

DOWNLOAD PDF HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH: MODERN CHRISTIANITY

Chapter 1 : History of Christianity - Wikipedia

The history of modern Christianity concerns the Christian religion from the end of the Early Modern era to the present day. The Early Modern history of Christianity is usually taken to begin with the Protestant Reformation c. (usually rounded down to) and ending in the late 18th century with the onset of the Industrial.

The Era of the Free Churches And so we come to the seventh and last period of our overview: If we can do this, it will be quite an accomplishment! More than years in bullet list! We began with a united set of churches, begun by the apostles. In the 4th century, it gained favor with the Roman government. Multitudes of Roman citizens flocked to the church, almost none of whom had the commitment of previous Christians. A hierarchy developed that ruled all churches and eventually, by the 5th century, gained political rule as well. Great darkness ensued, in which it is very difficult to find anything resembling the early apostolic churches. The Renaissance and then the Reformation broke the power of the Catholic church, spreading authority and rule to new organizations. These new organizations, such as the Lutheran and Reformed churches, maintained political power and still demanded the allegiance of all citizens. Short enough, I think! I would love to have links for many of the modern Christianity groups referenced on this page, but I just do not have time. Eventually, maybe even next year, I could get to pages on the Waldensians, Lutherans, or Albigenses for example , but there are many other more pressing pages now. Would you like to write an article to become a page on this site? It needs to be under 2, words. The benefit to you is that I will credit you for the article and link a site for you, your own or another. A link from this site is worth something because my traffic is decent, and it will only continue to grow. How do I know? My thanks to Chloe Joy, age 16, for her excellent writeup on Hudson Taylor. The Puritans were the greatest source of free churches in modern Christianity. At first this was a movement in the Church of England that wanted to purify the Church of Catholic dogma, not necessarily purity of life. When this failed, others arose, called "Separatists," who determined that if they could not reform the Church, they would form their own. These Puritans turned Separatists went in all directions, but primarily to Holland and to the New World, which provided tremendous opportunity to escape religious persecution. Other Free Churches in Modern Christianity The atmosphere was now such that it was no longer unthinkable to leave the state church, and it began happening more and more often. In England in the 16th century, George Fox founded "societies of friends" all over England who would become known as Quakers. In the 18th century, Anglican priest John Wesley founded societies of "Methodists" in the new world. While he intended them to remain part of the Church of England, it was apparent to all others that they would not. They rapidly became their own denomination. One of the more major free churches of modern Christianity, of course, is the Baptist church. It would be more proper to say Baptist churches, however, since I saw a book 25 years ago describing different denominations of Baptists in the United States. The history of the Church is like a tree with many branches. They all have one trunk. Groups like the Novatianists, Albigensians, and Waldensians all left the catholic churches in prior centuries and left no descendants. The Waldensians, far from founding any descending groups, were instead absorbed into the Reformation and, for all intents and purposes, disappeared. My apologies to Waldensian churches that still exist and retain the name. Most people who claim descent from the Waldensians have never even heard of you. The Baptist denominations are descended from British Separatists, though they did adopt the Anabaptist practice of rebaptizing converts from the Churches practicing infant baptism which included all the major Reformation churches. In fact, it is likely this influence came to the Baptists through Mennonite a Dutch branch of the Anabaptists influence upon John Smyth and Thomas Helwys around to A major influence on my own life has been the Plymouth Brethren churches and their successors. These arose in England in the early 19th century, founded by a man named J. Darby later excommunicated other brethren churches and fled to Switzerland claiming the church age was over, but the Brethren legacy in England did not die. It survived to influence not just me but much of the world and much of modern Christianity. Some of the most notable 19th and early 20th

