

Why did henry viii create the church of england? essay sample



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In this essay I am going to try and find out why King Henry VIII created the Church of England. In 1532 he broke with papal authority and announced himself head of the church in England, in 1533 the Church of England was created and in 1535 monasteries were closed. There are many arguments to do with economics, power, popularity, religion and finally succession and his personal life. Henry did not believe that any woman would be fit to rule the land.

Henry's first wife was Catherine of Aragon and she was his brother's widow. Henry and Catherine only surviving child was a girl (Mary I), Henry wanted a son to succeed him on the throne and Catherine was unable to give him anymore children. Henry also wanted to marry his lover, Anne Boleyn but her nephew, Holy Roman Emperor Charles V was strongly opposed and he was holding Pope Clement VIII prisoner so he could not approve the divorce without displeasing his captor.

Another obvious reason was to do with religion. Henry may have been sympathetic to ideas of Protestantism, Martin Luther and therefore rejected Catholicism. It was also known that monks and priests lead immoral lives. When joining the clergy they had to promise to live as poor people, they were to have no worldly possessions and had to swear to complete chastity. Maybe he did not agree with the payments people were forced to make to the church.

These payments made the Catholic Church extremely unpopular with many people as they thought it was morally wrong. The people of England wanted

to abandon the Catholic Church in favour of Protestantism and Henry was very keen to be popular with the people of England.

Henry had recently spent a lot of money on wars and become bankrupt. He realised that this left him in a weak position. He also realised that churches and monasteries were receiving a lot of money. People left money to monasteries when they died, paid for special Churches in their names when they died where songs were sung for soul, which they believed could be heard in purgatory which helped them get through faster and people were also told by the Clergy that if they paid money to the Church then they would get through Purgatory quicker and this meant that the Churches were very wealthy. With all of this money he could continue to support his extravagant court life. By closing down the monasteries he would receive all of the money and land that they owned.

He saw money from England going to taxes in Rome and he resented the Pope having such an influence on his country. The Papacy was also supporting his rival, Charles V. Henry liked power and he did not like the amount of power that the Roman Catholic Church had over England. He knew that by cutting himself off from Rome and placing himself as head of the Church in England that he would have a lot more power over England and the people living there.

Also, Henry's advisers wanted to break with Rome and he gave in.

I think that the main reason Henry VIII created the Church of England was because he wanted a male heir to the throne. If Henry was not so desperate for a son then the Church of England would probably not have been created, <https://assignbuster.com/why-did-henry-viii-create-the-church-of-england-essay-sample/>

at least for such a very long time. I also believe that he was truly in love with Anne Boleyn and did not truly love Catherine, as he only married her for political reasons. It was also another way for him to have more power over his country.