

CHAPTER 14 | LESSON 1 Trouble for the Catholic Church

Lesson 1 Trouble for the Catholic Church**BEFORE YOU READ**

In Chapter 13, you read about the great artists of the Renaissance who worked for the Catholic Church. In this section, you will read about how disagreements over Church practices led to the Reformation.

AS YOU READ

Use a chart like the one below to summarize each of the main sections of Lesson 1.

Section	Summary
The Great Schism	
Criticism of the Church	
Martin Luther confronts the Church	

TERMS & NAMES

- **Great Schism** split that divided the Catholic Church from 1378 until 1417
- **indulgence** the relaxation of earthly penalty for sin
- **Martin Luther** a reformer whose beliefs challenged Church authority and started the reform movement that led to the Reformation
- **Protestants** Christians who broke with the Catholic Church during and after the 1500s
- **Reformation** term used by Protestants to describe the movement of opposition to the Catholic Church

The Great Schism

(pages 461–462)

How did internal differences weaken the Catholic Church?

In the 1300s, the rulers of some nations grew strong enough to force the Church to support their policies. In 1305, the French king used his political power to have Clement V elected pope. Pope Clement V moved the center of Church government from Rome to Avignon, France. After the move, most popes were French. To many Europeans and Church officials it seemed that the French king controlled the pope.

Over time two centers of power developed within the Church. One was in Avignon and the other in Rome. In 1378, each elected different popes. This marked the start of the **Great Schism**, or split within the Catholic Church.

From 1378 until 1417, the Great Schism divided the Church. During this time, both popes claimed power over all Christians. Each excommunicated the other's followers. Christians became confused about which pope had power and authority. The split greatly weakened the Church. It ended in 1414 when the Holy Roman Emperor, ruler of much of central Europe, brought both sides together. At this meeting Church officials forced out the French pope and convinced the Roman pope to resign. In 1417 officials elected a new pope based in Rome.

1. How did the Great Schism weaken the Church?

READING STUDY GUIDE CONTINUED

Criticism of the Church

(pages 462–463)

Why did people begin to question some Church practices?

In the 1300s and 1400s, Church members began to speak out against some Church practices.

Many practices angered reformers. They disliked the way the Church earned and spent its money. Over time, the Church had become a large landowner, owning from one-fifth to one-third of all lands of Europe. Church leaders needed huge sums of money to maintain these lands. Many Europeans, especially those outside of Italy, resented paying taxes to the Church in Rome. They were also angry that the Church paid no taxes on its vast landholdings. Reformers also disliked the way the Church spent its money. Many popes spent large sums on the arts and on themselves.

Reformers also objected to the sale of **indulgences**. An indulgence is the relaxation of earthly penalty for sin. However, people bought indulgences because they believed these indulgences would help them avoid punishment by God in the afterlife. Reformers opposed the idea that someone could buy their way into heaven. Many called on the Church to stress its spiritual values over earthly ones.

During the 1300s and 1400s, several key reformers spoke out against Church practices. In England, priest and philosopher John Wycliffe questioned the pope's right to levy taxes and appoint Church officials without the king's approval. Dutch priest and scholar Desiderius Erasmus criticized Church officials for neglecting Christian values. He also spoke out against reformers for trying to divide the Church. These thinkers influenced reformers in the next century.

2. What Church practices did reformers dislike?

Luther Confronts the Church

(pages 463–465)

Who is credited with beginning the Reformation?

Early Church reformers wanted to improve the Church and work within it. In the early 1500s German-born **Martin Luther** started a movement that openly attacked the Catholic Church. As a young man Luther began to question many traditional beliefs and practices. In 1517, he boldly challenged Church beliefs by listing his ideas in a paper called the Ninety-Five Theses. His ideas included the belief that the Bible was only source of religious truth. He also felt that people did not need clergy to interpret the Bible. He argued that people could be saved only if they had faith in Christ. They could not be saved through good works. These beliefs challenged the Church's authority.

His ideas lead to a fight with the Catholic Church. In 1529 German princes loyal to the Church agreed to oppose Luther's ideas. Prince who supported Luther signed a protest against this agreement. Luther's supporters became known as Protestants. In time all Christians who broke with the Catholic Church during and after the 1500s became known as **Protestants**. They called their movement against the Catholic Church the **Reformation**.

3. What were important ideas from the Reformation?
