

[PDF] The Reformation

Diarmaid MacCulloch - pdf download free book



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Description:

Diarmaid MacCulloch wrote what is widely considered to be the authoritative account of the Reformation—a critical juncture in the history of Christianity. "It is impossible to understand modern Europe without understanding these sixteenth-century upheavals in Latin Christianity," he writes. "They represented the greatest fault line to appear in Christian culture since the Latin and Greek halves of the Roman Empire went their separate ways a thousand years before; they produced a house divided." The resulting split between the Catholics and Protestants still divides Christians throughout the Western world. It affects interpretations of the Bible, beliefs about baptisms, and event how much authority is given to religious leaders. The division even fuels an ongoing war. What makes MacCulloch's account rise above previous attempts to interpret the Reformation is the

breadth of his research. Rather than limit his narrative to the actions of key theologians and leaders of the era—Luther, Zingli, Calvin, Loyola, Cranmer, Henry VIII and numerous popes—MacCulloch sweeps his narrative across the culture, politics and lay people of Renaissance Western Europe. This broad brush approach touches upon many fascinating discussions surrounding the Reformation, including his belief that the Latin Church was probably not as "corrupt and ineffective" as Protestants tend to portray it. In fact, he asserts that it "generally satisfied the spiritual needs of the late medieval people." As a historical document, this 750-page narrative has all the key ingredients. MacCulloch, a professor of history at the Church of Oxford University, is an articulate and vibrant writer with a strong guiding intelligence. The structure is sensible—starting with the main characters who influenced reforms, then spreading out to the regional concerns, and social intellectual themes of the era. He even fast forwards into American Christianity—showing how this historical era influences modern times. MacCulloch is a topnotch historian—uncovering material and theories that will seem fresh and inspired to Reformation scholars as well as lay readers. --*Gail Hudson* --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

From Publishers Weekly Many standard histories of Christianity chronicle the Reformation as a single, momentous period in the history of the Church. According to those accounts, a number of competing groups of reformers challenged a monolithic and corrupt Roman Catholicism over issues ranging from authority and the role of the priests to the interpretation of the Eucharist and the use of the Bible in church. In this wide-ranging, richly layered and captivating study of the Reformation, MacCulloch challenges traditional interpretations, arguing instead that there were many reformations. Arranging his history in chronological fashion, MacCulloch provides in-depth studies of reform movements in central, northern and southern Europe and examines the influences that politics and geography had on such groups. He challenges common assumptions about the relationships between Catholic priests and laity, arguing that in some cases Protestantism actually took away religious authority from laypeople rather than putting it in their hands. In addition, he helpfully points out that even within various groups of reformers there was scarcely agreement about ways to change the Church. MacCulloch offers valuable and engaging portraits of key personalities of the Reformation, including Erasmus, Luther, Zwingli and Calvin. More than a history of the Reformation, MacCulloch's study examines its legacy of individual religious authority and autonomous biblical interpretation. This spectacular intellectual history reminds us that the Reformation grew out of the Renaissance, and provides a compelling glimpse of the cultural currents that formed the background to reform. MacCulloch's magisterial book should become the definitive history of the Reformation.

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