

History of Christianity

The **history of Christianity** concerns the Christian religion, Christendom, and the Church with its various denominations, from the 1st century to the present.

Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Christianity spread to all of Europe in the Middle Ages. Christianity expanded throughout the world and became the world's largest religion due to European colonialism.^[1] Today there are more than two billion Christians worldwide.^[2]

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Early Christianity (c. 31/33–324)

During its early history, Christianity grew from a 1st-century Jewish following to a religion that existed across the entire Greco-Roman world and beyond.

Early Christianity may be divided into 2 distinct phases: the apostolic period, when the first apostles were alive and led the Church, and the post-apostolic period, when an early episcopal structure developed, and persecution was periodically intense. The Roman persecution of Christians ended in AD 324 when Constantine the Great decreed tolerance for the religion. He then called the First Council of Nicaea in AD 325, beginning of the period of the First seven Ecumenical Councils.

Apostolic Church

The Apostolic Church was the community led by the apostles, and to some degree, Jesus' relatives.^[3] In his "Great Commission", the resurrected Jesus commanded that his teachings be spread to all the world. While the historical reliability of the Acts of the Apostles is disputed by critics, the *Acts of the Apostles* is the major primary source of information for this period. Acts gives a history of the Church from this commission in 1:3–11 (<http://bible.oremus.org/?p=assage=Acts+1:3-11:3&version=nrsv>) to the spread of the religion among the Gentiles^[4] and the eastern Mediterranean by Paul and others.

The first Christians were essentially all ethnically Jewish or Jewish proselytes. In other words, Jesus preached to the Jewish people and called from them his first disciples, see for example Matthew 10. However, the Great Commission is specifically directed at "all nations", and an early difficulty arose concerning the matter of Gentile (non-Jewish) converts as to whether they had to "become Jewish" (usually referring to circumcision and adherence to dietary law), as part of becoming Christian. Circumcision in particular was considered repulsive by Greeks and Hellenists^[5] while circumcision advocates were labelled Judaisers, see Jewish background to the circumcision controversy for details. The actions of Peter, at the conversion of Cornelius the Centurion,^[4] seemed to indicate that circumcision and food laws did not apply to Gentiles, and this was agreed to at the apostolic Council of Jerusalem. Related issues are still debated today.

The doctrines of the apostles brought the Early Church into conflict with some Jewish religious authorities. This eventually led to their expulsion from the synagogues, according to one theory of the Council of Jamnia. Acts records the martyrdom of the Christian leaders, Stephen and James of Zebedee. Thus, Christianity acquired an identity distinct from Rabbinic Judaism, but this distinction was not recognised all at once by the Roman Empire, see Split of early Christianity and Judaism for details. The name "Christian" (Greek Χριστιανός) was first applied to the disciples in Antioch, as recorded in Acts 11:26.^[6] Some contend that the term "Christian" was first coined as a derogatory term, meaning "little Christs", and was meant as a mockery, a term of derision for those that followed the teachings of Jesus.

Early Christian beliefs and creeds

The sources for the beliefs of the apostolic community include the Gospels and New Testament epistles. The very earliest accounts of belief are contained in these texts, such as early creeds and hymns, as well as accounts of the Passion, the empty tomb, and Resurrection appearances; some of these are dated to the 30s or 40s AD, originating within the

Jerusalem Church.^[8] According to a tradition recorded by Eusebius and Epiphanius, the Jerusalem church fled to Pella at the outbreak of the First Jewish–Roman War (66–73 AD).^[9]

Post-Apostolic Church

The post-apostolic period concerns the time after the death of the apostles (roughly 100 AD) until persecutions ended with the legalisation of Christian worship under Emperors Constantine the Great and Licinius.

Persecutions

According to the New Testament, Christians were subject to various persecutions from the beginning. This involved even death for Christians such as Stephen (Acts 7:59 (<http://bible.oremus.org/?passage=Acts+7:59-7:59&version=nrsv>)) and James, son of Zebedee (12:2 (<http://bible.oremus.org/?passage=Acts+12:2-12:2&version=nrsv>)). Larger-scale persecutions followed at the hands of the authorities of the Roman Empire, beginning with the year 64, when, as reported by the Roman historian Tacitus, the Emperor Nero blamed them for that year's Great Fire of Rome.

According to Church tradition, it was under Nero's persecution that Peter and Paul were each martyred in Rome. Similarly, several of the New Testament writings mention persecutions and stress endurance through them.

Early Christians suffered sporadic persecutions as the result of local pagan populations putting pressure on the imperial authorities to take action against the Christians in their midst, who were thought to bring misfortune by their refusal to honour the gods.^{[10][11]} The last and most severe persecution organised by the imperial authorities was the Diocletianic Persecution, 303–311.^[12]

Reasons for the spread of Christianity

In spite of these sometimes intense persecutions, the Christian religion continued its spread throughout the Mediterranean Basin.^[13] There is no agreement on how Christianity managed to spread so successfully prior to the Edict of Milan and the establishment of Christianity as the state religion of the Roman Empire. In *The Rise of Christianity*, Rodney Stark argues that Christianity triumphed over paganism chiefly because it improved the lives of its adherents in various ways.^[14]

Another factor was the way in which Christianity combined its promise of a general resurrection of the dead with the traditional Greek belief that true immortality depended on the survival of the body, with Christianity adding practical explanations of how this was going to actually happen at the end of the world.^[15] For Mosheim, the rapid progression of Christianity was explained by two factors: translations of the New Testament and the Apologies composed in defence of Christianity.^[16]

Edward Gibbon in his *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* discusses the topic in considerable detail in his famous Chapter Fifteen, summarizing the historical causes of the early success of Christianity as follows: "(1) The inflexible, and, if we may use the expression, the intolerant zeal of the Christians, derived, it is true, from the Jewish



Christ Jesus,^[7] the Good Shepherd, 3rd century.



St. Lawrence (martyred 258) before Emperor Valerianus by Fra Angelico

religion, but purified from the narrow and unsocial spirit which, instead of inviting, had deterred the Gentiles from embracing the law of Moses. (2) The doctrine of a future life, improved by every additional circumstance which could give weight and efficacy to that important truth. (3) The miraculous powers ascribed to the primitive church. (4) The pure and austere morals of the Christians. (5) The union and discipline of the Christian republic, which gradually formed an independent and increasing state in the heart of the Roman empire."^[17]

Structure and the episcopacy

In the post-Apostolic church, bishops emerged as overseers of urban Christian populations, and a hierarchy of clergy gradually took on the form of *episkopos* (overseers, in-spectors; and the origin of the term bishop) and *presbyters* (elders; and the origin of the term priest), and then *deacons* (servants). But this emerged slowly and at different times for different locations. Clement, a 1st-century bishop of Rome, refers to the leaders of the Corinthian church in his epistle to Corinthians as bishops and presbyters interchangeably. The New Testament writers also use the terms overseer and elders interchangeably and as synonyms.^[18]

Post-apostolic bishops of importance include Polycarp of Smyrna, Clement of Rome, and Ignatius of Antioch. These men reportedly knew and studied under the apostles personally and are therefore called Apostolic Fathers. Each Christian community also had presbyters, as was the case with Jewish communities, who were also ordained and assisted the bishop. As Christianity spread, especially in rural areas, the presbyters exercised more responsibilities and took distinctive shape as priests. Lastly, deacons also performed certain duties, such as tending to the poor and sick. In the 2nd century, an episcopal structure becomes more visible, and in that century this structure was supported by teaching on apostolic succession, where a bishop becomes the spiritual successor of the previous bishop in a line tracing back to the apostles themselves.

The diversity of early Christianity can be documented from the New Testament record itself. The Book of Acts admits conflicts between Hebrews and Hellenists, and Jewish Christians and Gentile Christians, and Aramaic speakers and Greek speakers. The letters of Paul, Peter, John, and Jude all testify to intra-Church conflicts over both leadership and theology. In a response to the Gnostic teaching, Irenaeus created the first document describing what is now called apostolic succession.^[19]

Early Christian writings

As Christianity spread, it acquired certain members from well-educated circles of the Hellenistic world; they sometimes became bishops, but not always. They produced two sorts of works: theological and "apologetic", the latter being works aimed at defending the faith by using reason to refute arguments against the veracity of Christianity. These authors are known as the Church Fathers, and study of them is called patristics. Notable early Fathers include Ignatius of Antioch, Polycarp, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus of Lyons, Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria, and Origen of Alexandria.

Early art

Christian art only emerged relatively late, and the first known Christian images emerge from about 200 AD,^[20] though there is some literary evidence that small domestic images were used earlier. The oldest known Christian paintings are from the Roman Catacombs, dated to about AD 200, and the oldest Christian sculptures are from sarcophagi, dating to the beginning of the 3rd century.^[21]

Although many Hellenised Jews seem, as at the Dura-Europos synagogue, to have had images of religious figures, the traditional Mosaic prohibition of "graven images" no doubt retained some effect, although never proclaimed by theologians. This early rejection of images, and the necessity to hide Christian practise from persecution, leaves us with

few archaeological records regarding early Christianity and its evolution.^[21]

Early heresies

The New Testament itself speaks of the importance of maintaining correct (orthodox) doctrine and refuting heresies, showing the antiquity of the concern.^[22] Because of the biblical proscription against false prophets, Christianity has always been occupied with the orthodox interpretation of the faith. Indeed, one of the main roles of the bishops in the early Church was to determine and retain important correct beliefs, and refute contrarian opinions, known as heresies. As there were sometimes differing opinions among the bishops on new questions, defining orthodoxy would occupy the Church for some time.

The earliest controversies were often Christological in nature; that is, they were related to Jesus' divinity or humanity. Docetism held that Jesus' humanity was merely an illusion, thus denying the Incarnation (God becoming human). Arianism held that Jesus, while not merely mortal, was not eternally divine and was, therefore, of lesser status than the Father.^[23] Trinitarianism held that the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit were all strictly one being with three hypostases or persons. Many groups held dualistic beliefs, maintaining that reality was composed into two radically opposing parts: matter, seen as evil, and spirit, seen as good. Such views gave rise to some theology of the "incarnation" that were declared heresies. Most scholars agree that the Bible teaches that both the material and the spiritual worlds were created by God and were therefore both good.^[24]

The development of doctrine, the position of orthodoxy, and the relationship between the various opinions is a matter of continuing academic debate. Since most Christians today subscribe to the doctrines established by the Nicene Creed, modern Christian theologians tend to regard the early debates as a unified orthodox position against a minority of heretics. Other scholars, drawing upon distinctions between Jewish Christians, Pauline Christianity, and other groups such as Marcionites, argue that early Christianity was always fragmented, with contemporaneous competing beliefs.^[25]

Biblical canon

The Biblical canon is the set of books Christians regard as divinely inspired and thus constituting the Christian Bible. Though the Early Church used the Old Testament according to the canon of the Septuagint (LXX), the apostles did not otherwise leave a defined set of new scriptures; instead the New Testament developed over time.