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century missionaries and teachers were of Brethren descent. Men and women like Hudson Taylor, C. Pentecostal churches did not arise until the 20th century, sparked by the Azusa Street Revival in the Los Angeles area. First, they had their own counter-Reformation, led by Ignatius of Loyola. They also convened a council to assess and reaffirm their own doctrines in called the Council of Trent. Interestingly enough, this council met convened 25 times over 18 years, not ending until First churches freed themselves from the rule of state churches, and only later did the governments begin to strip themselves of the influence of the various major churches. The Roman Catholic church retained much of its influence and still does over Italy, Spain, and Portugal. As a result, they also had and have much influence over South America, which was colonized by Spain and Portugal. Distance, however, and conversion by the sword, which rarely if ever converts the heart, has led to a very different form of Catholicism in South America. In many places, it is mixed with local nature religions, including voodoo. Even where it is not, the emphasis on the veneration of saints and Mary is much greater in the South American countries and Mexico than in Europe and North America. The Mass, which had always been said in Latin, was translated into the local vernacular. Protestants were embraced as "separated brethren," and numerous other policies were relaxed. For example, lay ministers, at first only men but later including women, were allowed to distribute the Eucharist to Mass attendees. Modern Christianity in the 20th Century There are many influences responsible for the state of modern Christianity in the 21st century. There was a tendency to liberal theology among Protestants and Catholics in the 19th century, influencedâ€”in the opinion of many historiansâ€”by the rising authority of science. This liberal theology questioned things like the authorship of the books of the Bible and standard interpretations of history. It also rebelled against strict interpretations of doctrine and dogma. By the early 20th century, however, this led to a backlash against liberal theology and fundamentalism arose. Fundamentalists wanted a return to a strict, enforceable orthodoxy and to renewed reverence for the Bible. Fundamentalists have become a powerful force in American religion and politics, though they have had very little influence in Europe. The rising emphasis on individualism led to a rapid increase in the number of denominations as well as to an increase in unchurched or home-churched Christians. It has also led to many unusual from a historical standpoint worship methods, with even rock and roll music becoming part of Christian worship. Today it remains to be seen what will become of are new information age. The rise of the internet has given voice to numerous people who would have had no audience at all 30 years ago, or very little like myself, in fact. What effect this will have on Christianity as we know it is hard to predict. Atheists, of course, predict the downfall of Christianity due to their increased voice, but as of I see no indication this is true.

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Chapter 2 : Oxford History of the Christian Church (16 vols.) - Logos Bible Software

One of the more major free churches of modern Christianity, of course, is the Baptist church. It would be more proper to say Baptist church es, however, since I saw a book 25 years ago describing different denominations of Baptists in the United States.

