

1. What was the encomienda and how did it serve to benefit the colonists?

The encomienda was a system established by Spanish colonizers in which Native Americans traded their labor in exchange for a foundational Christian education, although oftentimes against their will and essentially functioned as a form of slavery.

2. Why is 1517 known as the beginning of the Reformation?

1517 marks the year in which Martin Luther published his renowned Ninety-five Theses, or “Disputation on the Power and Efficacy of Indulgences.”

3. Who were the Anabaptists and were they pacifists or militarists?

The Anabaptists were a radical branch of the Reformation that held to the notion that the church must uphold New Testament practices, leading them to reject militarism for the most part, although there was an extremist sect that abandoned the general pacifist position of the Anabaptists.

- A. **Ulrich Zwingli** - Leader of the Swiss Reformation in the early sixteenth-century. He was also a zealous patriot and military activist who gave his life in battle.
- B. **Teresa of Avila** - A Spanish nun who, alongside John of the Cross, co-founded the “Discalced Carmelites,” one of several monastic movements that were birthed during the Catholic Reformation.
- C. **Mary Tudor** - Successor to the English throne, upon her half-brother Edward VI’s death, and fervent Catholic who sought to reverse the effects of the Protestant Reformation in England, leading to the execution of many Protestants and earning her the nickname “Bloody Mary.”

From a Christian historical standpoint, the period extending from the Fall of Constantinople in 1453 to the end of the sixteenth century is characterized by Western colonialism and the birth of the Protestant Reformation. The supposed “Discovery” of the Americas led to the conquest of lands extending from what is now known as parts of the United States to South America. To supply the requisite labor for gleaning wealth from the colonies’ mines and plantations, the conquistadors coerced the “Indians” into the encomienda system, using the natives’ failure to accept the “Requerimiento,” or convert to Christianity and submit to the king, as an excuse. Simultaneously, certain figures from the church protested against the unjust colonization of these lands and their natives’ enslavement. Thus, colonization was both in a sense justified and also refuted by the church, leading to Christianity’s complicated relationship with missions today. At the same time the missionary enterprise was taking over the Western Hemisphere, the seeds of the Reformation were being planted in Europe. In 1517, Martin Luther’s published the Ninety-five Theses in 1517, protesting against the sale of indulgences. Following Luther’s lead, such figures as Ulrich Zwingli and John Calvin led the Reformation in Switzerland, resulting in today’s “Reformed” and “Presbyterian” churches. In England, the spread of the Reformation but also the preservation of Catholic traditions that did not interfere with Reformed doctrine founded the Anglican and Episcopal Church. Catholicism continued to reign supreme in several countries, such as Spain, Italy, and Poland, although even these countries retained significant Protestant populations. The Roman Catholic Church also produced a Counter-Reformation focused on reducing corruption and abuse, and producing such notable monastic orders as the Discalced Carmelites and Jesuits.