The writings attributed to the apostles circulated amongst the earliest Christian communities. The Pauline epistles were circulating in collected form by the end of the 1st century AD. Justin Martyr, in the early 2nd century, mentions the "memoirs of the apostles", which Christians called "gospels" and which were regarded as on par with the Old Testament,^[26] which was written in narrative form where "in the biblical story God is the protagonist, Satan (or evil people/powers) are the antagonists, and God's people are the agonists".^{[27][28]}

A four gospel canon (the *Tetramorph*) was in place by the time of Irenaeus, c. 160, who refers to it directly.^[29] By the early 3rd century, Origen of Alexandria may have been using the same 27 books as in the modern New Testament, though there were still disputes over the canonicity of Hebrews, James, II Peter, II and III John, and Revelation^[30] Such works that were sometimes "spoken against" were called Antilegomena. In contrast, the major writings and most of what is now the



Virgin and Child. Wall painting from the early catacombs, Rome, 4th century.

New Testament were *Homologoumena*, or universally acknowledged for a long time, since the middle of the 2nd century or before.^[31] Likewise the Muratorian fragment shows that by 200 there existed a set of Christian writings similar to the current New Testament.^[32]

In his Easter letter of 367, Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria, gave the earliest preserved list of exactly the books that would become the New Testament canon.^[33] The African Synod of Hippo, in 393, approved the New Testament, as it stands today, together with the Septuagint books, a decision that was repeated by the Council of Carthage (397) and the Council of Carthage (419).^[34] These councils were under the authority of St. Augustine, who regarded the canon as already closed.^[35] Likewise, Damasus' commissioning of the Latin Vulgate edition of the Bible, c. 383, was instrumental in the fixation of the canon in the West.^[36] In 405, Pope Innocent I sent a list of the sacred books to Exuperius, a Gallic bishop.

When these bishops and councils spoke on the matter, however, they were not defining something new, but instead "were ratifying what had already become the mind of the Church."^[37] Thus, by the 4th century, there existed unanimity in the West concerning the New Testament canon,^[38] and by the 5th century the East, with a few exceptions, had come to accept the Book of Revelation and thus had come into harmony on the matter of the canon.^[39] Nonetheless, a full dogmatic articulation of the canon was not made until the 1546 Council of Trent for Roman Catholicism,^[40] the 1563 Thirty-Nine Articles for the Church of England, the 1647 Westminster Confession of Faith for Calvinism, and the 1672 Synod of Jerusalem for Greek Orthodoxy.



A folio from P46, an early-3rd-century collection of Pauline epistles.

Christianity during late antiquity (313–476)

Establishment of Roman orthodoxy

Galerius, who had previously been one of the leading figures in persecution, in 311 issued an edict which ended the Diocletian persecution of Christianity.^[41] After halting the persecutions of the Christians, Galerius reigned for another 2 years. He was then succeeded by an emperor with distinctively *pro* Christian leanings, Constantine the Great.

The Emperor Constantine I was exposed to Christianity by his mother, Helena.^[42] At the Battle of Milvian Bridge in 312, Constantine commanded his troops to adorn their shields with the Christian symbol in accordance with a vision that he had had the night before. After winning the battle, Constantine was able to claim the emperorship in the West.^[43] In 313, he issued the Edict of Milan, officially legalizing Christian worship.

How much Christianity Constantine adopted at this point is difficult to discern. The Roman coins minted up to eight years subsequent to the battle still bore the images of Roman gods.^[42] Nonetheless, the accession of Constantine was a turning point for the Christian Church. After his victory, Constantine supported the Church financially, built various basilicas, granted privileges (e.g., exemption from certain taxes) to clergy, promoted Christians to some high-ranking offices, and returned property confiscated during the Great Persecution of Diocletian.^[44]

Between 324 and 330, Constantine built, virtually from scratch, a new imperial capital that came to be named for him: Constantinople. It had overtly Christian architecture, contained churches within the city walls, and had no pagan temples.^[45] In accordance with a prevailing custom, Constantine was baptised on his deathbed.

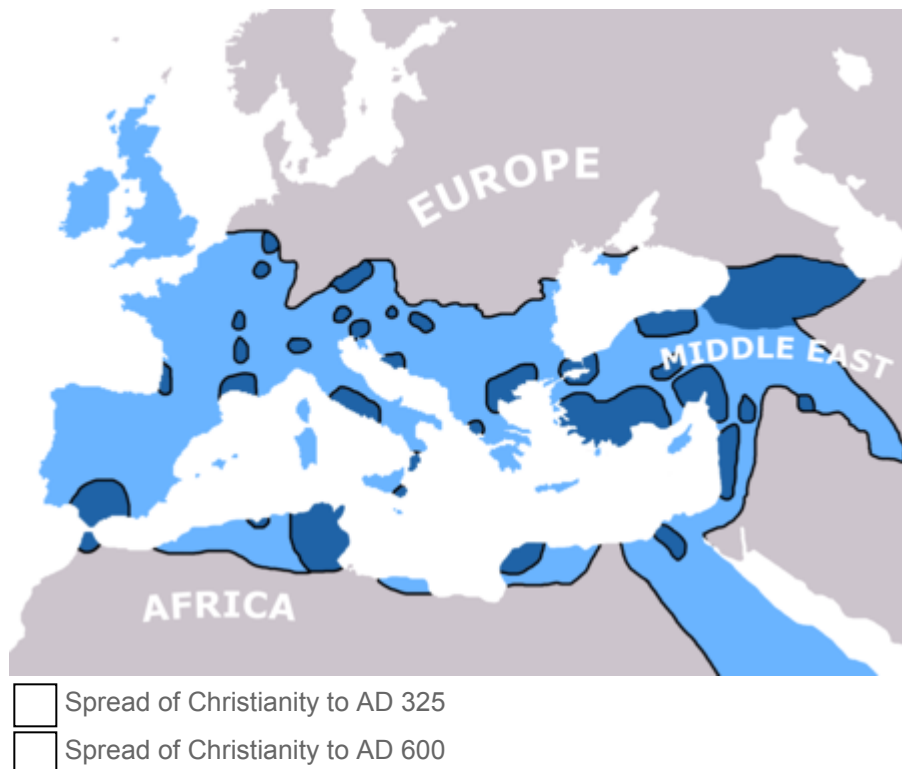
Constantine also played an active role in the leadership of the Church. In 316, he acted as a judge in a North African dispute concerning the Donatist controversy. More significantly, in 325 he summoned the Council of Nicaea, the first Ecumenical Council. Constantine thus established a precedent for the emperor as responsible to God for the spiritual health of their subjects, and thus with a duty to maintain orthodoxy. The emperor was to enforce doctrine, root out heresy, and uphold ecclesiastical unity.^[46]

Constantine's son's successor, known as Julian the Apostate, was a philosopher who upon becoming emperor renounced Christianity and embraced a Neo-platonic and mystical form of paganism shocking the Christian establishment. He began reopening pagan temples and, intent on re-establishing the prestige of the old pagan beliefs, he modified them to resemble Christian traditions such as the episcopal structure and public charity (previously unknown in Roman paganism). Julian's short reign ended when he died while campaigning in the East.

Later Church Fathers wrote volumes of theological texts, including Augustine, Gregory Nazianzus, Cyril of Jerusalem, Ambrose of Milan, Jerome, and others. Some of these fathers, such as John Chrysostom and Athanasius, suffered exile, persecution, or martyrdom from Arian Byzantine Emperors. Many of their writings are translated into English in the compilations of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers.

Arianism and the first Ecumenical Councils

A popular doctrine of the 4th century was Arianism, the denial of the divinity of Christ, as propounded by Arius. Though this doctrine was condemned as heresy and eventually eliminated by the Roman Church it remained popular underground for some time. In the late 4th century Ulfilas, a Roman bishop and an Arian, was appointed as the first bishop to the Goths, the Germanic peoples in much of Europe at the borders of and within the Empire. Ulfilas spread Arian Christianity among the Goths firmly establishing the faith among many of the Germanic tribes, thus helping to keep them culturally distinct.^[47]



Icon depicting the Emperor Constantine (centre) and the bishops of the First Council of Nicaea (325) holding the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed of 381.

During this age, the first Ecumenical Councils were convened. They were mostly concerned with Christological disputes. The First Council of Nicaea (325) and the First Council of Constantinople (381) resulted in condemning Arian teachings as heresy and producing the Nicene Creed.

Christianity as Roman state religion (380)

On 27 February 380, with the Edict of Thessalonica put forth under Theodosius I, the Roman Empire officially adopted Trinitarian Christianity as its state religion. Prior to this date, Constantius II (337-361) and Valens (364–378) had personally favoured Arian or Semi-Arian forms of Christianity, but Valens' successor Theodosius I supported the Trinitarian doctrine as expounded in the Nicene Creed.

After its establishment, the Church adopted the same organisational boundaries as the Empire: geographical provinces, called dioceses, corresponding to imperial governmental territorial division. The bishops, who were located in major urban centres as per pre-legalisation tradition, thus oversaw each diocese. The bishop's location was his "seat", or "see". Among the sees, five came to hold special eminence: Rome, Constantinople, Jerusalem, Antioch, and Alexandria. The prestige of most of these sees depended in part on their apostolic founders, from whom the bishops were therefore the spiritual successors. Though the bishop of Rome was still held to be the First among equals, Constantinople was second in precedence as the new capital of the empire.

Theodosius I decreed that others not believing in the preserved "faithful tradition", such as the Trinity, were to be considered to be practitioners of illegal heresy,^[48] and in 385, this resulted in the first case of capital punishment of a heretic, namely Priscillian.^{[49][50]}

Nestorianism and the Sasanian Empire

During the early 5th century the School of Edessa had taught a Christological perspective stating that Christ's divine and human nature were distinct persons. A particular consequence of this perspective was that Mary could not be properly called the mother of God, but could only be considered the mother of Christ. The most widely known proponent of this viewpoint was the Patriarch of Constantinople Nestorius. Since referring to Mary as the mother of God had become popular in many parts of the Church this became a divisive issue.

The Roman Emperor Theodosius II called for the Council of Ephesus (431), with the intention of settling the issue. The councils ultimately rejected Nestorius' view. Many churches who followed the Nestorian viewpoint broke away from the Roman Church, causing a major schism. The Nestorian churches were persecuted and many followers fled to the Sasanian Empire where they were accepted.

The Sasanian (Persian) Empire had many Christian converts early in its history tied closely to the Syriac branch of Christianity. The Empire was officially Zoroastrian and maintained a strict adherence to this faith in part to distinguish itself from the religion of the Roman Empire (originally the pagan Roman religion and then Christianity). Christianity became tolerated in the Sasanian Empire and as the Roman Empire increasingly exiled *heretics* during the 4th and 6th



An Eastern Roman mosaic showing a basilica with towers, mounted with Christian crosses, 5th century AD, Louvre



Largely extinct Church of the East and its largest extent during the Middle Ages.

centuries, the Sasanian Christian community grew rapidly.^[51] By the end of the 5th century the Persian Church was firmly established and had become independent of the Roman Church. This church evolved into what is today known as the Church of the East.

Miaphysitism

In 451 the Council of Chalcedon was held to further clarify the Christological issues surrounding Nestorianism. The council ultimately stated that Christ's divine and human nature were separate but both part of a single entity, a viewpoint rejected by many churches who called themselves miaphysites. The resulting schism created a communion of churches, including the Armenian, Syrian, and Egyptian churches.^[52] Though efforts were made at reconciliation in the next few centuries the schism remained permanent resulting in what is today known as Oriental Orthodoxy.