The relation of the early church to late Judaism Christianity began as a movement within Judaism at a period when the Jews had long been dominated culturally and politically by foreign powers and had found in their religion rather than in their politics or cultural achievements the linchpin of their community. In the Hellenistic Age bceâ€”3rd century ce , the dispersion of the Jews throughout the kingdoms of the eastern Mediterranean and the Roman Empire reinforced this universalistic tendency. But the attempts of foreign rulers, especially the Syrian king Antiochus IV Epiphanes in â€” bce , to impose Greek culture in Palestine provoked zealous resistance on the part of many Jews, leading to the revolt of Judas Maccabeus against Antiochus. In Palestinian Judaism the predominant note was separation and exclusiveness. Jewish missionaries to other areas were strictly expected to impose the distinctive Jewish customs of circumcision , kosher food , and Sabbaths and other festivals. Other Jews, however, were not so exclusive , welcoming Greek culture and accepting converts without requiring circumcision. The relationship of the earliest Christian churches to Judaism turned principally on two questions: Courtesy of the Master and Fellows of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge The Hebrew Scriptures presented history as the stage of a providential drama eventually ending in a triumph of God over all present sources of frustration e. The proper course of action leading to the consummation of the drama, however, was the subject of some disagreement. Among the diverse groups were the aristocratic and conservative Sadducees , who accepted only the five books of Moses the Pentateuch and whose lives and political power were intimately associated with Temple worship , and the Pharisees , who accepted the force of oral tradition and were widely respected for their learning and piety. The Zealots were aggressive revolutionaries known for their violent opposition to Rome and its polytheisms. Other groups were the Herodians , supporters of the client kingdom of the Herods a dynasty that supported Rome and abhorrent to the Zealots , and the Essenes , a quasi-monastic dissident group, probably including the sect that preserved the Dead Sea Scrolls. This latter sect did not participate in the Temple worship at Jerusalem and observed another religious calendar, and from their desert retreat they awaited divine intervention and searched prophetic writings for signs indicating the consummation. What relation the followers of Jesus had to some of these groups is not clear. In the canonical Gospels those accepted as authentic by the church the main targets of criticism are the scribes and Pharisees, whose attachment to the tradition of Judaism is presented as legalistic and pettifogging. The Sadducees and Herodians likewise receive an unfriendly portrait. The Essenes are never mentioned. Jesus probably stood close to the Pharisees. Under the social and political conditions of the time, there could be no long future either for the Sadducees or for the Zealots: The choice for many Jews, who were barred from Jerusalem after , thus lay between the Pharisees and the emerging Christian movement. Pharisaism as enshrined in the Mishna oral law and the Talmud commentary on and addition to the oral law became normative Judaism. By looking to the Gentile non-Jewish world and carefully dissociating itself from the Zealot revolutionaries and the Pharisees, Christianity made possible its ideal of a world religion, at the price of sacrificing Jewish particularity and exclusiveness. The fact that Christianity has never succeeded in gaining the allegiance of more than a small minority of Jews is more a mystery to theologians than to historians.

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Chapter 3 : History of the Christian Church by Philip Schaff, complete edition with power search.

Philip Schaff's History of the Christian Church excels at providing an impressive and instructive historical treatment of the Christian church. This eight volume work begins with the early Church and ends at with the Swiss Reformation.

Dispensationalism Restorationism refers to various unaffiliated movements that considered contemporary Christianity, in all its forms, to be a deviation from the true, original Christianity, which these groups then attempted to "Reconstruct", often using the Book of Acts as a "guidebook" of sorts. Restorationism developed out of the Second Great Awakening and is historically connected to the Protestant Reformation, [10] but differs in that 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. Throughout his life, Smith told of an experience he had as a boy having seen God the Father and Jesus Christ as two separate beings, who told him that the true church had been lost and would be restored through him, and that he would be given the authority to organize and lead the true Church of Christ. Smith and Cowdery also explained that the angels John the Baptist , Peter , James and John visited them in and gave them authority to reestablish the Church of Christ and in Joseph Smith announced that he had received a revelation from God that officially changed the name to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. The city council of Nauvoo, Illinois subsequently had the printing press of the Expositor destroyed. Some called for the Latter Day Saints to be either expelled or destroyed. These various claims resulted in a succession crisis , in which the majority of church members followed Brigham Young , he being the senior Apostle of the church; others followed Sidney Rigdon or James Strang. The crisis resulted in several permanent schisms as well as the formation of occasional splinter groups, some of which no longer exist. These various groups are occasionally referred to under two geographical headings: Today, there are many schism organizations who regard themselves as a part of the Latter Day Saint movement, though in most cases they do not acknowledge the other branches as valid and regard their own tradition as the only correct and authorized version of the church Smith founded. The second-largest denomination is the Community of Christ , which reports over , members. Western Christianity since the 20th century[edit] Fascism[edit] Fascism describes certain related political regimes in 20th-century Europe, especially the Nazi Germany of Hitler, the Fascist Italy of Mussolini and the falangist Spain of Franco. Chesterton friendly but critical. Nazism[edit] The position of Christians in Nazi Fascism 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. A further 2, Polish priests were executed a quarter of all Polish priests , and 5, Polish nuns were either displaced, imprisoned, or executed. Bonhoeffer was later found guilty in the conspiracy to assassinate Hitler and executed. Ecumenism Ecumenism broadly refers to movements between Christian groups to establish a degree of unity through dialogue. Catholic Church and 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. Some of the most difficult questions in relations with the ancient Eastern Churches concern some doctrine i. 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 This process involved a redefinition

