

Winter 2015 History & Heritage -- #5

Faith Alone and Predestination --- (Kirk; *Roots*, pp. 247-258)

These two doctrines shaped the theology of salvation from sin for Knox, for the Scots Calvinists, and for Calvinism in Europe and abroad generally? The first proclaimed justification (God declaring the unjust just) on the sole basis of Christ's righteousness (His cross-bearing obedience) credited to Spirit-renewed and thereby believing sinners. The second sought to explain the deep, eternal rationale (rooted in God's sovereign will) for the persistence of belief and unbelief, redemption and perdition throughout history.

The First Irrepressible Rumbling of Reformation --- (Kirk; *Roots*, pp. 247-258)

This historic development, shaking the religious landscape in Scotland in the early 1500's, was set in motion by the martyrdom of nobleman Patrick Hamilton? Hamilton, whose family made him lay superior (abbot) of Ferne Abbey, fell under the sway of Lutheranism and taught its doctrines fervently in the bosom of St. Andrews University. Convicted by Scots Archbishop James Beaton for heresy, Hamilton wouldn't give in, rather relishing the prospect of dying in 1528 for what he believed was gospel truth.

Knox's (& Protestantism's) Achilles' Heel --- (Kirk; *Roots*, pp. 247-258)

This heading may describe the crisis faced by Knox (& Protestantism) by virtue of insistence on the Bible's authority alone coupled with the right of private interpretation? Knox himself, in later years, was dismayed by interpretations of the Bible differing from his own coming from younger Scots Reformers, but could find no simple way to ease the tension. Thus Protestantism, without some resort to traditional and clerical authority along with the Bible's, seemed vulnerable to endless church splits and schisms.

The Heretic, his Bodyguard, and the Cardinal --- (Kirk; *Roots*, pp. 247-258)

These three roles in interaction—played out by Wishart, Knox, and Beaton respectively—set the stage for decades of religious turmoil in 16th-century Scotland? George Wishart preached Reform more radical than that of Luther or Calvin, declaring himself a "prophet" and dismissing the necessity of an ordained ministry. John Knox, mimicking Peter's lame defense of Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane, brandished a sword in vain to shield Wishart from arrest by men acting on David Beaton's authority.

Presbyterianism and National Covenant --- (Kirk; *Roots*, pp. 247-258)

This church polity and this declarative document together forged the unity and independence of Scottish Christianity in the wake of the 16th-century Reformation? The Scots polity affirmed the rule of a board of elders in local churches, of regional councils of elders representing many churches, and finally of a national assembly of elders with ties to all the churches. The 17th-century Scots document declared the full independence of the church, in doctrine and practice, from kingly (state) interference.