



Core Seminars  
**Global Christianity**  
Week 6

## Christianity in Western Europe

### Introduction

We'll tell three stories, then gather three common threads. Focus is on Reformation to the present.



*Predominant Religious Bodies in Europe in the Mid-16<sup>th</sup> Century*

Image Source:

[http://wpscms.pearsoncmg.com/wps/media/objects/1748/1790587/chap\\_assets/maps/atl\\_map14\\_1.html](http://wpscms.pearsoncmg.com/wps/media/objects/1748/1790587/chap_assets/maps/atl_map14_1.html)

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## I. France and Spain: Where Reform Never Took Root

### Spain:

- Militant Roman Catholicism kept Reformation out
- Today only 3% Protestant

### France:

- 1572, St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre
- Today: laïcité, extremely strict separation of church and state, religion and public life
- Today only 3% Protestant (1% evangelical)

## II. Germany and Scandinavia: Secular Lutheran Lands of the North

### Germany:

- Reformation proceeded by ruler adopting new position
- Wide gap between ruler's profession and people's practice

### Scandinavia

- (1) "Christianization" in the middle ages
- (2) Adoption of Lutheranism in the sixteenth century
- (3) Rapid and early secularization
  - 1890 – only 5% of Sweden's urban population attended church at least once a month
  - 1927 – Only 5.6% of whole Swedish population attended church regularly
  - 1950s – 3% of Swedes attend Lutheran church
  - Minor exception: Swedish Baptists
  - Brian Stanley, in *Christianity in the Twentieth Century*: "Last in, first out . . . The narrative of Scandinavian Christianity is as much one of long-term failure in Christianization as one of twentieth-century secularization" (111, 114).

## III. England: A Partly-Reformed Establishment in Need of Reformation and Revival

- 1558–59 – Elizabethan religious settlement
- 1662 – Act of Uniformity; Puritan pastors expelled from the Church of England
- 1730s–40s – Great Awakening; widespread revival
- Church of England today: only 1.4% of the population attends
- State of play today?
- Pressures on being Baptist

## IV. Common Threads

1. The fallout of the Enlightenment.
2. Secularism accelerating in the wake of the sexual revolution.
3. The largely counter-productive presence of state churches.