Monasticism

Monasticism is a form of asceticism whereby one renounces worldly pursuits and goes off alone as a hermit or joins a tightly organized community. It began early in the Church as a family of similar traditions, modelled upon Scriptural examples and ideals, and with roots in certain strands of Judaism. John the Baptist is seen as an archetypical monk, and monasticism was also inspired by the organisation of the Apostolic community as recorded in Acts 2.

Eremitic monks, or hermits, live in solitude, whereas cenobitics live in communities, generally in a monastery, under a rule (or code of practice) and are governed by an abbot. Originally, all Christian monks were hermits, following the example of Anthony the Great. However, the need for some form of organised spiritual guidance lead Pachomius in 318 to organise his many followers in what was to become the first monastery. Soon, similar institutions were established throughout the Egyptian desert as well as the rest of the eastern half of the Roman Empire. Women were especially attracted to the movement.^[53]

Central figures in the development of monasticism were Basil the Great in the East and, in the West, Benedict, who created the famous Rule of Saint Benedict, which would become the most common rule throughout the Middle Ages, and starting point for other monastic rules.^[54]

Early Middle Ages (476–799)

The transition into the Middle Ages was a gradual and localised process. Rural areas rose as power centres whilst urban areas declined. Although a greater number of Christians remained in the East (Greek areas), important developments were underway in the West (Latin areas) and each took on distinctive shapes.

The Bishops of Rome, the Popes, were forced to adapt to drastically changing circumstances. Maintaining only nominal allegiance to the Emperor, they were forced to negotiate balances with the "barbarian rulers" of the former Roman provinces. In the East the Church maintained its structure and character and evolved more slowly.

Western missionary expansion

The stepwise loss of Western Roman Empire dominance, replaced with foederati and Germanic kingdoms, coincided with early missionary efforts into areas not controlled by the collapsing empire.^[55] Already as early as in the 5th century, missionary activities from Roman Britain into the Celtic areas (current Scotland, Ireland and Wales) produced competing early traditions of Celtic Christianity, that was later reintegrated under the Church in Rome.

Prominent missionaries were Saints Patrick, Columba and Columbanus. The Anglo-Saxon tribes that invaded southern Britain some time after the Roman abandonment, were initially pagan, but converted to Christianity by Augustine of Canterbury on the mission of Pope Gregory the Great. Soon becoming a missionary centre, missionaries such as Wilfrid, Willibrord, Lullus and Boniface would begin converting their Saxon relatives in Germania.

The largely Christian Gallo-Roman inhabitants of Gaul (modern France) were overrun by the Franks in the early 5th century. The native inhabitants were persecuted until the Frankish king Clovis I converted from paganism to Roman Catholicism in 496. Clovis insisted that his fellow nobles follow suit, strengthening his newly established kingdom by uniting the faith of the rulers with that of the ruled.^[56]

After the rise of the Frankish Kingdom and the stabilizing political conditions, the Western part of the Church increased the missionary activities, supported by the Merovingian kingdom as a means to pacify troublesome neighbour peoples. After the foundation of a church in Utrecht by Willibrord, backlashes occurred when the pagan Frisian king Radbod destroyed many Christian centres between 716 and 719. In 717, the English missionary Boniface was sent to aid Willibrord, re-establishing churches in Frisia continuing missions in Germany.^[56]



A mosaic of Justinian I in the church of San Vitale, Ravenna, Italy.

Byzantine iconoclasm

Following a series of heavy military reverses against the Muslims, the Iconoclasm emerged in the early 8th century. In the 720s the Byzantine Emperor Leo III the Isaurian banned the pictorial representation of Christ, saints, and biblical scenes. In the West, Pope Gregory III held two synods at Rome and condemned Leo's actions. The Byzantine Iconoclast Council at Hieria in 754, ruled that holy portraits were heretical.^[57]

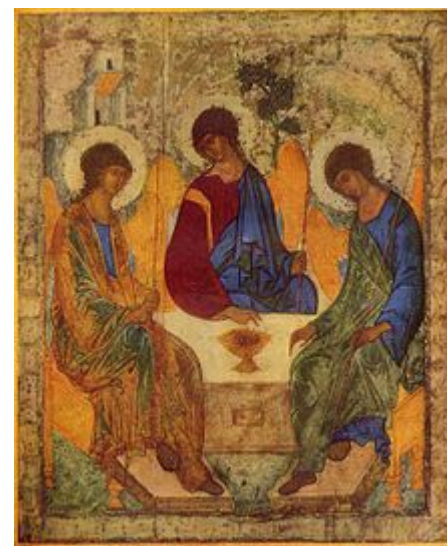
The movement destroyed much of the Christian church's early artistic history. The iconoclastic movement itself was later defined as heretical in 787 under the Seventh Ecumenical council, but enjoyed a brief resurgence between 815 and 842.

High Middle Ages (800–1299)

Carolingian Renaissance

The Carolingian Renaissance was a period of intellectual and cultural revival of literature, arts, and scriptural studies during the late 8th and 9th centuries, mostly during the reigns of Charlemagne and Louis the Pious, Frankish rulers. To address the problems of illiteracy among clergy and court scribes, Charlemagne founded schools and attracted the most learned men from all of Europe to his court.

Monastic Reform



Andrei Rublev's Trinity.



A view of the Abbey of Cluny.

Cluny

From the 6th century onward most of the monasteries in the West were of the Benedictine Order. Owing to the stricter adherence to a reformed Benedictine rule, the abbey of Cluny became the acknowledged leader of western monasticism from the later 10th century. Cluny created a large, federated order in which the administrators of subsidiary houses served as deputies of the abbot of Cluny and answered to him. The Cluniac spirit was a revitalising influence on the Norman church, at its height from the second half of the 10th centuries through the early 12th.

Cîteaux

The next wave of monastic reform came with the Cistercian Movement. The first Cistercian abbey was founded in 1098, at Cîteaux Abbey. The keynote of Cistercian life was a return to a literal observance of the Benedictine rule, rejecting the developments of the Benedictines. The most striking feature in the reform was the return to manual labour, and especially to field-work.

Inspired by Bernard of Clairvaux, the primary builder of the Cistercians, they became the main force of technological diffusion in medieval Europe. By the end of the 12th century the Cistercian houses numbered 500, and at its height in the 15th century the order claimed to have close to 750 houses. Most of these were built in wilderness areas, and played a major part in bringing such isolated parts of Europe into economic cultivation



Bernard of Clairvaux, in a medieval illuminated manuscript.

Mendicant orders

A third level of monastic reform was provided by the establishment of the Mendicant orders. Commonly known as friars, mendicants live under a monastic rule with traditional vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, but they emphasise preaching, missionary activity, and education, in a secluded monastery. Beginning in the 12th century, the Franciscan order was instituted by the followers of Francis of Assisi, and thereafter the Dominican order was begun by St. Dominic.

Investiture Controversy

The Investiture Controversy, or Lay investiture controversy, was the most significant conflict between secular and religious powers in medieval Europe. It began as a dispute in the 11th century between the Holy Roman Emperor Henry IV, and Pope Gregory VII concerning who would appoint bishops (investiture). The end of lay investiture threatened to undercut the power of the Empire and the ambitions of noblemen for the benefit of Church reform.

Bishops collected revenues from estates attached to their bishopric. Noblemen who held lands (fiefdoms) hereditarily passed those lands on within their family. However, because bishops had no legitimate children,



Henry IV at the gate of Canossa, by August von Heyden.

when a bishop died it was the king's right to appoint a successor. So, while a king had little recourse in preventing noblemen from acquiring powerful domains via inheritance and dynastic marriages, a king could keep careful control of lands under the domain of his bishops.

Kings would bestow bishoprics to members of noble families whose friendship he wished to secure. Furthermore, if a king left a bishopric vacant, then he collected the estates' revenues until a bishop was appointed, when in theory he was to repay the earnings. The infrequent nature of this repayment was an obvious source of dispute. The Church wanted to end this lay investiture because of the potential corruption, not only from vacant sees but also from other practices such as simony. Thus, the Investiture Contest was part of the Church's attempt to reform the episcopate and provide better pastoral care.

Pope Gregory VII issued the *Dictatus Papae*, which declared that the pope alone could appoint or depose bishops, or translate them to other sees. Henry IV's rejection of the decree led to his excommunication and a ducal revolt. Eventually Henry received absolution after dramatic public penance barefoot in Alpine snow and cloaked in a hair-shirt (see Road to Canossa), though the revolt and conflict of investiture continued.

Likewise, a similar controversy occurred in England between King Henry I and St. Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury, over investiture and ecclesiastical revenues collected by the king during an episcopal vacancy. The English dispute was resolved by the Concordat of London, 1107, where the king renounced his claim to invest bishops but continued to require an oath of fealty from them upon their election.

This was a partial model for the Concordat of Worms (*Pactum Calixtinum*), which resolved the Imperial investiture controversy with a compromise that allowed secular authorities some measure of control but granted the selection of bishops to their cathedral canons. As a symbol of the compromise, lay authorities invested bishops with their secular authority symbolised by the lance, and ecclesiastical authorities invested bishops with their spiritual authority symbolised by the ring and the staff.

Medieval Inquisition

The Medieval Inquisition is a series of Inquisitions (Roman Catholic Church bodies charged with suppressing heresy) from around 1184, including the Episcopal Inquisition (1184–1230s) and later the Papal Inquisition (1230s). It was in response to movements within Europe considered apostate or heretical to Western Catholicism, in particular the Cathars and the Waldensians in southern France and northern Italy. These were the first inquisition movements of many that would follow. The inquisitions in combination with the Albigensian Crusade were fairly successful in ending heresy. Historian Thomas F. Madden has written about popular myths regarding the Inquisition.^[58]

Conversion of the Scandinavians

Early evangelisation in Scandinavia was begun by Ansgar, Archbishop of Bremen, "Apostle of the North". Ansgar, a native of Amiens, was sent with a group of monks to Jutland Denmark in around 820 at the time of the pro-Christian Jutish king Harald Klak. The mission was only partially successful, and Ansgar returned two years later to Germany, after Harald had been driven out of his kingdom.

In 829 Ansgar went to Birka on Lake Mälaren, Sweden, with his aide friar Witmar, and a small congregation was formed in 831 which included the king's own steward Hergeir. Conversion was slow, however, and most Scandinavian lands were only completely Christianised at the time of rulers such as Saint Canute IV of Denmark and Olaf I of Norway in the years following AD 1000.

Conversion of the Slavs

Though by 800 Western Europe was ruled entirely by Christian kings, East and Central Europe remained an area of missionary activity. For example, in the 9th century SS. Cyril and Methodius had extensive missionary success in the region among the Slavic peoples, translating the Bible and liturgy into Slavonic. The Baptism of Kiev in 988 spread Christianity throughout Kievan Rus', establishing Christianity among Ukraine, Belarus and Russia.

In the 9th and 10th centuries, Christianity made great inroads into Eastern Europe, including Bulgaria and Kievan Rus'. The evangelisation, or Christianisation, of the Slavs was initiated by one of Byzantium's most learned churchmen—the Patriarch Photios I of Constantinople (Photius). The Byzantine emperor Michael III chose Cyril and Methodius in response to a request from Rastislav, the king of Moravia who wanted missionaries that could minister to the Moravians in their own language.

