

Church History Timeline

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Introduction

Welcome to *The Church History Timeline*, from www.churchtimeline.com.

The timeline was originally created as a project for a church history class at Covenant Presbyterian Seminary, the seminary for the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA). My intention is to provide a resource for the whole Church. The timeline is intended as an overview, to give "the big picture" of some of the major events in the church in the last couple of millennia.

On the web site, www.churchtimeline.com, I've linked keywords in the timeline to the coolest and most useful information I could find on the web. Whenever I could find the text of the documents mentioned, I've linked to those. The web site also includes a page of links to resources I've found helpful along the way.

Please enjoy, and learn a lot. Church History is a rich teacher.

Clay McKinney
clay_mckinney@hotmail.com

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The Early Church in the Apostolic Period: 35-120

- 35 b. Ignatius. His letters to churches and to Polycarp are widely quoted in the early church
- 51 The Jewish persecution of Christians in Rome becomes so disruptive that the Jews are expelled from the city
- 60 b. Papias, Bishop of Hierapolis in Asia Minor. "He was a man of long ago and the disciple of one 'John' and a companion of Polycarp," according to Irenaeus
- 64 Emperor Nero blames the fire that destroys much of Rome on the Christians. He persecutes the church ruthlessly, and uses Christians as candles to light his garden. It is likely that both Peter and Paul were executed during this persecution
- 68 The end of Nero's reign
- 69 b. Polycarp, in Smyrna. He was a strong defender of the faith in Asia Minor combating the Marcionites and the Valentinians. Irenaeus reported that Polycarp had communication with John the Apostle and 'others who had seen the Lord'
- 81 Domitian becomes Emperor. As Emperor, he persecuted both Jews and Christians
- 96 The end of Domitian's reign
- 96 d. Clement of Rome. He wrote influential epistles to Corinth
- 98 Trajan becomes Emperor. Trajan eventually instituted a policy toward Christians that staid in effect until the time of Aurelius. His policy was not to seek Christians out, but if they were brought before the authorities they were to be punished, usually executed, for being Christians
- By the end of the first century it is possible to document congregations in almost every city that Paul visited on his three missionary journeys. There are also a few churches in Egypt and along the coast of Northern Africa
- 107 Ignatius led to Rome and martyred
- 115 b. Irenaeus, the first great Catholic theologian and author of Against Heresies, a treatise against the gnostics

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The Early Church in the Period of the Apologists: 120-220

- 130 d. Papias
- 130 Conversion of Justin Martyr. Justin loved philosophy, and had studied many philosophies and pagan religions in his search for truth. He was an apologist, and taught that the seeds of truth (logos) could be found in all religions, but that only Christianity taught the whole truth
- 144 Marcion excommunicated for rejecting the Old Testament, rejecting most of the New Testament, and teaching that Christ only appeared to be human (Docetism). His challenge helps the church realize the necessity of formally recognizing the canon
- 150 b. Clement of Alexandria. He was an apologist who used Plato to support Christianity, and tried to reach gnostics by showing that only the Christian had real "gnosis." He helped establish the allegorical method of interpreting scripture. His works make up a large proportion of The Ante-Nicene Fathers, Vol. II
- 155 Polycarp was martyred in Smyrna by being burned to death. Polycarp declared, "Eighty and six years have I served Him, and He never did me any injury: how then can I blaspheme my King and my Savior?" The only known writings to survive are parts of letters he wrote to the Philippians
- 156 Possibly the beginning of the Montanist movement. They were an ascetic movement with apocalyptic visions. They claimed the Spirit spoke directly through their prophets and prophetesses
- 160 b. Tertullian. He objected to Justin's use of philosophy to defend Christianity, saying "What has Athens to do with Jerusalem?." Late in life he became a Montanist and wrote Against Praxeas, which helped the church understand the Trinity
- 161 Marcus Aurelius becomes emperor. He abandoned Trajan's passive approach and actively sought Christians to persecute them throughout the empire
- 165 Justin is martyred
- 180 The end of Aurelius's reign
- 185 b. Origen. Pupil of Clement of Alexandria, he further develops the allegorical method. This and his desire to relate to the Neoplatonists in Alexandria led him away from orthodoxy in some matters. But he is still important to the church. On First Principles is the first systematic theology
- 202 Septimus Severus tries to unite the empire under one religion, the worship of the Unconquered Sun. Both Jews and Christians refuse and are vehemently persecuted
- 202 Irenaeus is martyred(?)
- 202 Clement of Alexandria flees to Syria until his death in 215
- 216 b. Mani, founder of Manichaeism. He fused Persian, Christian, and Buddhist elements into a major new heresy