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of the idea of "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. Trends in theology[edit] Main article: 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. Christian fundamentalism Fundamentalist Christianity, is a movement that arose mainly within British and American Protestantism in the late 19th and early 20th centuries in reaction to modernism and certain liberal Protestant groups that denied doctrines considered fundamental to Christianity yet still called themselves "Christian. Second Vatican Council[edit] Main article: 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 Russian Orthodoxy[edit] Orthodoxy was very strong in Russia , which had recently acquired an autocephalous status, and as the only part of the Orthodox communion which remained outside the control of the Ottoman Empire; Moscow called itself the Third Rome , as the heir of Constantinople. In Tsar Peter I abolished completely the patriarchate and so the Russian Orthodox Church effectively became a department of the government, ruled by a Most Holy Synod composed of senior bishops and lay bureaucrats appointed by the Tsar himself. This continued until the 20th century. Orthodoxy under Ottoman rule[edit] See also: 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. As a result of the Ottoman conquest 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. This is, in part, due to this geographical and intellectual confinement that the voice of Eastern Orthodoxy was not heard during the Reformation in sixteenth-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. The new Ottoman government that arose from the ashes of Byzantine civilisation was neither primitive nor barbaric. Islam not only recognised Jesus as a great prophet, but tolerated Christians as another People of the Book. As such, the Church was not extinguished nor was its canonical and hierarchical organisation significantly disrupted. 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. The Hagia Sophia and the Parthenon , which had been Christian churches for nearly a millennium were, admittedly, converted into mosques, yet countless other churches, both in Constantinople and elsewhere, remained in Christian hands. They were endowed with civil as well as ecclesiastical power over all Christians in Ottoman territories. 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. Practically, this meant that all Orthodox Churches within Ottoman territory were under the control of Constantinople. Thus, the authority and jurisdictional frontiers of the patriarch were enormously enlarged. However, these rights and privileges see Dhimmitude , including freedom of worship and religious organisation, were often established in principle but seldom corresponded to reality. The legal privileges of the patriarch and the Church depended, in fact, on the whim and mercy of the Sultan and the Sublime Porte , while all Christians were viewed as little more than second-class citizens. Moreover, Turkish corruption and brutality were not a myth. That it was the

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"infidel" Christian who experienced this more than anyone else is not in doubt. Nor were pogroms of Christians in these centuries unknown see Greco-Turkish relations. Missionary work among Moslems was dangerous and indeed impossible, 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. Education of the clergy and the Christian population either ceased altogether or was reduced to the most rudimentary elements. Corruption[edit] 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. Nor was the patriarchal throne ever secure. Few patriarchs between the fifteenth and the nineteenth centuries died a natural death while in office. The forced abdications, exiles, hangings, drownings, and poisonings of patriarchs are well documented. The hanging of patriarch Gregory V from the gate of the patriarchate on Easter Sunday was accompanied by the execution of two metropolitans and twelve bishops. Devshirmeh[edit] Devshirmeh was the system of the collection of young boys from conquered Christian lands by the Ottoman sultans as a form of regular taxation in order to build a loyal army formerly largely composed of war captives and the class of military administrators called the " Janissaries ", or other servants such as tellak in hamams. At the same time, it was placed under the control of the Tsar by the Church reform of Peter I in the 18th century. Its governing body was Most Holy Synod , which was run by an official titled Ober-Procurator appointed by the Tsar himself. The church was involved in the various campaigns of russification , [21] and accused of the involvement in anti-Jewish pogroms. This may have further strengthened the Bolshevik animus against the church. After the October Revolution of 7 November October 25 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. Toward that end, the Communist regime confiscated church property, ridiculed religion, harassed believers, and propagated atheism 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. In the first five years after the Bolshevik revolution, 28 bishops and 1, priests were executed. 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. Christ the Saviour Cathedral Moscow after reconstruction The main target of the anti-religious campaign in the s and s 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 and , the number of Orthodox Churches in the Russian Republic fell from 29, to less than Between and , , Orthodox priests were arrested. Of these, 95, were put to death, executed by firing squad. By about 22, Russian Orthodox churches had become active. But in Nikita Khrushchev initiated his own campaign against the Russian Orthodox Church and forced the closure of about 12, churches. By fewer than 7, churches remained active. 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 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