The two brothers spoke the local Slavonic vernacular and translated the Bible and many of the prayer books.^[59] As the translations prepared by them were copied by speakers of other dialects, the hybrid literary language Old Church Slavonic was created.

Methodius later went on to convert the Serbs.^[60] Some of the disciples returned to Bulgaria where they were welcomed by the Bulgarian Knyaz Boris I who viewed the Slavonic liturgy as a way to counteract Byzantine influence in the country. In a short time the disciples of Cyril and Methodius managed to prepare and instruct the future Slavic clergy into the Glagolitic alphabet and the biblical texts.

Bulgaria was officially recognised as a patriarchate by Constantinople in 927, Serbia in 1346, and Russia in 1589. All these nations, however, had been converted long before these dates.

The missionaries to the East and South Slavs had great success in part because they used the people's native language rather than Latin as the Roman priests did, or Greek.

Mission to Great Moravia

When king Rastislav of Moravia asked Byzantium for teachers who could minister to the Moravians in their own language, Byzantine emperor Michael III chose two brothers, Cyril and Methodius. As their mother was a Slav from the hinterlands of Thessaloniki, the two brothers had been raised speaking the local Slavonic vernacular. Once commissioned, they immediately set about creating an alphabet, the Glagolitic alphabet. They then translated the Scripture and the liturgy into Slavonic.

This Slavic dialect became the basis of Old Church Slavonic which later evolved into Church Slavonic which is the common liturgical language still used by the Russian Orthodox Church and other Slavic Orthodox Christians. The missionaries to the East and South Slavs had great success in part because they used the people's native language rather than Latin or Greek. In Great Moravia, Constantine and Methodius encountered Frankish missionaries from Germany, representing the western or Latin branch of the Church, and more particularly representing the Holy Roman Empire as founded by



Stavronikita monastery.



St. Cyril and St. Methodius monument on Mt. Radhošť.

Charlemagne, and committed to linguistic, and cultural uniformity. They insisted on the use of the Latin liturgy, and they regarded Moravia and the Slavic peoples as part of their rightful mission field.

When friction developed, the brothers, unwilling to be a cause of dissension among Christians, travelled to Rome to see the Pope, seeking an agreement that would avoid quarrelling between missionaries in the field. Constantine entered a monastery in Rome, taking the name Cyril, by which he is now remembered. However, he died only a few weeks thereafter.

Pope Adrian II gave Methodius the title of Archbishop of Sirmium (now Sremska Mitrovica in Serbia) and sent him back in 869, with jurisdiction over all of Moravia and Pannonia, and authorisation to use the Slavonic Liturgy. Soon, however, Prince Ratislav, who had originally invited the brothers to Moravia, died, and his successor did not support Methodius. In 870 the Frankish king Louis and his bishops deposed Methodius at a synod at Ratisbon, and imprisoned him for a little over two years. Pope John VIII secured his release, but instructed him to stop using the Slavonic Liturgy.

In 878, Methodius was summoned to Rome on charges of heresy and using Slavonic. This time Pope John was convinced by the arguments that Methodius made in his defence and sent him back cleared of all charges, and with permission to use Slavonic. The Carolingian bishop who succeeded him, Witching, suppressed the Slavonic Liturgy and forced the followers of Methodius into exile. Many found refuge with Knyaz Boris of Bulgaria, under whom they reorganised a Slavic-speaking Church. Meanwhile, Pope John's successors adopted a Latin-only policy which lasted for centuries.

Conversion of Bulgaria

Bulgaria was a pagan country since its establishment in 681 until 864 when Boris I (852–889) converted to Christianity. The reasons for that decision were complex; the most important factors were that Bulgaria was situated between two powerful Christian empires, Byzantium and East Francia; Christian doctrine particularly favoured the position of the monarch as God's representative on Earth, while Boris also saw it as a way to overcome the differences between Bulgars and Slavs.^{[61][62]}

In 885 some of the disciples of Cyril and Methodius, including Clement of Ohrid, Naum of Preslav and Angelarius, returned to Bulgaria where they were welcomed by Boris I who viewed the Slavonic liturgy as a way to counteract Byzantine influence in the country. In a short time they managed to prepare and instruct the future Bulgarian clergy into the Glagolitic alphabet and the biblical texts. As a result of the Council of Preslav in AD 893, Bulgaria expelled its Greek clergy and proclaimed the Old Bulgarian language as the official language of the church and the state.

Conversion of the Rus'

The success of the conversion of the Bulgarians facilitated the conversion of other East Slavic peoples, most notably the Rus', predecessors of Belarusians, Russians, and Ukrainians, as well as Rusyns. By the beginning of the 11th century most of the pagan Slavic world, including Rus', Bulgaria and Serbia, had been converted to Byzantine Christianity. The traditional event associated with the conversion of Rus' is the baptism of Vladimir of Kiev in 989. However, Christianity is documented to have predated this event in the city of Kiev and in Georgia. Today the Russian Orthodox Church is the largest of the Orthodox Churches.



Church of St. Margaret of Antioch, Kopčany (Kopčany, Slovakia, 9th–10th century) – the only preserved building from the time of Great Moravia.

Controversy and Crusades dividing East and West

Growing tensions between East and West

The cracks and fissures in Christian unity which led to the East-West Schism started to become evident as early as the 4th century. Cultural, political, and linguistic differences were often mixed with the theological, leading to schism.

The transfer of the Roman capital to Constantinople inevitably brought mistrust, rivalry, and even jealousy to the relations of the two great sees, Rome and Constantinople. It was easy for Rome to be jealous of Constantinople at a time when it was rapidly losing its political prominence. Estrangement was also helped along by the German invasions in the West, which effectively weakened contacts. The rise of Islam with its conquest of most of the Mediterranean coastline (not to mention the arrival of the pagan Slavs in the Balkans at the same time) further intensified this separation by driving a physical wedge between the two worlds. The once homogeneous unified world of the Mediterranean was fast vanishing. Communication between the Greek East and Latin West by the 7th century had become dangerous and practically ceased.^[63]

Two basic problems were involved: the nature of the primacy of the bishop of Rome and the theological implications of adding a clause to the Nicene Creed, known as the Filioque clause. These doctrinal issues were first openly discussed in Photius's patriarchate.

By the 5th century, Christendom was divided into a pentarchy of five sees with Rome accorded a primacy. The four Eastern sees of the pentarchy considered this determined by canonical decision and not entailing hegemony of any one local church or patriarchate over the others. However, Rome began to interpret her primacy in terms of sovereignty, as a God-given right involving universal jurisdiction in the Church. The collegial and conciliar nature of the Church, in effect, was gradually abandoned in favour of supremacy of unlimited papal power over the entire Church. These ideas were finally given systematic expression in the West during the Gregorian Reform movement of the 11th century.

The Eastern churches viewed Rome's understanding of the nature of episcopal power as being in direct opposition to the Church's essentially conciliar structure and thus saw the two ecclesiologies as mutually antithetical. For them, specifically, Simon Peter's primacy could never be the exclusive prerogative of any one bishop. All bishops must, like St. Peter, confess Jesus as the Christ and, as such, all are Peter's successors. The churches of the East gave the Roman See primacy but not supremacy, the Pope being the first among equals but not infallible and not with absolute authority.^[64]

The other major irritant to Eastern Christendom was the Western use of the Filioque clause—meaning "and the Son"—in the Nicene Creed . This too developed gradually and entered the Creed over time. The issue was the addition by the West of the Latin clause Filioque to the Creed, as in "the Holy Spirit... who proceeds from the Father *and the Son*", where the original Creed, sanctioned by the councils and still used today by the Eastern Orthodox simply states "the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life, who proceeds from the Father." The Eastern Church argued that the phrase had been added unilaterally, and therefore illegitimately, since the East had never been consulted.^[65]



The Baptism of Vladimir.

In the final analysis, only another ecumenical council could introduce such an alteration. Indeed, the councils, which drew up the original Creed, had expressly forbidden any subtraction or addition to the text. In addition to this ecclesiological issue, the Eastern Church also considered the *Filioque* clause unacceptable on dogmatic grounds. Theologically, the Latin interpolation was unacceptable since it implied that the Spirit now had two sources of origin and procession, the Father and the Son, rather than the Father alone.^[66]

Photian schism

In the 9th century AD, a controversy arose between Eastern (Byzantine, Greek Orthodox) and Western (Latin, Roman Catholic) Christianity that was precipitated by the opposition of the Roman Pope John VII to the appointment by the Byzantine emperor Michael III of Photios I to the position of patriarch of Constantinople. Photios was refused an apology by the pope for previous points of dispute between the East and West. Photios refused to accept the supremacy of the pope in Eastern matters or accept the *Filioque* clause. The Latin delegation at the council of his consecration pressed him to accept the clause in order to secure their support.

The controversy also involved Eastern and Western ecclesiastical jurisdictional rights in the Bulgarian church, as well as a doctrinal dispute over the *Filioque* ("and from the Son") clause. That had been added to the Nicene Creed by the Latin church, which was later the theological breaking point in the ultimate Great East-West Schism in the 11th century.

Photios did provide concession on the issue of jurisdictional rights concerning Bulgaria and the papal legates made do with his return of Bulgaria to Rome. This concession, however, was purely nominal, as Bulgaria's return to the Byzantine rite in 870 had already secured for it an autocephalous church. Without the consent of Boris I of Bulgaria, the papacy was unable to enforce any of its claims.

East-West Schism (1054)

The East-West Schism, or Great Schism, separated the Church into Western (Latin) and Eastern (Greek) branches, i.e., Western Catholicism and Eastern Orthodoxy. It was the first major division since certain groups in the East rejected the decrees of the Council of Chalcedon (see Oriental Orthodoxy), and was far more significant. Though normally dated to 1054, the East-West Schism was actually the result of an extended period of estrangement between Latin and Greek Christendom over the nature of papal primacy and certain doctrinal matters like the *Filioque*, but intensified by cultural and linguistic differences.

The "official" schism in 1054 was the excommunication of Patriarch Michael Cerularius of Constantinople, followed by his excommunication of papal legates. Attempts at reconciliation were made in 1274 (by the Second Council of Lyon) and in 1439 (by the Council of Basel), but in each case the eastern hierarchs who consented to the unions were repudiated by the Orthodox as a whole, though reconciliation was achieved between the West and what are now called the "Eastern Rite Catholic Churches". More recently, in 1965 the mutual excommunications were rescinded by the Pope and the Patriarch of Constantinople, though schism remains.

Both groups are descended from the Early Church, both acknowledge the apostolic succession of each other's bishops, and the validity of each other's sacraments. Though both acknowledge the primacy of the Bishop of Rome, Eastern Orthodoxy understands this as a primacy of honour with limited or no ecclesiastical authority in other dioceses.

The Orthodox East perceived the Papacy as taking on monarchical characteristics that were not in line with the church's tradition.

The final breach is often considered to have arisen after the capture and sacking of Constantinople by the Fourth Crusade in 1204. Crusades against Christians in the East by Roman Catholic crusaders was not exclusive to the Mediterranean though (see also the Northern Crusades and the Battle of the Ice). The sacking of Constantinople and the Church of Holy Wisdom and establishment of the Latin Empire as a seeming attempt to supplant the Orthodox Byzantine Empire in 1204 is viewed with some rancour to the present day.

