

Which was the most important reason for the outbreak of the english civil war?



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When James I next recalled parliament in 1621 it was to discuss the marriage between Charles I and a Spanish Princess but parliament were annoyed because they didn't want the children to be brought catholic. James I believed in the 'divine rights of kings' so he did not like to be argued with and therefore there was a damaged relationship between King and parliament. Consequently when Charles I became King neither parliament or Charles were happy.

Charles who had not expected or prepared to be King had grown up seeing the arguments between his father and parliament and thought that it was all parliament's fault. Like his father, Charles firmly believed in the divine rights of kings so he found it hard to believe that his father was wrong. Members of Parliament did not want the same thing that James did to happen to them again so they made it harder for Charles to rule without them.

With both sides already seeing each other in the wrong there was already increased tension between both sides. In 1625 Charles I married a French catholic, Henrietta Maria which outraged the MPs because they had not been consulted and because the country was protestant many people disliked the idea of having a catholic for Queen however this was not a main cause for civil war because most people just accepted it but it arose a lot of suspicion in the future that some people argue was the cause of civil war.

If he had married a good wholesome English Protestant then his relationship with parliament may not have got off to such a bad start and therefore decrease the amount of tension that was already there because of Charles' father and also people may not have thought Charles was turning the

country catholic when he introduced the prayer book so puritans in parliament may not have been so strongly against him.

In 1626, his main advisor Buckingham and best friend had wasted lots of money on a failed naval attack against Spain, therefore parliament want him sacked however Charles let his emotions get to him he would have realised that parliament didn't have strong evidence against Buckingham so therefore he could have saved Buckingham and still had a good relationship with parliament, instead he got his reign off to a worse start and the tension was increasing in parliament.

As he stopped parliament to prevent The Duke of Buckingham to be impeached he made parliament much less likely to approve of future advisors including Archbishop Laud who caused a lot of religious issues in the future. Consequently because of his actions here he now had to resort to other means of finance. Parliament had been growing in power since Henry VIII reign and in 1629 when Charles I dissolved them they were consequently not happy so they tried to make it harder for Charles to earn money.

After running out of money Charles introduced the 'ship money' where he collected money from the coastal towns to help the navy. However at this time the navy was not in use so people in the country were quite annoyed with the decision. A source shows the statistics for the collection of ship money in England, in 1634 and 1635 when the tax was first introduced high percentages were collected showing that although people did not think it was right for them to pay they still thought that he was King so they should.

However, when the tax was introduced inland a man called John Hampden refused to pay the money showing resistance against the king and this gained Charles bad publicity resulting in 1639 only 20% was collected. Although the ship money earned Charles plenty of money showing he could rule with parliament it offend every class in the country and people where annoyed with paying the tax.

This was mainly a result of tension between parliament and the king because parliament where trying to force Charles into listening to parliament but it was making the opposite affect by angering him that he did not want to listen to parliament. On the other hand religious issues also caused a lot of problems there is still religious unrest but mostly the country is protestant and Charles honestly believed that people needed to be closer to god so he and Archbishop Laud began to make changes to the Church of England.

However people took this the wrong way thinking that he was changing the country catholic and so it upset a lot of people especially puritans who were very against it. ong term issues also affected how parliament reacted to it because of the tension caused due to Buckingham they were unwilling to approve of Charles' main advisor in this, Archbishop Laud and also suspicions arose about him secretly catholic. This religious issue resulted in more tension between parliament and Charles because parliament who could see that the people where not happy with these decisions and were trying to change it but Charles believes he shouldn't be argued with so is also no happy.

Charles was both King of England and Scotland however the Scottish were very strict puritans so Charles introduces the new prayer book to Scotland
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(which is in some peoples opinion a very big mistake) he made them obey the prayer book but it was so close to Catholicism that the scots rebelled. Charles made the English pay the “ Coat and Conduct Money” tax to pay for the army’s uniforms, training and transport. Coming on top of Ship Money, it produced a taxpayers strike in 1639-1640-The gentry refused to pay or collect the tax.

After 11 years, April 1640, Charles I recalls parliament to help get money to fight the war because of the tax payers strike. The parliament will only grant the money if he stops his ‘ unpopular taxes’ and religious reforms. The religious issues are therefore causing more tension in parliament because the puritans think the changes are too catholic but Charles thinks they are good causing a conflict between the issues. After 3 weeks of parliament open Charles closed them again.