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Chapter 4 : History of the Christian Church: Modern Christianity: The Swiss Reformation by Philip Schaff

History of the Christian Church, Volume VII. Modern Christianity. The German Reformation. by Philip Schaff. This document has been generated from XSL (Extensible Stylesheet Language) source with RenderX XEP Formatter, version Client Academic.

Church History Church History: Relevant for Modern Christianity Church History, on the surface, seems irrelevant to 21st century Christianity. However, Christianity, unlike any other religion, is deeply rooted in history. Central to the Christian faith is the fact that God came to earth as a man -- Jesus Christ. He lived, loved and taught among humanity about years ago. The historical reality of His sacrifice, burial and resurrection is the cornerstone of the Christian faith. Church history is vital to our understanding of the institution of the Christian church. Much is to be gleaned from the events between the time of the apostles and the present. In 1 Corinthians Like the history of ancient Israel, the history of the Christian church is to be remembered and learned from. For instance, many who are skeptical of the Christian faith often associate Christianity with the violence and imperialism of the crusades. But an objective look at church history will show that the crusades happened at a time when the papacy was a political institution corrupted by power and greed. The crusades took advantage of Christianity, but had nothing to do with the underlying gospel of grace. Today, our culture is often confronted with new and bizarre religious philosophies, some of which present themselves under the banner of Christianity. This is nothing new. History is littered with heresies that have tried to infiltrate the church, including false ideas such as Arianism, Gnosticism, Montanism and Marcionism. Understanding Christian doctrine in light of church history helps us to separate fiction and fads from the facts and doctrine of the true Christian faith. A Simple Chronology Church history is rather complex, but an understanding of the basics is very worthwhile. The Christian faith is birthed and the gospel of grace is preached. Early heresies sprouted; first church councils and the canonizing of scripture. Christianity became a faith for the masses; start of Monasticism. Benedictine monks deployed as missionaries; the pope becomes the "ruler" of the church. The church gains the world but loses its soul. The start of denominationalism - Examples: Lutheran, Reformed, Anabaptist and Anglican. The papacy loses its power and influence. Pluralistic and totalitarian societies see no relevance for Christianity. God, the Father, sent His only Son to satisfy that judgment for those who believe in Him. Jesus, the creator and eternal Son of God, who lived a sinless life, loves us so much that He died for our sins, taking the punishment that we deserve, was buried, and rose from the dead according to the Bible. If you truly believe and trust this in your heart, receiving Jesus alone as your Savior, declaring, "Jesus is Lord," you will be saved from judgment and spend eternity with God in heaven. What is your response?

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Chapter 5 : History of the Christian Church: Modern Christianity: The German Reformation by Philip Schaff

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.