Many in the East saw the actions of the West as a prime determining factor in the weakening of Byzantium. This led to the Empire's eventual conquest and fall to Islam. In 2004, Pope John Paul II extended a formal apology for the sacking of Constantinople in 1204; the apology was formally accepted by Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople. Many things that were stolen during this time: holy relics, riches, and many other items, are still held in various Western European cities, particularly Venice, Italy.

Crusades

Generally, the Crusades refer to the campaigns in the Holy Land against Muslim forces sponsored by the Papacy. There were other crusades against Islamic forces in southern Spain, southern Italy, and Sicily, as well as the campaigns of Teutonic knights against pagan strongholds in North-eastern Europe (see Northern Crusades). A few crusades such as the Fourth Crusade were waged within Christendom against groups that were considered heretical and schismatic (also see the Battle of the Ice and the Albigensian Crusade).

The Holy Land had been part of the Roman Empire, and thus Byzantine Empire, until the Islamic conquests of the 7th and 8th centuries. Thereafter, Christians had generally been permitted to visit the sacred places in the Holy Land until 1071, when the Seljuk Turks closed Christian pilgrimages and assailed the Byzantines, defeating them at the Battle of Manzikert.

Emperor Alexius I asked for aid from Pope Urban II (1088–1099) for help against Islamic aggression. He probably expected money from the pope for the hiring of mercenaries. Instead, Urban II called upon the knights of Christendom in a speech made at the Council of Clermont on 27 November 1095, combining the idea of pilgrimage to the Holy Land with that of waging a holy war against infidels.

The First Crusade captured Antioch in 1099 and then Jerusalem. The Second Crusade occurred in 1145 when Edessa was retaken by Islamic forces. Jerusalem would be held until 1187 and the Third Crusade, famous for the battles between Richard the Lionheart and Saladin. The Fourth Crusade, begun by Innocent III in 1202, intended to retake the Holy Land but was soon subverted by Venetians who used the forces to sack the Christian city of Zara.^[67]

Eventually, the crusaders arrived in Constantinople. Rather than proceed to the Holy Land the crusaders instead sacked Constantinople and other parts of Asia Minor effectively establishing the Latin Empire of Constantinople in Greece and Asia Minor. This was effectively the last crusade sponsored by the papacy, with later crusades being sponsored by individuals.^[67]

Jerusalem was held by the crusaders for nearly a century, and other strongholds in the Near East would remain in Christian possession much longer. The crusades in the Holy Land ultimately failed to establish permanent Christian kingdoms. Islamic expansion into Europe would renew and remain a threat for centuries culminating in the campaigns of Suleiman the Magnificent in the 16th century.^[67]



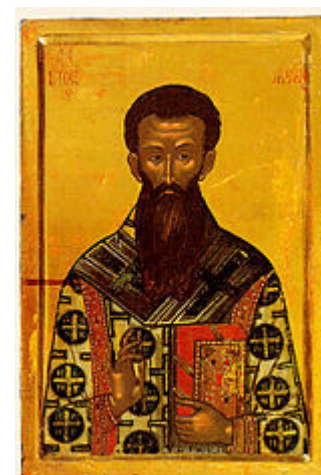
Krak des Chevaliers was built in the County of Tripoli by the Knights Hospitaller during the Crusades.

Crusades in southern Spain, southern Italy, and Sicily eventually lead to the demise of Islamic power in Europe.^[67] The Teutonic knights expanded Christian domains in Eastern Europe, and the much less frequent crusades within Christendom, such as the Albigensian Crusade, achieved their goal of maintaining doctrinal unity.^[67]

Hesychast Controversy

In 1337 Hesychasm—a mystical teaching at Mount Athos came under attack from Barlaam of Calabria, an abbot in Constantinople. Barlaam propounded a more intellectual and propositional approach to the knowledge of God than the Hesychasts taught. Hesychasm is a form of constant purposeful prayer or experiential prayer, explicitly referred to as contemplation focusing on the idea of stillness and the characteristic mystical idea of light as the vehicle for knowing God.

Gregory Palamas, afterwards Archbishop of Thessalonica, defended Hesychasm. Several synods took one position or the other until in 1351 at a synod under the presidency of the Emperor John VI Cantacuzenus, Hesychast doctrine was established as the doctrine of the Orthodox Church. the theology was especially attractive in the East because it validated the use of icons as a vehicle for contemplation of divine light.^[68]



Gregory Palamas.

Eastern Orthodox captivity (1453–1850)

Fall of Constantinople

In 1453, Constantinople fell to the Ottoman Empire. By this time Egypt had been under Muslim control for some seven centuries, but Orthodoxy was very strong in Russia which had recently acquired an autocephalous status; and thus Moscow called itself the Third Rome, as the cultural heir of Constantinople.

Under Ottoman rule, the Greek Orthodox Church acquired substantial power as an autonomous *millet*. The ecumenical patriarch was the religious and administrative ruler of the entire "Greek Orthodox nation" (Ottoman administrative unit), which encompassed all the Eastern Orthodox subjects of the Empire.

Eastern Christians fleeing Constantinople, and the Greek manuscripts they carried with them, is one of the factors that prompted the literary renaissance in the West at about this time.

Isolation from the West

As a result of the Ottoman conquest of the Byzantine Empire in 1453, and the Fall of Constantinople, the entire Orthodox communion of the Balkans and the Near East became suddenly isolated from the West. For the next four hundred years, it would be confined within a hostile Islamic world, with which it had little in common religiously or culturally. The Russian Orthodox Church was the only part of the Orthodox communion which remained outside the control of the Ottoman Empire.

It is, in part, due to this geographical and intellectual confinement that the voice of Eastern Orthodoxy was not heard during the Reformation in 16th-century Europe. As a result, this important theological debate often seems strange and distorted to the Orthodox. They never took part in it and thus neither Reformation nor Counter-Reformation is part of their theological framework.

Religious rights under the Ottoman Empire

The new Ottoman government that conquered the Byzantine Empire followed Islamic law when dealing with the conquered Christian population. Christians were officially tolerated as People of the Book. As such, the Church's canonical and hierarchical organisation were not significantly disrupted and its administration continued to function. One of the first things that Mehmet the Conqueror did was to allow the Church to elect a new patriarch, Gennadius Scholarius.

Because Islamic law makes no distinction between nationality and religion, all Christians, regardless of their language or nationality, were considered a single millet, or nation. The patriarch, as the highest-ranking hierarch, was thus invested with civil and religious authority and made ethnarch, head of the entire Christian Orthodox population. This meant that all Orthodox Churches within Ottoman territory were under the control of Constantinople. However, these rights and privileges, including freedom of worship and religious organisation, were often established in principle but seldom corresponded to reality. Christians were viewed as second-class citizens, and the legal protections they depended upon were subject to the whims of the Sultan and the Sublime Porte.^{[69][70]}

Under Ottoman occupation the Church could no longer bear witness to Christ. Christian missionary work among Muslims was illegal and dangerous, whereas conversion to Islam was entirely legal and permissible. Converts to Islam who returned to Orthodoxy were put to death as apostates. No new churches could be built and even the ringing of church bells was prohibited. The Hagia Sophia and the Parthenon, which had been Christian churches for nearly a millennium, were converted into mosques. Education of the clergy and the Christian population either ceased altogether or was reduced to the most rudimentary elements. Violent persecutions of Christians were common, and reached their climax in the Armenian, Assyrian, and Greek genocides.

Corruption

The Orthodox Church found itself subject to the Turkish system of corruption. The patriarchal throne was frequently sold to the highest bidder, while new patriarchal investiture was accompanied by heavy payment to the government. In order to recoup their losses, patriarchs and bishops taxed the local parishes and their clergy.

Few patriarchs between the 15th and the 19th centuries died a natural death while in office. The forced abdications, exiles, hangings, drownings, and poisonings of patriarchs are well documented. The hierarchy's positions were often dangerous as well. The hanging of patriarch Gregory V from the gate of the patriarchate on Easter Sunday 1821 was accompanied by the execution of two metropolitans and twelve bishops.

Late Middle Ages and the early Renaissance (1300–1520)

Avignon Papacy (1309–1378)

The Avignon Papacy, sometimes referred to as the Babylonian Captivity, was a period from 1309 to 1378 during which seven Popes resided in Avignon, in modern-day France.^[71] The period was one of conflict and controversy during which French Kings held considerable sway over the Papacy and rulers across Europe felt sidelined by the new French-centric papacy.

Troubles reached their peak in 1378 when, Gregory XI died while visiting Rome. A papal conclave met in Rome and elected Urban VI, an Italian. Urban soon alienated the French cardinals, and they held a second conclave electing Robert of Geneva to succeed Gregory XI, beginning the Western Schism.

Western Schism (1378–1416)

The Western Schism, or Papal Schism, was a prolonged period of crisis in Latin Christendom from 1378 to 1416, when there were two or more claimants to the See of Rome and there was conflict concerning the rightful holder of the papacy. The conflict was political, rather than doctrinal, in nature.

In 1309, Pope Clement V, due to political considerations, moved to Avignon in southern France and exercised his pontificate there. For sixty-nine years popes resided in Avignon rather than Rome. This was not only an obvious source of confusion but of political animosity as the prestige and influence of city of Rome waned without a resident pontiff. Though Pope Gregory XI, a Frenchman, returned to Rome in 1378, the strife between Italian and French factions intensified, especially following his subsequent death.

In 1378 the conclave, elected an Italian from Naples, Pope Urban VI; his intransigence in office soon alienated the French cardinals, who withdrew to a conclave of their own, asserting the previous election was invalid since its decision had been made under the duress of a riotous mob. They elected one of their own, Robert of Geneva, who took the name Pope Clement VII. By 1379, he was back in the palace of popes in Avignon, while Urban VI remained in Rome.

For nearly forty years, there were two papal curias and two sets of cardinals, each electing a new pope for Rome or Avignon when death created a vacancy. Each pope lobbied for support among kings and princes who played them off against each other, changing allegiance according to political advantage. In 1409, a council was convened at Pisa to resolve the issue. The council declared both existing popes to be schismatic (Gregory XII from Rome, Benedict XIII from Avignon) and appointed a new one, Alexander V. The existing popes refused to resign and thus there were three papal claimants. Another council was convened in 1414, the Council of Constance.

In March 1415 the Pisan pope John XXIII fled from Constance in disguise. He was brought back a prisoner and deposed in May. The Roman pope, Gregory XII, resigned voluntarily in July. The Avignon pope, Benedict XIII, refused to come to Constance, nor would he consider resignation. The council deposed him in July 1417. The council in Constance elected Pope Martin V as pope in November, having finally cleared the field of popes and antipopes, .

