

The Renaissance - Tradition & Religion

Luther Leads the Reformation

Church Authority Challenged

- Secularism, individualism of Renaissance challenge Church authority
- Rulers challenge Church's power
- Printing press spreads secular ideas
- Northern merchants resent paying church taxes

Criticisms of the Catholic Church

- Corrupt leaders, extravagant popes
- Poorly educated priests

Luther Challenges the Church

The 95 Theses

- Martin Luther protests Friar Johann Tetzel's selling of indulgences
 - **Indulgence** - a pardon releasing a person from penalty for a sin
- In 1517 Luther posts his 95 Theses attacking "pardon-merchants"
- Luther's theses circulate throughout Germany
- Luther launches the **Reformation** - a movement for religious reform
- Reformation rejects pope's authority

Luther's Teachings

- People can win salvation by good works and faith
- Christian teachings must be based on the Bible, not the pope
- All people with faith are equal, can interpret Bible without priests

The Response to Luther

The Pope's Threat

- Pope Leo X issues decree threatening to excommunicate Luther (1520)
- Luther's rights of Church membership are taken away
- Luther refuses to take back his statements and is excommunicated.

The Peasants' Revolt

- Inspired by Reformation, German peasants seek end to serfdom (1524)
- Princes crush revolt; about 100,000 people die.