What is the history of Christianity? The history of Christianity is really the history of Western civilization. Christianity has had an all-pervasive influence on society at large—art, language, politics, law, family life, calendar dates, music, and the very way we think have all been colored by Christian influence for nearly two millennia. The story of the church, therefore, is an important one to know. Jesus had promised that He would build His church Matthew 16:18. The initial converts to Christianity were Jews or proselytes to Judaism, and the church was centered in Jerusalem. Because of this, Christianity was seen at first as a Jewish sect, akin to the Pharisees, the Sadducees, or the Essenes. However, what the apostles preached was radically different from what other Jewish groups were teaching. It is quite proper to say that Christianity has its roots in Judaism. The Old Testament laid the groundwork for the New, and it is impossible to fully understand Christianity without a working knowledge of the Old Testament see the books of Matthew and Hebrews. The New Testament, then, is all about the coming of Messiah and His work to save us from sin. In His life, Jesus fulfilled over specific prophecies, proving that He was the One the Old Testament had anticipated. The evangelist Philip preached to the Samaritans Acts 8: The apostle Paul the former persecutor of the church spread the gospel all over the Greco-Roman world, reaching as far as Rome itself Acts 17: For the next years, Christians were persecuted by Rome—sometimes at random, sometimes by government edict. In the 2nd and 3rd centuries, the church leadership became more and more hierarchical as numbers increased. Several heresies were exposed and refuted during this time, and the New Testament canon was agreed upon. Persecution continued to intensify. About 70 years later, during the reign of Theodosius, Christianity became the official religion of the Roman Empire. Bishops were given places of honor in the government, and by A.D. 313, after Constantine, then, Christians were no longer persecuted. Such forced conversions led to many people entering the church without a true change of heart. The pagans brought with them their idols and the practices they were accustomed to, and the church changed; icons, elaborate architecture, pilgrimages, and the veneration of saints were added to the simplicity of early church worship. About this same time, some Christians retreated from Rome, choosing to live in isolation as monks, and infant baptism was introduced as a means of washing away original sin. As the Roman Empire grew weaker, the church became more powerful, and many disagreements broke out between the churches in the West and those in the East. The Western Latin church, based in Rome, claimed apostolic authority over all other churches. This did not sit well with the Eastern Greek church, based in Constantinople. History of Christianity - The Middle Ages During the Middle Ages in Europe, the Roman Catholic Church continued to hold power, with the popes claiming authority over all levels of life and living as kings. Corruption and greed in the church leadership was commonplace. From time to time the popes endorsed a series of bloody and expensive crusades in an effort to repel Muslim advances and liberate Jerusalem. History of Christianity - The Reformation Through the years, several individuals had tried to call attention to the theological, political, and human rights abuses of the Roman Church. All had been silenced in one way or another. But in 1517, a German monk named Martin Luther took a stand against the church, and everyone heard. Although Catholicism made a comeback in Europe, and a series of wars between Protestants and Catholics ensued, the Reformation had successfully dismantled the power of the Roman Catholic Church and helped open the door to the modern age. History of Christianity - The Age of Missions From 1600 to 1800, the church showed an unprecedented interest in missionary work. Colonization had opened eyes to the need for missions, and industrialization had provided people with the financial ability to fund the missionaries. Missionaries went around the world preaching the gospel, and churches were established throughout the world. The evangelical church is strongly independent and rooted firmly in Reformed theology. The church has also seen the rise of

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Pentecostalism, the charismatic movement, ecumenicalism, and various cults. Each of us is responsible to know what the Scripture says and to live by it. When the church forgets what the Bible teaches and ignores what Jesus taught, chaos reigns. There are many churches today, but only one gospel. May we be careful to preserve that faith and pass it on without alteration, and the Lord will continue to fulfill His promise to build His church.

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Chapter 6 : Modern Christianity: The Era of the Free Churches

The history of Christianity The primitive church The relation of the early church to late Judaism. Christianity began as a movement within Judaism at a period when the Jews had long been dominated culturally and politically by foreign powers and had found in their religion (rather than in their politics or cultural achievements) the linchpin of their community.