John Wycliff and Jan Hus

John Wycliffe (or Wyclif) (1330–1384) was an English scholar and heretic best known for denouncing the corruptions of the Church, and his sponsoring the first translation of the Bible from Latin into English. He was a precursor of the Protestant Reformation. He emphasized the supremacy of the Bible, and called for a direct relationship between man and God, without interference by priests and bishops. His followers, called Lollards, faced persecution by the Church of England. They went underground for over a century and played a role in the English Reformation.^{[72][73]}

Jan Hus (or Huss) (1369?–1415) a Czech theologian in Prague, was influenced by Wycliffe and spoke out against the corruptions he saw in the Church; his continued defiance led to his excommunication and condemnation by the Council of Constance, which also condemned John Wycliff. Hus was executed in 1415, but his followers organized a peasants' war, 1419–1436, that was put down by the Empire with great brutality. Hus was a forerunner of the Protestant Reformation and his memory has become a powerful symbol of Czech culture in Bohemia.^[74]



Painting of Jan Hus in Council of Constance by Václav Brožík.

Italian Renaissance (c. 1375 – 1520)

The Renaissance was a period of great cultural change and achievement, marked in Italy by a classical orientation and an increase of wealth through mercantile trade. The City of Rome, the Papacy, and the Papal States were all affected by the Renaissance. On the one hand, it was a time of great artistic patronage and architectural magnificence, where the Church pardoned such artists as Michelangelo, Brunelleschi, Bramante, Raphael, Fra Angelico, Donatello, and da Vinci. On the other hand, wealthy Italian families often secured episcopal offices, including the papacy, for their own members, some of whom were known for immorality, such as Alexander VI and Sixtus IV.

In addition to being the head of the Church, the Pope became one of Italy's most important secular rulers, and pontiffs such as Julius II often waged campaigns to protect and expand their temporal domains. Furthermore, the popes, in a spirit of refined competition with other Italian lords, spent lavishly both on private luxuries but also on public works, repairing or building churches, bridges, and a magnificent system of aqueducts in Rome that still function today.

From 1505 to 1626, St. Peter's Basilica, perhaps the most recognised Christian church, was built on the site of the old Constantinian basilica. It was also a time of increased contact with Greek culture, opening up new avenues of learning, especially in the fields of philosophy, poetry, classics, rhetoric, and political science, fostering a spirit of humanism—all of which would influence the Church.



Michelangelo's *Pietà* in St. Peter's Basilica, Vatican City

Reformation and Counter-Reformation

Protestant Reformation (1521–1610)

In the early 16th century, movements were begun by two theologians, Martin Luther and Huldrych Zwingli, that aimed to reform the Church; these reformers are distinguished from previous ones in that they considered the root of corruptions to be doctrinal (rather than simply a matter of moral weakness or lack of ecclesiastical discipline) and thus they aimed to change contemporary doctrines to accord with what they perceived to be the "true gospel." The word *Protestant* is derived from the Latin *protestatio* meaning *declaration* which refers to the letter of protestation by Lutheran princes against the decision of the Diet of Speyer in 1529, which reaffirmed the edict of the Diet of Worms against the Reformation.^[75] Since that time, the term has been used in many different senses, but most often as a general term refers to Western Christianity that is not subject to papal authority.^[75] The term "Protestant" was not originally used by Reformation era leaders; instead, they called themselves "evangelical", emphasising the "return to the true gospel (Greek: *euangelion*)."^[76]

The beginning of the Protestant Reformation is generally identified with Martin Luther and the posting of the 95 Theses on the castle church in Wittenberg, Germany. Early protest was against corruptions such as simony, episcopal vacancies, and the sale of indulgences. The Protestant position, however, would come to incorporate doctrinal changes such as sola scriptura and sola fide. The three most important traditions to emerge directly from the Protestant Reformation were the Lutheran, Reformed (Calvinist, Presbyterian, etc.), and Anglican traditions, though the latter group identifies as both "Reformed" and "Catholic", and some subgroups reject the classification as "Protestant."

The Protestant Reformation may be divided into two distinct but basically simultaneous movements, the Magisterial Reformation and the Radical Reformation. The Magisterial Reformation involved the alliance of certain theological teachers (Latin: *magistri*) such as Luther, Zwingli, Calvin, Cranmer, etc. with secular magistrates who cooperated in the

reformation of Christendom. Radical Reformers, besides forming communities outside state sanction, often employed more extreme doctrinal change, such as the rejection of tenets of the Councils of Nicaea and Chalcedon. Often the division between magisterial and radical reformers was as or more violent than the general Catholic and Protestant hostilities.

The Protestant Reformation spread almost entirely within the confines of Northern Europe, but did not take hold in certain northern areas such as Ireland and parts of Germany. By far the magisterial reformers were more successful and their changes more widespread than the radical reformers. The Catholic response to the Protestant Reformation is known as the Counter Reformation, or Catholic Reformation, which resulted in a reassertion of traditional doctrines and the emergence of new religious orders aimed at both moral reform and new missionary activity. The Counter Reformation reconverted approximately 33% of Northern Europe to Catholicism and initiated missions in South and Central America, Africa, Asia, and even China and Japan. Protestant expansion outside of Europe occurred on a smaller scale through colonisation of North America and areas of Africa.

Martin Luther

Martin Luther was an Augustinian friar and professor at the University of Wittenberg. In 1517, he published a list of 95 Theses, or points to be debated, concerning the illicitness of selling indulgences. Luther had a particular disdain for Aristotelian philosophy, and as he began developing his own theology, he increasingly came into conflict with Thomistic scholars, most notably Cardinal Cajetan.^[77] Soon, Luther had begun to develop his theology of justification, or process by which one is "made right" (righteous) in the eyes of God. In Catholic theology, one is made righteous by a progressive infusion of grace accepted through faith and cooperated with through good works. Luther's doctrine of justification differed from Catholic theology in that justification rather meant "the declaring of one to be righteous", where God imputes the merits of Christ upon one who remains without inherent merit.^[78] In this process, good works are more of an unessential byproduct that contribute nothing to one's own state of righteousness. Conflict between Luther and leading theologians lead to his gradual rejection of authority of the Church hierarchy. In 1520, he was condemned for heresy by the papal bull Exsurge Domine, which he burned at Wittenberg along with books of canon law.^[79]



Martin Luther, by Lucas Cranach the Elder

Ulrich Zwingli

Ulrich Zwingli was a Swiss scholar and parish priest who was likewise influential in the beginnings of the Protestant Reformation. Zwingli claimed that his theology owed nothing to Luther, and that he had developed it in 1516, before Luther's famous protest, though his doctrine of justification was remarkably similar to that of the German friar.^[80] In 1518, Zwingli was given a post at the wealthy collegiate church of the Grossmünster in Zürich, where he would remain until his death at a relatively young age. Soon he had risen to prominence in the city, and when political tension developed between most of Switzerland and the Catholic Habsburg Emperor Charles V. In this environment, Zwingli began preaching his version of reform, with certain points as the aforementioned doctrine of justification, but others (with which Luther vehemently disagreed) such as the position that veneration of icons was actually idolatry and thus a violation of the first commandment, and the denial of the real presence in the Eucharist.^[81] Soon the city council had accepted Zwingli's doctrines and Zurich became a focal point of more radical reforming movements, and certain admirers and followers of Zwingli pushed his message and reforms far further than even he had intended, such as rejecting infant baptism.^[82] This split between Luther and Zwingli formed the essence of the Protestant division between Lutheran and Reformed theology.



Ulrich Zwingli, wearing the scholar's cap.

Meanwhile, political tensions increased; Zwingli and the Zurich leadership imposed an economic blockade on the inner Catholic states of Switzerland, which led to a battle in which Zwingli, in full armor, was slain along with his troops.

John Calvin

John Calvin was a French cleric and doctor of law turned Protestant reformer. He belonged to the second generation of the Reformation, publishing his theological tome, the *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, in 1536 (later revised), and establishing himself as a leader of the Reformed church in Geneva, which became an "unofficial capital" of Reformed Christianity in the second half of the 16th century. He exerted a remarkable amount of authority in the city and over the city council, such that he has (rather ignominiously) been called a "Protestant pope." Calvin established an eldership together with a "consistory", where pastors and the elders established matters of religious

discipline for the Genevan population.^[83] Calvin's theology is best known for his doctrine of (double) predestination, which held that God had, from all eternity, providentially foreordained who would be saved (the elect) and likewise who would be damned (the reprobate). Predestination was not the dominant idea in Calvin's works, but it would seemingly become so for many of his Reformed successors.^[84]

English Reformation

Unlike other reform movements, the English Reformation began by royal influence. Henry VIII considered himself a thoroughly Catholic King, and in 1521 he defended the papacy against Luther in a book he commissioned entitled, *The Defence of the Seven Sacraments*, for which Pope Leo X awarded him the title *Fidei Defensor* (Defender of the Faith). However, the king came into conflict with the papacy when he wished to annul his marriage with Catherine of Aragon, for which he needed papal sanction. Catherine, among many other noble relations, was the aunt of Emperor Charles V, the papacy's most significant secular supporter. The ensuing dispute eventually led to a break from Rome and the declaration of the King of England as head of the English Church. England would later experience periods of frenetic and eclectic reforms contrasted by periods led by staunch conservatives. Monarchs such as Edward VI, Mary I, Elizabeth I, and Archbishops of Canterbury such as Thomas Cranmer and William Laud pushed the Church of England in many directions over the course of only a few generations. What emerged was a state church that considered itself both "Reformed" and "Catholic" but not "Roman" (and hesitated from the title "Protestant"), and other "unofficial" more radical movements such as the Puritans.



Statue of Richard Hooker, whose emphases on reason, tolerance and inclusiveness influenced Anglicanism.

Counter-Reformation (1545–1610)

The Counter-Reformation, or Catholic Reformation, was the response of the Catholic Church to the Protestant Reformation. The essence of the Counter-Reformation was a renewed conviction in traditional practices and the upholding of Catholic doctrine as the source of ecclesiastic and moral reform, and the answer to halt the spread of Protestantism. Thus it experienced the founding of new religious orders, such as the Jesuits, the establishment of seminaries for the proper training of priests, renewed worldwide missionary activity, and the development of new yet

orthodox forms of spirituality, such as that of the Spanish mystics and the French school of spirituality. The entire process was spearheaded by the Council of Trent, which clarified and reasserted doctrine, issued dogmatic definitions, and produced the Roman Catechism.

Though Ireland, Spain, France, and elsewhere featured significantly in the Counter-Reformation, its heart was Italy and the various popes of the time, who established the *Index Librorum Prohibitorum* (the list of prohibited books) and the Roman Inquisition, a system of juridical tribunals that prosecuted heresy and related offences. The Papacy of St. Pius V (1566–1572) was known not only for its focus on halting heresy and worldly abuses within the Church, but also for its focus on improving popular piety in a determined effort to stem the appeal of Protestantism. Pius began his pontificate by giving large alms to the poor, charity, and hospitals, and the pontiff was known for consoling the poor and sick, and supporting missionaries. The activities of these pontiffs coincided with a rediscovery of the ancient Christian catacombs in Rome. As Diarmaid MacCulloch stated, "Just as these ancient martyrs were revealed once more, Catholics were beginning to be martyred afresh, both in mission fields overseas and in the struggle to win back Protestant northern Europe: the catacombs proved to be an inspiration for many to action and to heroism."^[85]

The Council of Trent

The Council of Trent (1545–1563), initiated by Pope Paul III (1534–1549) addressed issues of certain ecclesiastical corruptions such as simony, absenteeism, nepotism, and other abuses, as well as the reassertion of traditional practices and the dogmatic articulation of the traditional doctrines of the Church, such as the episcopal structure, clerical celibacy, the seven Sacraments, transubstantiation (the belief that during mass the consecrated bread and wine truly become the body and blood of Christ), the veneration of relics, icons, and saints (especially the Blessed Virgin Mary), the necessity of both faith and good works for salvation, the existence of purgatory and the issuance (but not the sale) of indulgences, etc. In other words, all Protestant doctrinal objections and changes were uncompromisingly rejected. The Council also fostered an interest in education for parish priests to increase pastoral care. Milan's Archbishop Saint Charles Borromeo (1538–1584) set an example by visiting the remotest parishes and instilling high standards.



