

# Huguenots

Historical Theology

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Author: Lonnie Moore

Who were the Huguenots?

*French Protestants*

Why were they called Huguenots?

*From German "Eidgenossen" or "Eyguenots" meaning confederate.*

*Or from a rebel leader: Hugues*

Why study the Huguenots?

- I. **Arguments against**
  - A. Numbers were small
  - B. Didn't change France
  - C. Forced to flee
  - D. Integrated into other groups/cultures/faiths
- II. **Arguments for**
  - A. At their peak
    1. 10% of France
    2. 2 million adherents
    3. 2000 churches
  - B. Wars and long-term effects
    1. French Religious Wars 1562-1598
    2. St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre
    3. Small remnants fought in the French Revolution against the King
  - C. Made an impact with the flight
    1. The word "refugee" first used for Huguenots coming into England
    2. Those that went to England were welcomed as many were skilled in textiles and/or highly educated
    3. Paul Revere's father was Apollos Rivoire
    4. I have Huguenot ancestry. My maternal grandmother was a Rosier

D. Integration, yes, but

1. French Huguenot Church in Charleston, South Carolina
2. The Huguenot Society of America

Early French Reformation

- I. Waldensians
  - A. Waldo 1174 A.D.
    1. Matt. 19:23 Sell belongings and follow Christ
    2. Translated book of Matthew from Latin to French
    3. Criticized the riches of the Roman Church
    4. Experienced a holocaust when they were killed during a crusade against Albigensians (a group to which the Waldensians strongly disagreed)
  - B. St. Francis of Assisi was strongly influenced by Waldo's teachings
  - C. Waldensian remnants joined the Calvinist Reformation
  - D. Some Waldensians migrated to the New World – mostly Delaware
  - E. A Waldensian Church and Seminary exist not far from the Vatican

II. John Calvin

Huguenot History

- I. Feudal Period (1536-1572)
  - A. Early success
    1. The Gospel was spread and many responded
    2. Many nobles were converted
    3. They hoped the King would be won
  - B. Set back
    1. The King was angered by teaching against the Mass
    2. He arrested 150 Huguenots from the lower classes

3. Twenty-seven were burned at the stake and 18 had their tongues cut out
  4. Jan. 1535-King's decree to exterminate the heretics. A citizen could gain 25% of person's estate if they would report the "Lutherans" to the government officials.
  5. This is when John Calvin left France.
  6. In spite of the persecutions, many people joined the Reformed movement
  7. Many that joined were lower nobles or business people. It may have been for political reasons instead of spiritual.
  8. The National Synod of La Rochelle met in 1559 and established 40 articles patterned after Calvin's theology.
  9. For several years after the death of King Henry II, there was much political turmoil and it was tied to religion. Reformed v. Catholic.
  10. An early attempt at reconciliation was to separate. Six hundred Huguenots were sent to Florida to establish Fort Caroline. (Spanish attacked and destroyed the settlement)
  11. The King's mother, Catherine de' Medici (niece of the Pope), began to fear a Huguenot advisor to teenage son. She organized the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre. (1572)
  12. It started at a wedding where many nobles who were Huguenots came as guests. In all over 10,000 were killed in Paris and the surrounding provinces.
  13. Pope Gregory XIII celebrated a special Mass and had a medal struck to celebrate the "victory"
- II. The Democratic Period (1572-1628)
- A. Huguenots continue
    1. New leadership needed since the old leaders had been martyred or driven out
    2. The new leadership came from the middle class
    3. The Huguenot church became democratic
  - B. Henri of Navarre
    1. King Charles IX died in 1574
    2. Henry III became king but was killed in 1589
    3. Henry III had no sons, so the crown went to his nephew: Henri of Navarre.
    4. Henri was a leader in the Huguenot world, but he was not going to be able to accept the throne.
    5. He stated, "Paris is worth the Mass." He converted to Catholicism.
    6. He was probably never a true believer; however, he issued the Edict of Nantes in 1598. It guaranteed the political and religious freedom for Huguenots.
  - C. Edict of Nantes
    1. They are allowed religious services in the areas where the nobles who were Huguenots ruled.
    2. They had to pay taxes to the Catholic Church, but the Catholics had to pay the Reformed pastors' salaries and church expenses.
    3. They could have their own schools, hospitals, city councils. They became their own democratic state within a kingdom.

D. The 'arrangement' comes to an end

1. Henri was assassinated in 1610 by a monk who thinks the country has been sold out to the protestants.
2. Louis XIII becomes king and begins to undo the Edict of Nantes.
3. Cardinal Richelieu is picked as Chancellor and is the new King's most trusted advisor. (Does the name Richelieu ring any bells?)
4. In 1628, Richelieu laid siege to the two largest Huguenot cities and they fall. It was the end of any real power for the Protestants.

### III. The Religious Period 1628-1635

A. Persecutions starts

1. Under Louis XIII and Richelieu, Huguenots were persecuted.
2. Louis XIII died in 1643, giving the throne to Louis XIV at the age of 5.