Visit Website When he was around 30 years old, Jesus started his public ministry after being baptized in the Jordan River by the prophet known as John the Baptist. For about three years, Jesus traveled with 12 appointed disciples, teaching large groups of people and performing what witnesses described as miracles. Some of the most well-known miraculous events included raising a dead man named Lazarus from the grave, walking on water and curing the blind. Some of the main themes that Jesus taught, which Christians later embraced, include: Love your neighbor as yourself. Forgive others who have wronged you. Ask God for forgiveness of your sins. Jesus is the Messiah and was given the authority to forgive others. Repentance of sins is essential. The Kingdom of God is near. According to the Bible, Jesus was arrested, tried and condemned to death. Roman governor Pontius Pilate issued the order to kill Jesus after being pressured by Jewish leaders who alleged that Jesus was guilty of a variety of crimes, including blasphemy. Jesus was crucified by Roman soldiers in Jerusalem, and his body was laid in a tomb. Authors in the Bible say the resurrected Jesus ascended into Heaven. The Old Testament and the New Testament. The Old Testament, which is also recognized by followers of Judaism, describes the history of the Jewish people, outlines specific laws to follow, details the lives of many prophets, and predicts the coming of the Messiah. These letters offer instructions for how the church should operate. The final book in the New Testament, Revelation, describes a vision and prophecies that will occur at the end of the world, as well as metaphors to describe the state of the world. Most of the first Christians were Jewish converts, and the church was centered in Jerusalem. Shortly after the creation of the church, many Gentiles non-Jews embraced Christianity. Early Christians considered it their calling to spread and teach the gospel. One of the most important missionaries was the apostle Paul, a former persecutor of Christians. Paul preached the gospel and established churches throughout the Roman Empire, Europe and Africa. In addition to preaching, Paul is thought to have written 13 of the 27 books in the New Testament. Persecution of Christians Early Christians were persecuted for their faith by both Jewish and Roman leaders. Many were brutally tortured and killed during this time. Under Emperor Domitian, Christianity was illegal. If a person confessed to being a Christian, he or she was executed. Starting in A. This became known as the Great Persecution. During this time, there were several groups of Christians with different ideas about how to interpret scripture and the role of the church. He later tried to unify Christianity and resolve issues that divided the church by establishing the Nicene Creed. The Catholic Church In A. Catholics expressed a deep devotion for the Virgin Mary, recognized the seven sacraments, and honored relics and sacred sites. When the Roman Empire collapsed in A. The Crusades Between about A. In these battles, Christians fought against Muslims to reclaim holy land in the city of Jerusalem. The Christians were successful in occupying Jerusalem during some of the Crusades, but they were ultimately defeated. The Reformation In, a German monk named Martin Luther published 95 Theses—a text that criticized certain acts of the Pope and protested some of the practices and priorities of the Catholic church. As a result, Protestantism was created, and different denominations of Christianity eventually began to form. Christian Denominations Christianity is broadly split into three branches: Catholic, Protestant, and Eastern Orthodox. The Catholic branch is governed by the Pope and Catholic Bishops around the world. The Orthodox or Eastern Orthodox is split into independent units each governed by a Holy Synod; there is no central governing structure akin to the Pope. There are numerous denominations within Protestant Christianity, many of which differ in their interpretation of the Bible and understanding of the church. Some of the many denominations that fall under the category of Protestant Christianity include:

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Galerius , who had previously been one of the leading figures in persecution, in issued an edict which ended the persecution. Victory allowed him to claim the emperorship in the West. How much Christianity Constantine adopted at this point is difficult to discern. Roman coins minted up to eight years later still bore the images of Roman gods. Constantine supported the Church financially, built various basilicas, granted privileges e. It had overtly Christian architecture, contained churches within the city walls, and had no pagan temples. Constantine also played an active role in the leadership of the Church. In , he acted as a judge in a North African dispute concerning the Donatist controversy. More significantly, in 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. Some, such as John Chrysostom and Athanasius , suffered exile, persecution, or martyrdom from Arian Byzantine Emperors. Germanic Christianity 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. They were mostly concerned with Christological disputes. Christianity as Roman state religion [edit] An Eastern Roman mosaic showing a basilica with towers, mounted with Christian crosses , 5th century AD, Louvre On 27 February , with the Edict of Thessalonica put forth under Theodosius I , the Roman Empire officially adopted Trinitarian Christianity as its state religion. After its establishment, the Church adopted the same organisational boundaries as the Empire: The bishops, who were located in major urban centres as per pre-legalisation tradition, thus oversaw each diocese. 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 , [49] and in , this resulted in the first case of capital punishment of a heretic, namely Priscillian. 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. 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 centuries, the Sasanian Christian community grew rapidly. This church evolved into what is today known as the Church of the East. Oriental Orthodoxy In the Council of Chalcedon was held to further clarify the Christological issues surrounding Nestorianism. The resulting schism created a communion of churches, including the Armenian, Syrian, and Egyptian churches. Christian

