

12th May 2021

Essay - why did Henry VIII want to change England's religion?

There were many reasons as to why Henry VIII wanted to change the religion of England. One reason was because of family, he wanted to control the church so that he wouldn't need permission to get a divorce. Another reason was to reform what was seen as a corrupt and greedy church. Henry VIII also wanted more control over how much money and power that the church had.

King Henry VIII wanted to change the religion of England because he didn't like the Catholic Church. Henry didn't like that the church had the power over if people could get a divorce. If the pope granted the divorce then it could go ahead, however if he didn't then the two would stay together. If Henry changed the religion he could not have to get permission and he would be able to marry and divorce as he pleased. Another reason that Henry didn't like the church was that the church had land and money so therefore they had influence over everyone. Henry wanted control over how much money and power that the church had. King Henry VIII wanted to have more power than the church. He also believed that the church was greedy and corrupt. At this point there was already protestants forming around England. Evidence?

Another reason that King Henry wanted to change the religion of England was ~~that~~ Henry's desire for a son. Henry and Catherine of Aragon had been married for ~~2~~ over twenty years when Henry decided to divorce her. Henry wanted the divorce because he needed a son to take the rein after Henry's death. Catherine gave birth to Mary, a girl. Catherine went through many pregnancies but miscarried all of the babies apart from Mary. When Henry tried to get the divorce he used the excuse that because Catherine was married to Edward before Henry this was the reason that they could not have a son. Catherine went through a total of 6 pregnancies 2 of which were boys however they both died. Henry claimed that it was because of the curse. The curse was when you married someone who had been

married to a brother or sister. Before his Divorce with Catherine, Henry turned to Anne Boleyn. Anne was younger than Catherine and Henry meaning that she was more likely to be able to give Henry a son. Henry was married to Anne in secret before the church had granted permission for Henry's divorce with Catherine. When the church denied Henry's divorce, Henry used parliament to declare himself "Head of the Church in England". He grants himself an annulment of his marriage meaning he could get the divorce.

Why was a son so important?

Henry wanted to shut down the monasteries to get the divorce he wanted. This wasn't very difficult as the monasteries were already thought to be very corrupt and greedy. This was because they sold relics and trinkets at the monasteries. The relics (bones of saints etc.) were quite often just animal bones and other stuff that looks like what they were selling. Earning money. Henry saw the monasteries as places for people go to to look around and enjoy not to go to and spend money on fake stuff. Another reason that Henry wanted to close the monasteries was the power. Henry wanted more power, if he shut the monasteries he would have more power than before.

After considering all the different evidence I think the main reason as to why Henry VIII wanted to change the religion of England was because of his family. He would not let the reins go to another person that was not his son. He needed the divorce fast so he could get another woman and get a heir. I therefore believe he wanted to change the religion of England for his own needs.

* It was so important for Henry to have a son because