

## **The Elizabethan Age, 1558-1603**

### **The problem of religion**

#### **Religious problems in 1559**

##### **Henry VIII**

- Put an end to the pope's authority by making himself head of the church in England and Wales.
- Did not change church services but introduced an English Bible.
- Kept many traditional Catholic practices in place.

##### **Edward VI**

- Was heavily influenced by his advisors the Duke of Somerset and the Duke of Northumberland, both of whom were Protestants.
- Introduced a new Protestant Prayer Book and communion service.
- Required church services to be conducted in English instead of Latin.
- Had decorations and all images in churches torn down.
- Allowed priests to marry.

##### **Mary Tudor**

- Restored the authority of the pope as head of the church.
- Restored Latin Mass, Catholic doctrine and ritual.
- Separated priests and their wives.
- Began to persecute Protestants, a policy that earned her the title 'Bloody Mary'.

**Task:** Create a list of at least two religious problems that occurred during the reign of each monarch above.

Henry VIII	Edward VI	Mary Tudor

When \_\_\_\_\_ came to power, Britain had been divided by issues of \_\_\_\_\_ for thirty years. Henry VIII broke away from the \_\_\_\_\_ Church, in order to marry \_\_\_\_\_. However, despite the break, Henry kept a number of Catholic \_\_\_\_\_. When he died, his \_\_\_\_\_ Edward took over. As he was very young, he was \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_. England became more \_\_\_\_\_ during this period. For example, he had all \_\_\_\_\_ in churches torn down. When Edward died, his half-\_\_\_\_\_ Mary took over. She was Catholic so she \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_ as the Head of the Church. She began to persecute \_\_\_\_\_, with many of them being \_\_\_\_\_. She earned the title \_\_\_\_\_.

Protestants restored Catholic practices Henry VIII advisors Protestant Bloody Mary burned religion son Anne Boleyn influenced decorations Pope sister

Elizabeth faced problems from both Catholics and Protestants.

**Task:** Organise the information below into 'Catholic views' and 'Protestant views'.

- ✓ Catholic king of France, Francis II claimed that Mary Queen of Scots was the rightful ruler.
- ✓ More than ½ population of England were Protestant.
- ✓ Elizabeth had no right to be queen because she was considered illegitimate.
- ✓ Some of them were extreme Protestants (aka. Puritans).
- ✓ They wanted to persecute Catholics who refused to convert.
- ✓ They believed in a simple faith and rejected the rich decorations enjoyed by Catholics.
- ✓ Many Catholic extremists wanted to get rid of Elizabeth and replace her with Mary. Elizabeth faced a number of plots during her reign.

Catholic views	Protestant views

### Reaching a compromise

Elizabeth faced the very difficult task of attempting to satisfy the religious desires of contrasting groups, each of whom had their own ideas about how the Church should be run.

**Task:** Colour code the statements below as either a Catholic belief, Protestant belief or Extreme Protestant (Puritan) belief.

Priests should be allowed to marry.	The monarch should be the head of the Church.	Cardinals, archbishops and bishops were to help the pope govern the Church.	Priests should not marry.	The pope was head of the Church.
Church services should be simple.	Church services and the Bible were to be in Latin as read only by priests.	There should be no head of the Church or bishops.	Money should not be spent on elaborate church decorations.	Churchgoers should elect committees to run their church.
Church services and the Bible should be in English which everyone could read.	No need for any decoration.	Archbishops and bishops should help the monarch govern the church.	Churches should be highly decorated	There should be little decoration in churches.

Explain the main differences in religious beliefs between Catholics and Protestants in 1559.

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## The aims of the Religious Settlement

### Factors to consider

Below is a list of factors Elizabeth needed to consider when dealing with the problem of religion.

**Task:** Read through the list and colour code them depending on whether they are **foreign policy factors** (to do with England's relationship with other countries) or **domestic policy factors** (to do with England itself).

