

Church History

Timeline By Century

Taken From Christianity.com

13th Century

We are presently in the high Middle Ages. As a Protestant believer, I absorbed a common attitude among us that asks: How did the church ever survive the Middle Ages? How could the church sink so low? Why did God allow the papacy to develop as it did? How could both doctrine and practice become so corrupt?

I have to now admit that the more I learn of this period, the more I come to marvel they did as well as they did. In every generation there were godly men and women who followed Christ with a devotion we would look far to find today. The medieval church met just about every barbarian threat across Europe and brought brutal peoples to some level of Christian understanding and practice.

I dreamt recently that we 20th-century Christians and churches will have far more to answer for than our medieval 'dark age' predecessors at the Great Judgment when the Lord takes into account the light we each had. -- Ken Curtis

- This century is often called the high point of the middle ages, with the papacy reaching its greatest power, scholastic philosophy reaching its zenith, and Gothic Cathedrals towering over the landscape.
- Crusading cause and spirit continues.

- 1204--Europeans, with Vienna taking the lead, capture Constantinople.
- 1212--Children's crusade
- Mendicant orders of friars established, another effort at church reform. These reemphasize the importance of the sermon.
- 1209--Francis of Assisi establishes Franciscans (canonized 1228).
- 1220--Dominican Friars established as a teaching order, later entrusted by the Pope with the Inquisition. Some became missionaries to Central Asia, Persian Gulf, India, and China.
- Salisbury Cathedral built within one lifetime (1220-1258), a rarity for medieval cathedrals!
- With Pope Innocent III (1198-1216) the papacy was at the height of its powers. Affirmed all churches were under his control. Developed theory of papal power that allowed him to interfere in political affairs of nations. Approved 4th Crusade. Established Dominicans and Franciscans. Instituted Inquisition, joining powers of church and state to punish heretics.
- 1215--Fourth Lateran Council summarized and reinforced medieval doctrines and practices.
- Thomas Aquinas summarizes Scholastic Theology in his Summa Theologica, 1271, writing, *intelligo ut credam* "I understand, in order that I may believe."