


Topics

- Introduction to Church History 1600-1800
 - The British Church: The Anglicans
 - Grace Abounding: The Puritans
 - For Christ's Crown & Covenant: The Scottish Presbyterians
 - God's Free Mercy: The Church in the Netherlands
 - The Westminster Assembly
 - Calvinism in the New World
 - Protestant Orthodoxy
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- The Path of Life: Brother Lawrence and Blaise Pascal
 - The Great Divide: Enlightenment and Romanticism
 - A Warmth From the Fire of God in the Heart of Germany: Pietism and Bach
 - The Inextinguishable Blaze: The Evangelical Revival in Great Britain
 - The Great Awakening in America
 - From the Awakening to the Revolution: Davies to Witherspoon
 - Summary

<http://www.rpchurchmanassas.org/drupal/churchhistory16001800>

Lawrence, Pascal, and the Roman Catholics - Outline

- Roman Catholicism - Background
- Brother Lawrence
- Blaise Pascal

*“There is so much we could look at and talk about in Roman Catholic history. It is a little overwhelming, but I have chosen to focus on two men, Roman Catholics, who lived in Paris at the same time. One was a very simple man who had a very simple message and lived a very simple life. The other was one of the most brilliant minds in all of human history. One was **Brother Lawrence**, and the other was **Blaise Pascal**.”*

– Dr. David Calhoun

Roman Catholicism - Background

Outcome from the Council at Trent (1545-1563)	Reception in Europe
Strong Papacy	Nationalism, strong Kings – prefer authority in local bishops
Improved behavior by clergy Improved training for the clergy	Generally successful but some local bishops prefer bishop level authority to continue naughty behavior
No need to modify doctrine – Luther and the Protestants are wrong!	If Luther and Calvin are wrong on salvation by grace and predestination, doesn't that make Augustine wrong, too?!



CONTROVERSY!

Roman Catholicism - 17th Century Background

LATE 16th CENTURY

- Disputes among Catholics on Pre-destination
 - Jesuits equate Pre-destination with God's foreknowledge, accuse Dominicans of being Calvinists!
 - Dominicans adopt Augustinian view of Pre-destination, accuse Jesuits of being Pelagians
 - Popes side with Jesuits and condemn Dominican position but are mostly interested in ending the argument

17th CENTURY

- 1640 - Cornelius Jansenius's work Augustine is published posthumously
- 1643 - Pope Urban VIII condemns Augustine – sounds too much like Calvin
- 1643 – Saint Cyran (dies in October, 1643), then Antoine Arnauld assume the mantle of champion of Jansenism
- 1654 – Blaise Pascal embraces Jansenist / Augustinian ideas
- Jansenism eventually lives on as a religious reform (anti-Jesuit) and political (keep Roman influence out of France) movement not closely tied to Jansenius's writing

Brother Lawrence (~1610 – 1691)

- Born Nicholas Herman in Lorraine (France near German border) in 1610 or 1611 or 1614
 - Unlearned from an academic perspective
 - Soldier, odd jobs, somewhat aimless early life
 - “A big, awkward fellow who broke things” – self description
 - Converts to Christianity at 18 contemplating a bare tree in winter
- Joins the Carmelite Order in Paris in ~1660 - 1666
 - Becomes known as Brother Lawrence
 - Put to work in the monastery kitchen (didn't particularly enjoy)
- Known for a simple but powerful message –
We must practice the presence of God wherever we are and whatever we are doing (even working in the kitchen!)
- Letters and record of conversations with a friend released posthumously as *The Practice of the Presence of God*

“You keep saying that I am always saying just one thing. And you are right.”

“This made me resolve to give the all for the all; so after having given myself wholly to God, that He might take away my sin, I renounced for the love of Him, everything that was not He, and I began to live as if there was none but He and I in the world.”

“All possible kinds of mortification, if they were void of the love of God, could not efface a single sin. We ought without anxiety to expect the pardon of our sins from the blood of Jesus Christ, only endeavoring to love him with all our hearts.”

– Brother Lawrence

I Thessalonians 1:3 - *Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father;*

I Thessalonians 5:17 – *Pray without ceasing*

Blaise Pascal (1623 – 1662)



- Born in France in 1623
- Brilliant Mathematician and Scientist
 - Geometry, Physics, Calculus
 - Prototyped 50 models of a calculating machine
 - “Invented” the wristwatch – attached his pocket watch with a string
- Lived early life as a conventional Catholic
 - Mixed with the intelligentsia and wealthy in Paris society
- Religious Transformation ~1654
 - Embrace of Jansenist (Augustinian Catholic) ideas
 - The “Night of Fire” experience – November 23, 1654 10:30 PM – 12:30 AM
 - ❑ “God of Abraham, God of Isaac, God of Jacob, not of the philosophers and scholars”

“There is sufficient light for those who wish to see, and sufficient darkness for those of the opposite disposition. Enough clarity to illumine the elect, and enough darkness to keep them humble. Sufficient darkness to blind the reprobate, and sufficient clarity to condemn them and make them inexcusable”

– Blaise Pascal

Blaise Pascal (1623 – 1662)

- Apologist / Evangelist to the new secular intelligentsia (The Modern Pagan)
 - Montaigne (16th century) – Skepticism, the folly of certitude, What do I know?
 - Descartes (Pascal contemporary) – “I think therefore I am”, clear the slate and derive God and the external world with his own mind
- Famous Works
 - Provincial Letters – Witty, sarcastic defense of Jansenists against Jesuits attacking Jesuit’s semi-Pelagian views and ethics
 - Pensees [Thoughts] – Assembled after Pascal’s death from small fragments in a box
 - ❑ Problems – wretchedness, vanity, injustice, irrationality, alienation, sin, selfishness, death
 - ❑ Popular Pseudo-Solutions – diversion, indifference
 - ❑ Clues Along the Way – scripture, the Jews, miracles
 - ❑ The Decision: The Wager – “I should be much more afraid of being mistaken and then finding out that Christianity is true than of being mistaken in believing it to be true”
 - ❑ The End, the Point: Christ Himself

“Not only do we only know God through Jesus Christ, but we only know ourselves through Jesus Christ; we only know life and death through Jesus Christ. Apart from Jesus Christ we cannot know the meaning of our life or our death, of God, or of ourselves.”

– Blaise Pascal

BACK-UP SLIDES

PASCAL'S TRIANGLE