In 1559 a new king, Francis II and his 17 year old wife Mary Stuart of Scotland succeeded as the new Catholic rulers of France. Many Catholics considered Mary to be the rightful queen of England and some thought Francis might press her claim.	The majority of the MPs in the House of Commons were Protestant, but many of the members of the House of Lords were Catholic.	King Phillip of Spain was a devout Catholic who had been the husband of Bloody Mary (Elizabeth's sister). He was concerned with developments and didn't want to see France or Scotland gain any influence over the English Crown.
Majority of ordinary people were conservative in their religious sympathies.	Scotland was ruled over by a French regent (a person who governs whilst the monarch is under age). She was the Catholic widow of James V and Mary Stuart's mother. She was a strong Catholic but many Scottish nobles were firm Protestants and did not want to see any growth in Catholic power.	Elizabeth had to consider the Marian exiles (the Protestants who had fled to Europe when Bloody Mary came to the throne). They now wished to return to England and expected key posts in government and church. Many of them had been influenced by Puritan ideas.
The attitudes of the Pope were another major concern. If he chose to excommunicate Elizabeth it would free her subjects from having to obey her. He could also call the other Catholic powers to launch a religious crusade (war) against England.	<b><u>KEY</u></b>  Foreign Policy Domestic Policy	

Explain which factor you think was the most important for Elizabeth to consider.

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#### Elizabeth's religious beliefs

Elizabeth understood the important place that religion had in the lives of her people. She had lived in Protestant households as a child. During her father's last years she had been cared for by Catherine Parr, an enthusiastic Protestant. Along with her brother, Edward, they had been taught by a Protestant tutor.

Owing to her Protestant upbringing Elizabeth's life had been in danger during her sister Mary's reign. She had refused to become a Roman Catholic and her name had been associated with anti-Catholic plots.

While Elizabeth disliked the authority of the pope, there were aspects of the Catholic faith that she did believe in. She thought that priests should wear vestments, and she liked ornaments and decoration in churches. She kept crucifixes and candles in her private chapel, and she was opposed to the idea of bishops and clergymen being allowed to marry.

Most of all Elizabeth wanted to unify the country and did not wish to see her subjects punished because of their religious beliefs. She desired to create a church that the majority could accept. Her personal preference was for a church with a Protestant doctrine which retained traditional structure and Catholic ritual. She hoped for a compromise settlement.

**Task:** Use the information above to answer the questions.

How did Elizabeth's upbringing influence her religion?

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What aspects of the Catholic faith did Elizabeth believe in?

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What did Elizabeth want most of all?

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### The 'middle way'

In formulating her Religious Settlement Elizabeth adopted a **via media** (or 'middle way') and created a church which reflected both Protestant and Catholic attitudes and practices.

- She made Protestantism the official religion.
- She brought back changes made in Edward's reign, introducing a new Prayer Book, a Bible in English, simpler churches and allowed priests to be married.
- She refused to give way to extreme Protestant ideas
- She kept some aspects of the old Catholic Church e.g. archbishops, bishops and cathedrals. She allowed churches to continue using crosses and candles and allowed priests to wear vestments.
- She did not persecute Catholics, but she did fine them for not attending Church.

**Task:** Answer the question.

To what extent does the Religious Settlement of 1559 display the religious beliefs of Elizabeth I?

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### The Acts of Supremacy and Uniformity

<b>Act of Supremacy, 1559</b>	<b>Act of Uniformity, 1559</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Elizabeth became head of the Church of England instead of the pope.</li><li>• Elizabeth adopted the title of 'Supreme Governor of the Church of England'.</li><li>• All important officials such as judges, lawyers, JPs, MPs and the clergy, had to swear an oath of loyalty accepting Elizabeth's title.</li><li>• If they refused to swear the oath they could be imprisoned; if they refused three times they could be executed.</li><li>• Bishops would be used to govern the new church.</li><li>• The Marian heresy laws were repealed.</li><li>• A church high commission was established to ensure the changes were implemented at parish level.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The 1552 Protestant Book of Common Prayer was to be used in all churches.</li><li>• The Bible was to be in English.</li><li>• Church services were to be conducted in English.</li><li>• Ornaments and decorations were allowed in churches.</li><li>• Clergy had to wear vestments</li><li>• Clergy were allowed to marry</li><li>• All clergy had to take an oath to use the new Prayer Book.</li><li>• Everyone had to attend church on a Sunday and other holy days and to participate in the new services.</li><li>• The monasteries founded by Mary I were to be closed down and their wealth passed onto the crown.</li></ul>

**Task:** Read through the terms of the Acts and colour code them as either favouring Catholics, Protestants or both/neither.