The Council in Santa Maria Maggiore church; Museo Diocesiano Tridentino, Trento

Catholic missions

Catholic missions were carried to new places beginning with the new Age of Discovery, and the Roman Catholic Church established a number of Missions in the Americas and other colonies in order to spread Christianity in the New World and to convert the indigenous peoples. At the same time, missionaries such as Francis Xavier as well as other Jesuits, Augustinians, Franciscans and Dominicans were moving into Asia and the Far East. The Portuguese sent missions into Africa. While some of these missions were associated with imperialism and oppression, others (notably Matteo Ricci's Jesuit mission to China) were relatively peaceful and focused on integration rather than cultural imperialism.

Church and the Enlightenment (1610–1800)

Trial of Galileo

The Galileo affair, in which Galileo Galilei came into conflict with the Roman Catholic Church over his support of Copernican astronomy, is often considered a defining moment in the history of the relationship between religion and science.

In 1610, Galileo published his *Sidereus Nuncius* (*Starry Messenger*), describing the surprising observations that he had made with the new telescope. These and other discoveries exposed major difficulties with the understanding of the Heavens that had been held since antiquity, and raised new interest in radical teachings such as the heliocentric theory of Copernicus.

In reaction, many scholars maintained that the motion of the Earth and immobility of the Sun were heretical, as they contradicted some accounts given in the Bible as understood at that time. Galileo's part in the controversies over theology, astronomy and philosophy culminated in his trial and sentencing in 1633, on a grave suspicion of heresy.



Galileo before the Holy Office, a 19th-century painting by Joseph-Nicolas Robert-Fleury

Puritans in North America

The most famous colonisation by Protestants in the New World was that of English Puritans in North America. Unlike the Spanish or French, the English colonists made surprisingly little effort to evangelise the native peoples.^[86] The Puritans, or Pilgrims, left England so that they could live in an area with Puritanism established as the exclusive civic religion. Though they had left England because of the suppression of their religious practice, most Puritans had thereafter originally settled in the Low Countries but found the licentiousness there, where the state hesitated from enforcing religious practice, as unacceptable, and thus they set out for the New World and the hopes of a Puritan utopia.

Early Modern era

This is the period from the Industrial revolution and the French Revolution until the mid 19th century.

See the French Republican Calendar and anti-clerical measures. See also the Holy League, the Battle of Vienna, Cardinal Richelieu, and Louis XIV of France.

Revivalism (1720–1906)

Revivalism refers to the Calvinist and Wesleyan revival, called the Great Awakening, in North America which saw the development of evangelical Congregationalist, Presbyterian, Baptist, and new Methodist churches.

Great Awakenings

The First Great Awakening was a wave of religious enthusiasm among Protestants in the American colonies c. 1730–1740, emphasising the traditional Reformed virtues of Godly preaching, rudimentary liturgy, and a deep sense of personal guilt and redemption by Christ Jesus. Historian Sydney E. Ahlstrom saw it as part of a "great international Protestant upheaval" that also created Pietism in Germany, the Evangelical Revival, and Methodism in England.^[87] It centred on reviving the spirituality of established congregations, and mostly affected Congregational, Presbyterian, Dutch Reformed, German Reformed, Baptist, and Methodist churches, while also spreading within the slave population. The Second Great

Awakening (1800–1830s), unlike the first, focused on the unchurched and sought to instil in them a deep sense of personal salvation as experienced in revival meetings. It also sparked the beginnings of groups such as the Mormons, the Restoration Movement and the Holiness movement. The Third Great Awakening began from 1857 and was most notable for taking the movement throughout the world, especially in English speaking countries. The final group to emerge from the "great awakenings" in North America was Pentecostalism, which had its roots in the Methodist, Wesleyan, and Holiness movements, and began in 1906 on Azusa Street, in Los Angeles. Pentecostalism would later lead to the Charismatic movement.

Restorationism

Restorationism refers to the belief that a purer form of Christianity should be restored using the early church as a model.^{[88]:635[89]:217} In many cases, restorationist groups believed that contemporary Christianity, in all its forms, had deviated from the true, original Christianity, which they then attempted to "Reconstruct", often using the Book of Acts as a "guidebook" of sorts. Restorationists do not usually describe themselves as "reforming" a Christian church continuously existing from the time of Jesus, but as *restoring* the Church that they believe was lost at some point. "Restorationism" is often used to describe the Stone-Campbell Restoration Movement.

Jehovah's Witnesses

The term "Restorationist" is also used to describe the Jehovah's Witness Movement, founded in the late 1870s by Charles Taze Russell

Latter Day Saint movement

The term "Restorationist" is also used to describe the Latter Day Saint movement, including The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS Church), the Community of Christ and numerous other Latter Day Saints sects. Latter Day Saints, also known as Mormons, believe that Joseph Smith was chosen to restore the original organization established by Jesus, now "in its fullness", rather than to reform the church.^{[90][91]}

Late Modern era

The history of the Church from the mid 19th century around period of the revolutions of 1848 to today.

Modern Eastern Orthodoxy

Russian Orthodox Church in the Russian Empire

The Russian Orthodox Church held a privileged position in the Russian Empire, expressed in the motto of the late Empire from 1833: Orthodoxy, Autocracy, and Populism. Nevertheless, the Church reform of Peter I in the early 18th century had placed the Orthodox authorities under the control of the Tsar. An official (titled Ober-Procurator) appointed by the Tsar himself ran the committee which governed the Church between 1721 and 1918: the Most Holy Synod.

The Church became involved in the various campaigns of russification,^[92] and was accused of involvement in anti-Jewish pogroms.^[93] In the case of anti-Semitism and the anti-Jewish pogroms, no evidence is given of the direct participation of the Church, and many Russian Orthodox clerics, including senior hierarchs, openly defended persecuted Jews, at least from the second half of the 19th century.^[94] Also, the Church has no official position on Judaism as such.^{[94][95]}

The Bolsheviks and other Russian revolutionaries saw the Church, like the Tsarist state, as an enemy of the people.

Russian Orthodox Church in the Soviet Union

The Russian Orthodox Church collaborated with the White Army in the Russian Civil War (see White movement) after the October Revolution. This may have further strengthened the Bolshevik animus against the church.

After the October Revolution of 7 November 1917 (25 October Old Calendar) there was a movement within the Soviet Union to unite all of the people of the world under Communist rule (see Communist International). This included the Eastern European bloc countries as well as the Balkan States. Since some of these Slavic states tied their ethnic heritage to their ethnic churches, both the peoples and their church were targeted by the Soviet.^{[96][97]} Criticism of atheism was strictly forbidden and sometimes led to imprisonment.^[98]

The Soviet Union was the first state to have as an ideological objective the elimination of religion. Toward that end, the Communist regime confiscated church property, ridiculed religion, harassed believers, and propagated anti-religious atheistic propaganda in the schools. Actions toward particular religions, however, were determined by State interests, and most organised religions were never outlawed. Some actions against Orthodox priests and believers along with execution included torture being sent to prison camps, labour camps or mental hospitals.^{[99][100]} The result of state atheism was to transform the Church into a persecuted and martyred Church. In the first five years after the Bolshevik revolution, 28 bishops and 1,200 priests were executed.^[101] This included people like the Grand Duchess Elizabeth Fyodorovna who was at this point a monastic. Along with her murder was Grand Duke Sergei Mikhailovich Romanov; the Princes Ioann Konstantinovich, Konstantin Konstantinovich, Igor Konstantinovich and Vladimir Pavlovich Paley; Grand Duke Sergei's secretary, Fyodor Remez; and Varvara Yakovleva, a sister from the Grand Duchess Elizabeth's convent. They were herded into the forest, pushed into an abandoned mineshaft and grenades were then hurled into the mineshaft. Her remains were buried in Jerusalem, in the Church of Maria Magdalene.

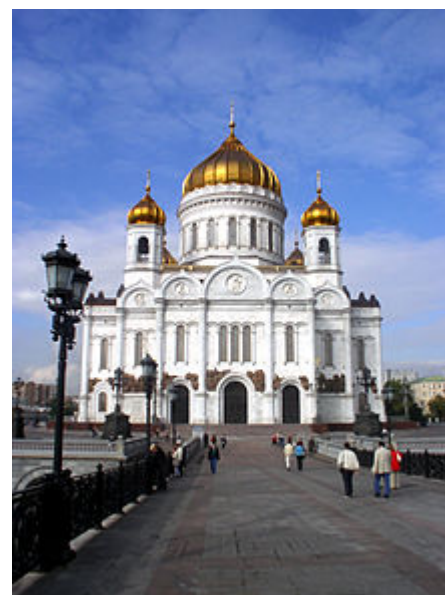
The main target of the anti-religious campaign in the 1920s and 1930s was the Russian Orthodox Church, which had the largest number of faithful. Nearly its entire clergy, and many of its believers, were shot or sent to labor camps. Theological schools were closed, and church publications were prohibited. In the period between 1927 and 1940, the number of Orthodox Churches in the Russian Republic fell from 29,584 to fewer than 500. Between 1917 and 1940, 130,000 Orthodox priests were arrested. Father Pavel Florensky was one of the New-martyrs of this particular period.

After Nazi Germany's attack on the Soviet Union in 1941, Joseph Stalin revived the Russian Orthodox Church to intensify patriotic support for the war effort. By 1957 about 22,000 Russian Orthodox churches had become active. But in 1959 Nikita Khrushchev initiated his own campaign against the Russian Orthodox Church and forced the closure of about 12,000 churches. By 1985 fewer than 7,000 churches remained active.^[102]

In the Soviet Union, in addition to the methodical closing and destruction of churches, the charitable and social work formerly done by ecclesiastical authorities was taken over by the state. As with all private property, Church owned property was confiscated into public use. The few places of worship left to the Church were legally viewed as state property which the government permitted the church to use. After the advent of state funded universal education, the



Churches of the Moscow Kremlin, as seen from the Balchug



Christ the Saviour Cathedral Moscow after reconstruction

Church was not permitted to carry on educational, instructional activity for children. For adults, only training for church-related occupations was allowed. Outside of sermons during the celebration of the divine liturgy it could not instruct or evangelise to the faithful or its youth. Catechism classes, religious schools, study groups, Sunday schools and religious publications were all illegal and or banned. This persecution continued, even after the death of Stalin until the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991. This caused many religious tracts to be circulated as illegal literature or samizdat.^[99] Since the fall of the Soviet Union there have been many New-martyrs added as Saints from the yoke.

