

## Winter 2015 History & Heritage -- #3

### **Americans' "Protestantism of the Protestant Religion"--(Kirk; *Roots*, pp. 229-238)**

**This description of the religious character** of Anglo-Americans from the beginning, Burke offered for the consideration of his colleagues in the House of Commons? The description reflected most Americans' embrace of the Reformation, with its protest against the Catholic clergy and its interpretation of Tradition. What the Reformers and thus Americans were decidedly for, seemingly under siege by Catholicism, was the ultimacy of Scripture and the right of every man to know it for himself.

### **The Faith's Final Authority --- (Kirk; *Roots*, pp. 229-238)**

**This burning issue**, concerning which Catholics cited "Scripture and Tradition" and Protestants "Scripture Alone," framed all their doctrinal disputes in the 1500's? Catholics more or less wrapped Scripture into Church Tradition, insisted only the clergy could interpret Tradition, and dismissed private, personal judgment on religious matters. Protestants countered with a ringing endorsement of the unique, ultimate authority of Scripture, along with the legitimacy of private interpretation of Scripture's meaning.

### **Luther and Calvin --- (Kirk; *Roots of American Order*, pp. 229-238)**

**These two 16th-century theologians**, among many influential Protestant Reformers, were without question the magisterial voices of the movement? One of them (d. 1546), best known for his *Ninety-five Theses*, invigorated the cause with his piercing insights; the other (d. 1564), with his *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, gave it its systematic coherence and cogency. Out of Germany and Switzerland respectively, their teachings spread like wildfire throughout Europe (particularly in the northern regions).

### **The Priesthood of All Believers --- (Kirk; *Roots*, pp. 229-238)**

**This biblical doctrine**, particularly emphasized in Protestantism, affirmed the spiritual life and differing gifts and service of all Christians however lowly they may appear? Luther (d. 1546) understood it to call every believer to represent Christ to his neighbor, an image of mediative service by which God draws nearer to men and men to God. Moreover, the informal ministries of all to all find formal, institutional expression in the ministries of Christian fathers in the family, the church, and the state.

### **Americans' "Dissidence of Dissent" --- (Kirk; *Roots*, pp. 229-238)**

**This description of the cultural temper** of Anglo-Americans, tacked on to their "Protestantism of the Protestant religion," Burke offered for Parliament's consideration? The description highlighted the independent streak of the colonials, saying "no" to Catholicism, even to Anglicanism for some, or to anything alien to their own identity. At last they parted from Britain to conserve the powers of their chartered, self-governing assemblies and the right of all free men to a voice therein via representation.