More tension has come because of the ‘ short parliament’ as Charles has not got he wants making him therefore angry at parliament and parliament are angry at Charles because they are only called when Charles needs help and all other methods haven’t worked. Charles is army then gets defeated and invade more of England so he pays them to stay away. Parliament says they will help with money if they have more power and agree to demands despite the damaged relationship between the crown and parliament Charles agreed to most of their demands, including punishing some of his advisors.

However, Charles did not change his religious reforms so parliament felt this wasn’t good enough. Even though there was increased tension between parliament and king, some MP’s began to think that parliament was going too far, because he was there king. This is when sides started taking place
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however it did not trigger civil war. A year later in 1642, there were increased arguments between parliament and king so Charles goes to parliament and tries to arrest 5 MP's who he thinks are the main troublemakers.

However, they had already been alerted and have escaped. As a King many people say that tis over steps his mark because he thinks some people are making trouble he can just go and arrest him. This gains a lot of publicity and the MP's are said to be heroes which just angers Charles further because although he has done wrong he has been humiliated and parliament have made him look bad so because of his stubborn attitude he isn't going to agree to much of what parliament tells him. Later in the year, a rebellion in Ireland causes lots of trouble and tension.

An army is needed to deal with it the rebellion but Parliament does not want Charles to have control of the army because they think that Charles may use the army against them as when he had tried to arrest the MP's. So fearing that Charles will attack them instead because of the arguments they have had they don't let him have control even though he has asked. As a result this just angers Charles even more because he believes he should have control because they have always had control. Parliament takes control of the army without Charles' permission which in some ways is just like Charles raising money without their permission.

This causes a lot of annoyance for Charles and it is against the law. Some people say that this rebellion says that is one of the main causes of the civil war because parliament don't want to give Charles the army because it will give him a lot of power and lots of citizens thought that Charles should have

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had control of the army because that is a Kings job and that parliament were wrong just to disobey like that so they could have more power. These results in people taking sides on who they thought were right because of tension between the two sides.

In June 1642, parliament demands more of the King in the 19 propositions. Parliament demands a lot of things of the King that are unnecessary including having control of the king's children and if he agreed to it would give parliament practically all the power so Charles didn't agree to it. It also split the MPs in Parliament many felt they had gone too far and declared their support for the King. Both sides started to organise armies and consequently civil war. In 1642, relations between Parliament and Charles had become very bad.

Charles had to do as Parliament wished as they had the ability to raise the money that Charles needed. However, as a firm believer in the "divine right of kings", such a relationship was unacceptable to Charles. People argue that it was tension between parliament and King that caused civil war because the tension had risen so much that both parliament and King had stepped too far on what they demanded from each other that the relationship was so damaged that people in the country started taking sides because they thought the other side was wrong.

For example in 1628 Charles was forced to acknowledge the petition of rights' giving parliament certain rights and liberties caused tension between parliament and king because parliament wanted more power as they had not had power in James' reign. As a result of Charles' beliefs the tension between

parliaments rose every time one side did the slightest thing the other side didn't like.

However, a lot of religious issues caused tension between parliament and king like when Charles agreed with parliament's demands except the religious reforms this caused tension because they didn't think Charles had agreed to enough demands. If there were no religious issues there may not have been enough tension between the two sides that it resulted in civil war because many people who agreed with parliament were puritans who thought Charles was too catholic then maybe if there were no religious reforms or puritans then there would have been a lot less tension between the two sides.

If Charles had not made the religious reforms then puritans would have been happy and not sided against him, they would not have been so demanding on the 19 propositions like the education of his children that Charles may have agreed and the tension wouldn't have resulted in Civil war. Also some sources say that despite some unpopular taxes the country was ruled for over 11 years without parliament and any major problems and most people were happy until the religious reforms that made a lot of people unhappy and the scots didn't ave rebelled making him bring back parliament and the tension. If this hadn't happened then he may have ruled peacefully without parliament for much longer. I personally think that it was a mixture of both reasons that English Civil war broke although it was mainly tension between parliament and king that resulted in the outbreak of the war a lot of the tension was increased by religious issues and without them many of the

things that caused the tension between the two sides wouldn't have happened.

I think that there would have still been tension between parliament and king if there was no religious issues but I don't think that it would have resulted in English civil because too much of the tension was caused by religious issues because Charles eventually did agree to most of parliaments demands except the religious ones making it a religious reason why there was increased tension. On the other hand if there was no tension between king and parliament then the religious issues may have been sorted out so therefore they wouldn't have taken up war between the sides.