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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. Eremetic 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 led Pachomius 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.

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**Schaff, Philip, History of the Christian Church. This material has been carefully compared, corrected, and emended (according to the edition of Charles Scribner's Sons) by The Electronic Bible Society, Dallas, TX,*

The church and its history The essence and identity of Christianity At its most basic, Christianity is the faith tradition that focuses on the figure of Jesus Christ. As a tradition, Christianity is more than a system of religious belief. It also has generated a culture, a set of ideas and ways of life, practices, and artifacts that have been handed down from generation to generation since Jesus first became the object of faith. Christianity is thus both a living tradition of faith and the culture that the faith leaves behind. The agent of Christianity is the church, the community of people who make up the body of believers. Few Christians, however, would be content to keep this reference merely historical. Although their faith tradition is historical. While there is something simple about this focus on Jesus as the central figure, there is also something very complicated. That complexity is revealed by the thousands of separate churches, sects, and denominations that make up the modern Christian tradition. To project these separate bodies against the background of their development in the nations of the world is to suggest the bewildering variety. To picture people expressing their adherence to that tradition in their prayer life and church-building, in their quiet worship or their strenuous efforts to change the world, is to suggest even more of the variety. Given such complexity, it is natural that throughout Christian history both those in the tradition and those surrounding it have made attempts at simplification. Modern scholars have located the focus of this faith tradition in the context of monotheistic religions. Christianity addresses the historical figure of Jesus Christ against the background of, and while seeking to remain faithful to, the experience of one God. It has consistently rejected polytheism and atheism. A second element of the faith tradition of Christianity, with rare exceptions, is a plan of salvation or redemption. That is to say, the believers in the church picture themselves as in a plight from which they need rescue. For whatever reason, they have been distanced from God and need to be saved. The agent of that redemption is Jesus Christ. It is possible that through the centuries the vast majority of believers have not used the term essence to describe the central focus of their faith. The term is itself of Greek origin and thus represents only one part of the tradition, one element in the terms that have gone into making up Christianity. Essence refers to those qualities that give something its identity and are at the centre of what makes that thing different from everything else. To Greek philosophers it meant something intrinsic to and inherent in a thing or category of things, which gave it its character and thus separated it from everything of different character. Thus, Jesus Christ belongs to the essential character of Christianity and gives it a unique identity. If most people are not concerned with defining the essence of Christianity, in practice they must come to terms with what the word essence implies. Whether they are engaged in being saved or redeemed on the one hand, or thinking and speaking about that redemption, its agent, and its meaning on the other, they are concentrating on the essence of their experience. Those who have concentrated from within the faith tradition have also helped to give it its identity. It is not possible to speak of the essence of a historical tradition without referring to how its ideal qualities have been discussed through the ages. Yet one can take up the separate subjects of essence and identity in sequence, being always aware of how they interrelate. Page 1 of

Chapter 9 : What is the history of Christianity?

Church History: Relevant for Modern Christianity However, Christianity, unlike any other religion, is deeply rooted in history. Central to the Christian faith is the fact that God came to earth as a man -- Jesus Christ.