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The Early Church in the Third Century: 220-305

- 225 d. Tertullian
- 245 Conversion of Cyprian
- 247 Cyprian becomes Bishop of Carthage
- 249-251 The reign of Decius. He ordered everyone in the empire to burn incense to him. Those who complied were issued a certificate. Those who did not have a certificate were persecuted. Many Christians bought forged certificates, causing a great controversy in the church
- Cyprian went into hiding during the persecution and ruled the church by letters
- 251 b. Anthony. One of the earliest monks. He sold all his possessions and moved to the desert. Athanasius later wrote his biography
- 254 d. Origen
- The Novatian schism develops concerning the treatment of the lapsed. (The Novatians, or Cathari, last until about 600. Read the Catholic view of the schism.) Cyprian refuses to accept the validity of baptism by schismatic priests. The church in Rome is critical of Cyprian's view, and sends him scathing letters.
Carthaginian Councils
- 258 Cyprian is martyred before the issue is settled
- 263 b. Eusebius of Caesarea. He was the first church historian. Many works of the early church survive only as fragments in Eusebius's writing
- 284 The beginning of the Diocletian persecution
- 286 b. Pachomius, Egyptian pioneer of cenobitic (communal rather than solitary) monasticism
- 297/300 b. Athanasius, the defender of Orthodoxy during the Arian controversy of the fourth century.

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The Imperial Church: 305-476

- 305 The end of the Diocletian persecution
- 310 b. Apollinaris, the heretic who said that Jesus had a human body but not a human mind; He had the divine mind. Gregory of Nazianzus' reply: "What has not been assumed cannot be restored"
- 311 b. Ulfilas
- 312 Constantine defeats Maxentius at the battle of Milvian Bridge and becomes Emperor of the West. Constantine had had a vision, and used the letters chi and rho (the first two letters in "Christ") as his symbol during the battle
- 312 Caecilian elected bishop of Carthage. He was lax toward the Traditores, who had saved themselves by handing over scriptures during the Diocletian persecution. And he seemed unenthusiastic about the martyrs. A group in Carthage rejected Caecilian's election on the grounds that he was ordained by a traditore. They elected a rival bishop named Majorinus
- 313 Edict of Milan gives Christians equal rights. It is issued by Constantine in the West and Licinius in the East, but Licinius soon withdraws his commitment to it
- 314 By this date, there is a significant number of Christians in Britain
- 315 Majorinus dies, Donatus is his successor. This party becomes known as the Donatist party
- 316 The Donatists appeal to Constantine, but he rules against them. Then he outlaws them and banishes them in an effort to unite the church
- 324 Constantine defeats Licinius and becomes Emperor of both East and West. Constantine favored Christianity, which effects the face of the church even today
- 325 Council of Nicea condemns Arianism. Arius, in Alexandria, taught that Christ was the first created being, that there was a time when He was not. The council declared that Jesus was begotten, not made, and that He is Homoousios, of the same substance as the Father
- 328 Athanasius becomes bishop of Alexandria
- 328 Constantine revokes the sentence against Arius
- 329 b. Basil the Great of Cappadocia, the monk who created the basic Rule for the Eastern Orthodox monks that is still in use today. Basil taught communal monasticism that serves the poor, sick, and needy. One immediate effect of the disappearance of persecution is the rise of monasticism to replace the old martyr witness
- 335 b. Martin of Tours, a great monk who is famous for his compassion for the poor
- 337 d. Constantine
- 339 b. Ambrose the Churchman, who fought Arianism and the revival of paganism, and promoted the power of the Church.
- 340 d. Eusebius of Caesarea
- 340 Ulfilas converted to Arian Christianity. He takes it to the Germanic tribes, gives them an alphabet, and translates the Bible into their language. Most of the Germanic tribes became Arian Christians

