part of the *Ten Articles* was that it only included three of the Seven Sacraments which Catholics believed in. The three that were included were: Baptism, the Eucharist and Penance.



Continued Reforms

After this Cromwell continued to make **reforms** to the Church. This included:

- Destroying statues and images of saints which had long been a Catholic tradition.
- Any Catholic practices which were seen as superstitious, like rubbing **holy relics**, were attacked.
- The English Bible was placed in all churches, however mass remained in Latin.



Henry VIII and Reform

Even though Henry was the Head of the Church of England, which was Protestant, Henry did not see himself as a Protestant and these reforms worried him. So in 1537, *The Bishops Book* was published in England. This acknowledged that the four sacraments which had been left out of the *Ten Articles* were valid but were less important than the other three Protestant sacraments.



Glossary

- **Doctrines:** A belief or set of beliefs that are taught.
- **Ceremonies:** Formal acts that are performed on religious occasions.
- **Holy relics:** Objects that are believed to have belonged or been touched by saints.
- **Reforms:** Changes made to something.



What changes occurred after Henry broke with Rome?



Comprehension questions

1. Why were the *Ten Articles* written in 1536?
2. How might the *Ten Articles* upset Catholics at the time?
3. List two religious reforms that were made to the Church.
4. How was *The Bishops Book* different from the *Ten Articles*?