Diaspora emigration to the West

One of the most striking developments in modern historical Orthodoxy is the dispersion of Orthodox Christians to the West. Emigration from Greece and the Near East in the last hundred years has created a sizable Orthodox diaspora in Western Europe, North and South America, and Australia. In addition, the Bolshevik Revolution forced thousands of Russian exiles westward. As a result, Orthodoxy's traditional frontiers have been profoundly modified. Millions of Orthodox are no longer geographically "eastern" since they live permanently in their newly adopted countries in the West. Nonetheless, they remain Eastern Orthodox in their faith and practice.

Modern trends in Christian theology

Modernism and liberal Christianity

Liberal Christianity, sometimes called liberal theology, is an umbrella term covering diverse, philosophically informed religious movements and moods within late 18th, 19th and 20th-century Christianity. The word "liberal" in liberal Christianity does not refer to a leftist *political* agenda or set of beliefs, but rather to the freedom of dialectic process associated with continental philosophy and other philosophical and religious paradigms developed during the Age of Enlightenment.

Fundamentalism

Fundamentalist Christianity, is a movement that arose mainly within British and American Protestantism in the late 19th century and early 20th century in reaction to modernism and certain liberal Protestant groups that denied doctrines considered fundamental to Christianity yet still called themselves "Christian." Thus, fundamentalism sought to re-establish tenets that could not be denied without relinquishing a Christian identity, the "fundamentals": inerrancy of the Bible, Sola Scriptura, the Virgin Birth of Jesus, the doctrine of substitutionary atonement, the bodily Resurrection of Jesus, and the imminent return of Jesus Christ.

Under/During Nazism

The position of Christians affected by Nazism is highly complex.

Regarding the matter, historian Derek Holmes wrote, "There is no doubt that the Catholic districts, resisted the lure of National Socialism [Nazism] far better than the Protestant ones."^[103] Pope Pius XI declared – *Mit brennender Sorge* – that Fascist governments had hidden "pagan intentions" and expressed the irreconcilability of the Catholic position and Totalitarian Fascist State Worship, which placed the nation above God, fundamental human rights and dignity. His declaration that "Spiritually, [Christians] are all Semites" prompted the Nazis to give him the title "Chief Rabbi of the Christian World."^[104]

Catholic priests were executed in concentration camps alongside Jews; for example, 2,600 Catholic Priests were imprisoned in Dachau, and 2,000 of them were executed. A further 2,700 Polish priests were executed (a quarter of all Polish priests), and 5,350 Polish nuns were either displaced, imprisoned, or executed.^[105] Many Catholic laymen and clergy played notable roles in sheltering Jews during the Holocaust, including Pope Pius XII (1876–1958). The head rabbi of Rome became a Catholic in 1945 and, in honour of the actions the Pope undertook to save Jewish lives, he took the name Eugenio (the pope's first name).^[106] A former Israeli consul in Italy claimed: "The Catholic Church saved more Jewish lives during the war than all the other churches, religious institutions, and rescue organisations put together."^[107]

The relationship between Nazism and Protestantism, especially the German Lutheran Church, was complex. Though many^[108] Protestant church leaders in Germany supported the Nazis' growing anti-Jewish activities, some, such as Dietrich Bonhoeffer (a Lutheran pastor) were strongly opposed to the Nazis. Bonhoeffer was later found guilty in the conspiracy to assassinate Hitler and executed.

Second Vatican Council

On 11 October 1962, Pope John XXIII opened the Second Vatican Council, the 21st ecumenical council of the Catholic Church. The council was "pastoral" in nature, emphasising and clarifying already defined dogma, revising liturgical practices, and providing guidance for articulating traditional Church teachings in contemporary times. The council is perhaps best known for its instructions that the Mass may be celebrated in the vernacular as well as in Latin.

Ecumenism

Ecumenism broadly refers to movements between Christian groups to establish a degree of unity through dialogue. "*Ecumenism*" is derived from Greek οἰκουμένη (*oikoumene*), which means "the inhabited world", but more figuratively something like "universal oneness." The movement can be distinguished into Catholic and Protestant movements, with the latter characterised by a redefined ecclesiology of "denominationalism" (which the Catholic Church, among others, rejects).

Catholic ecumenism

Over the last century, a number of moves have been made to reconcile the schism between the Catholic Church and the Eastern Orthodox churches. Although progress has been made, concerns over papal primacy and the independence of the smaller Orthodox churches has blocked a final resolution of the schism.

On 30 November 1894, Pope Leo XIII published the Apostolic Letter *Orientalium Dignitas* (<http://www.papalencyclical.s.net/Leo13/l13orient.htm>) (On the Churches of the East) safeguarding the importance and continuance of the Eastern traditions for the whole Church. On 7 December 1965, a Joint Catholic-Orthodox Declaration of Pope Paul VI and the Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras I was issued lifting the mutual excommunications of 1054.

Some of the most difficult questions in relations with the ancient Eastern Churches concern some doctrine (i.e. *Filioque*, Scholasticism, functional purposes of asceticism, the essence of God, Hesychasm, Fourth Crusade, establishment of the Latin Empire, Uniatism to note but a few) as well as practical matters such as the concrete exercise of the claim to papal primacy and how to ensure that ecclesiastical union would not mean mere absorption of the smaller Churches by the Latin component of the much larger Catholic Church (the most numerous single religious denomination in the world), and the stifling or abandonment of their own rich theological, liturgical and cultural heritage.

With respect to Catholic relations with Protestant communities, certain commissions were established to foster dialogue and documents have been produced aimed at identifying points of doctrinal unity, such as the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification produced with the Lutheran World Federation in 1999.

Pentecostal movement

The final Great Awakening (1904 onwards) had its roots in the Holiness movement which had developed in the late 19th century. The Pentecostal revival movement began, out of a passion for more power and a greater outpouring of the Spirit. In 1902, the American evangelists Reuben Archer Torrey and Charles M. Alexander conducted meetings in Melbourne, Australia, resulting in more than 8,000 converts. News of this revival travelled fast, igniting a passion for prayer and an expectation that God would work in similar ways elsewhere.

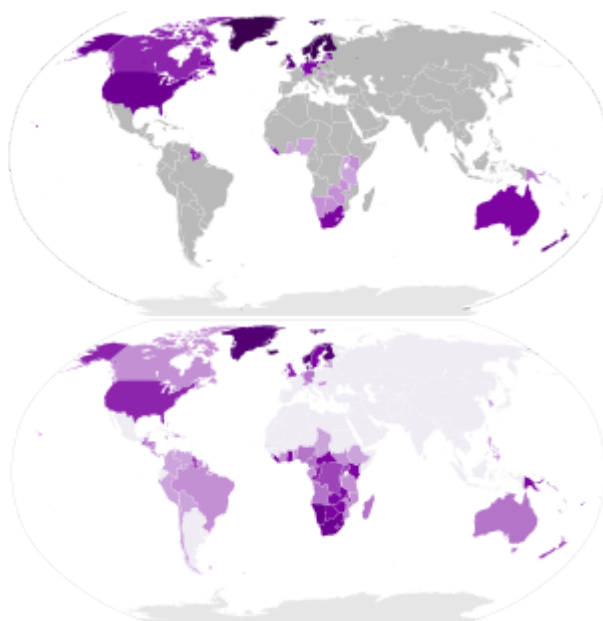
Torrey and Alexander were involved in the beginnings of the great Welsh revival (1904) which led Jessie Penn-Lewis to witness the working of Satan during times of revival, and write her book "War on the Saints". In 1906, the modern Pentecostal Movement was born on Azusa Street in Los Angeles.

Another noteworthy development in 20th-century Christianity was the rise of the modern Pentecostal movement. Although its roots predate the year 1900, its actual birth is commonly attributed to the 20th century. Sprung from Methodist and Wesleyan roots, it arose out of the meetings at an urban mission on Azusa Street in Los Angeles. From there it spread around the world, carried by those who experienced what they believed to be miraculous moves of God there. These Pentecost-like manifestations have steadily been in evidence throughout the history of Christianity—such as seen in the two Great Awakenings that started in the United States. However, Azusa Street is widely accepted as the fount of the modern Pentecostal movement. Pentecostalism, which in turn birthed the Charismatic movement within already established denominations, continues to be an important force in western Christianity.

In reaction to these developments, Christian fundamentalism was a movement to reject the radical influences of philosophical humanism, as this was affecting the Christian religion. Especially targeting critical approaches to the interpretation of the Bible, and trying to blockade the inroads made into their churches by atheistic scientific assumptions, the fundamentalists began to appear in various denominations as numerous independent movements of resistance to the drift away from historic Christianity. Over time, the Fundamentalist Evangelical movement has divided into two main wings, with the label Fundamentalist following one branch, while Evangelical has become the preferred banner of the more moderate movement. Although both movements primarily originated in the English-speaking world, the majority of Evangelicals now live elsewhere in the world.

Ecumenism within Protestantism

Ecumenical movements within Protestantism have focused on determining a list of doctrines and practices essential to being Christian and thus extending to all groups which fulfil these basic criteria a (more or less) co-equal status, with perhaps one's own group still retaining a "first among equal" standing. This process involved a redefinition of the idea of



Countries by percentage of Protestants in 1938 and 2010. Pentecostal and Evangelical Protestant denominations fueled much of the growth in Africa and Latin America.

"the Church" from traditional theology. This ecclesiology, known as denominationalism, contends that each group (which fulfils the essential criteria of "being Christian") is a sub-group of a greater "Christian Church", itself a purely abstract concept with no direct representation, i.e., no group, or "denomination", claims to be "the Church." This ecclesiology is at variance with other groups that indeed consider themselves to be "the Church." The "essential criteria" generally consist of belief in the Trinity, belief that Jesus Christ is the only way to have forgiveness and eternal life, and that He died and rose again bodily.


See also

- [Christianity and Paganism](#)
- [Christ myth theory](#)
- [History of Christian theology](#)
- [History of the Roman Catholic Church](#)
- [History of the Eastern Orthodox Church](#)
- [History of Protestantism](#)
- [History of Oriental Orthodoxy](#)
- [Christianization](#)
- [Timeline of Christianity](#)
- [Roman Catholic Church](#)
- [Eastern Orthodox Church](#)
- [Protestantism](#)
- [Rise of Christianity during the Fall of Rome](#)
- [Role of the Christian Church in civilization](#)
- [Timeline of the Roman Catholic Church](#)
- [Restoration Movement](#)
- [Timeline of Christian missions](#)

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20. "The earliest Christian images appeared somewhere about the year 200." Andre Grabar, p. 7
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The following links give an overview of the history of Christianity:

- [History of Christianity Reading Room: \(http://www.tyndale.ca/seminary/mtsm modular/reading-rooms/history\)](http://www.tyndale.ca/seminary/mtsm modular/reading-rooms/history) Extensive online resources for the study of global church history (Tyndale Seminary).
- *Dictionary of the History of Ideas*: (<https://archive.is/20071016200443/http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/cgi-local/DHI/dhi.cgi?id=dv1%E2%80%939>) Christianity in History

The following links provide quantitative data related to Christianity and other major religions, including rates of adherence at different points in time:

- [American Religion Data Archive \(http://www.thearda.com\)](http://www.thearda.com)
- [Early Stages of the Establishment of Christianity \(http://www.religiousbook.net/Books/Online_books/Sh/Heart_20.html\)](http://www.religiousbook.net/Books/Online_books/Sh/Heart_20.html)
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