B. The Sun King (Grandson of Henri IV)

1. His reign lasted for about 72 1/3 years
2. The sun was his adopted symbol
3. Also known as Louis the Great
4. He exercised more power than any French king before or after
5. He expands the hunting lodge into Versailles
6. Has most of the dukes come to live in Versailles
7. His need to dominate brings him to eliminate any rights that the Huguenots have left.
8. Many Huguenot churches are destroyed
9. Huguenots could not hold synods
10. Huguenots were excluded from government offices

C. Louis ramped up persecution

1. In March of 1679, several Huguenot cities had their church buildings leveled and the members were not allowed to hold services.
2. A Reformed Church building in southern France was demolished because its members did not kneel when a priest passed by with the Sacrament. (Feb. 1681)
3. By order of the French government, children were systematically taken from their parents and raised in Catholic convents (Jan. 1682)
4. The Royal Edict of May 18, 1682, Huguenots were forbidden to leave France.
5. A fund was created to persuade with money to leave Protestantism and become Catholic (not effective)
6. Next step, forced conversions: Soldiers were stationed in Huguenot cities to destroy churches and houses. Furthermore, the army would work to ruin Huguenot families financially.
7. By 1685, Louis XIV was told that all Huguenots have converted to Catholicism, so he ends the "irrevocable" Edict of Nantes.

### VI. The Huguenot Underground (1685-1787)

A. Many Huguenots escaped to Holland and became part of the Walloon Churches. Walloons were Calvinists.

B. Those who stayed faced persecution

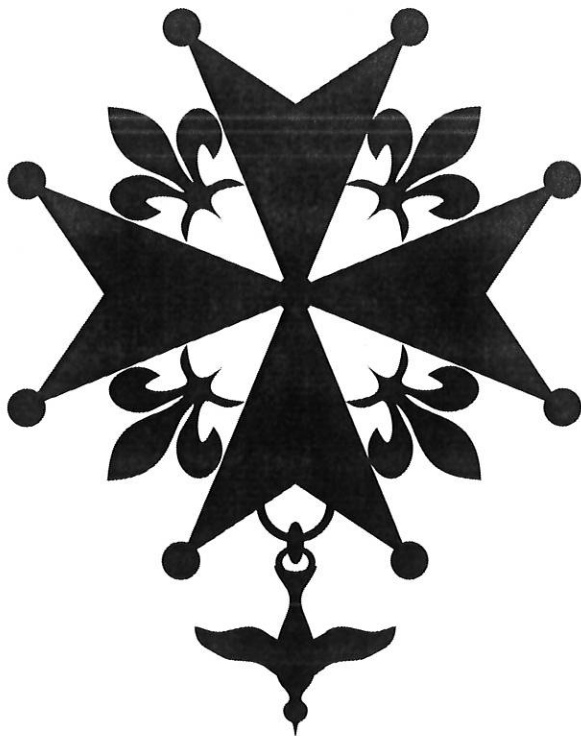
1. Officially non-persons before the law
2. Could not hold funerals
3. Could not hold public office
4. Could not pass on an inheritance
5. Could not possess a Bible or Hymnbook

6. If caught participating in a service, they could be sentenced to the galleys (rowing till death)
7. If caught conducting a service, they would be put to death.
8. For 102 years, the Huguenot church was forced underground.
9. Services were held in homes or in a forest.
10. Ministers studied at Geneva or Lausanne (Schools of the Martyrs)
11. Very few ministers died of old age. In the town of Montpellier alone 35 ministers were executed in the town square.

V. Change following the death of Louis XIV

- A. Several philosophers took up the cause of the Huguenots losing freedoms including Rousseau and Voltaire

Source: A Brief History of the Huguenots by Rev. Herbert Stein-Schneider



B. Lafayette

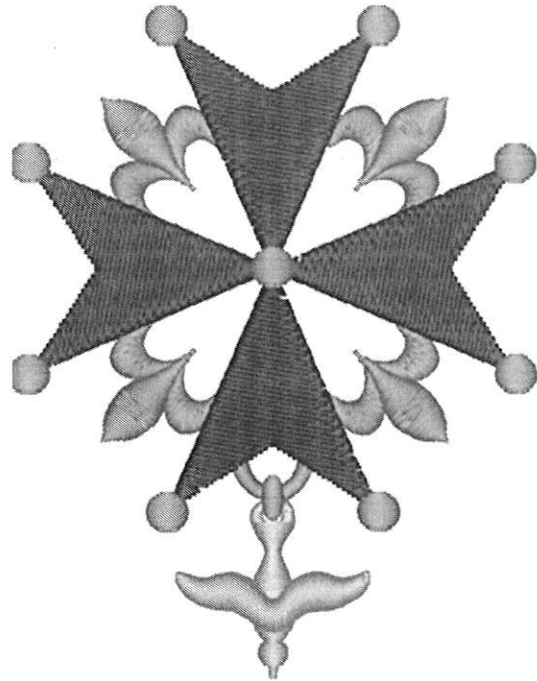
1. Received by American Huguenots including Commander Huger from Charleston.
2. When Lafayette returned to France, he was able to persuade King Louis XVI to sign the Edict of Toleration.

C. French Revolution made Protestantism legal.

Where else did Huguenots go during the persecution?

Alsace, Geneva, German principalities, Prussia (Huguenots were not pacifists like Anabaptists, so they were often given commissions in the army), Ireland (they established the linen industry there), England (they were given subsidies), American colonies (The English Crown paid for a Huguenot colony at Charles Town, S.C.)

Source: YouTube Video: Faith & Fortitude, The Huguenot Story, Dr. Alan Clifford



## Huguenot Dispersion



## Huguenot Music:

Find on YouTube: Hymn History Psalm 23, Huguenot Metrical Psalm

Grand Matron's Hymn <https://oeshuguenotchapter88.org/Music/ChapterMusic.html>

Loys Bourgeois' Old Hundredth <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ARMrbYy5NA0>