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- 345 b. John Chrysostom, "Golden Mouthed." He was a bold and reforming preacher, who used the Historical-grammatical method of exegesis. This was unusual, because exegetes had been looking at the allegorical interpretation ever since Clement of Alexandria and Origen
- 346 d. Pachomius
- 347 b. Jerome, the great Bible scholar and translator, author of the Vulgate
- 353 Emperor Constantius releases his pro-Arian campaign and drives Athanasius from Alexandria
- 354 b. Augustine
- 356 d. Anthony, at a very old age
- 361-363 Reign of Julian the Apostate, who converted from Christianity to paganism and restored paganism in Rome
- 361 Julian the Apostate removes the restrictions against the Donatists
- 369 b. Pelagius
- 367 A letter of Athanasius names the 66 books of the canon
- 373 d. Athanasius
- 379 d. Basil the Great of Cappadocia
- 379-395 The reign of Theodosius, who establishes Christianity as the official religion of the Roman Empire
- 381 Council of Constantinople. The Nicene position becomes dominant again, and the legal religion of the Empire. Jesus Christ is truly human, contrary to Apollinarianism, which held that Jesus had a human body but a divine mind. The Great Cappadocians are the inspiration behind the defeat of Arianism at this council. They are St. Basil the Great, St. Gregory of Nazianzus, and St. Gregory of Nyssa
- 382 A council in Rome affirms the authority of the New Testament canon. It is important to remember that the content of the canon was not a conciliar decision. The church recognized, or discovered, the canon. The church did not determine the canon
- 383 d. Ulfilas
- 386 Augustine was converted in a garden in Milan after hearing a child saying "Take up and read!" He took up Romans 13: 13-14.
- 387 Augustine baptized by Ambrose
- c. 389 b. St. Patrick. He was a British Romanized Christian who established Christianity in Ireland
- 390 d. Apollinaris
- 390 b. Leo the Great, an outstanding pope. He was influential in Chalcedon. He also argued for papal supremacy and showed political leadership in his negotiations with Attila the Hun
- 391 Augustine ordained a priest in Hippo, North Africa
- 393 The Council of Hippo recognizes the canon. To be recognized as canonical, a book had to be Apostolic, fit in with the other scriptures, and have been of fruitful use throughout the church up to that time
- 395 Augustine becomes bishop of Hippo

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- 397 d. Martin of Tours
- 397 The Council of Carthage agrees with the Council of Hippo
- 398 John Chrysostom becomes bishop of Constantinople
- 397-401 Augustine writes Confessions
- 400 d. Nestorius, the heretic who said that Mary was the bearer of Christ (christokos), but not the bearer of God (theotokos). He could not call a three month old Jesus God. So he said that Jesus Christ was two persons, whose only union was a moral one
- 407 d. Chrysostom
- 410 The Fall of Rome to Alaric and the Visigoths
- 411-430 Augustine's Anti-Pelagian writings. Pelagius rejected the idea that we all fell in Adam (Federal Headship), original sin, and the sin nature. We could earn our salvation by works, so grace is not necessary. Augustine insisted that we all sinned in Adam, and spiritual death, guilt, and our diseased nature is the result. God's grace is necessary not only to be able to choose to obey God's commands, but to be able to choose to turn to God initially for salvation.
- 413-426 Augustine writes The City of God. Some people blamed the fall of Rome on the Christians, saying it happened because Rome abandoned paganism. This is Augustine's response, along with many diversions.
- 418 The Council of Carthage anathematized the teachings of Pelagius.
- 420 d. Jerome
- 420 d. Pelagius
- 429 Arian Vandals cross into Africa. After this, Western Emperors became puppets of Germanic generals
- 430 d. Augustine
- 431 Council of Ephesus. Jesus Christ is one person, contrary to Nestorianism, which held that Christ was two persons, one divine and one human
- 448 Leo writes an epistle to Flavian, The Tome of Leo, to encourage him. It encapsulates the Christology of the church, drawing from Augustine and Tertullian
- 449 The Latrocinium (Robber's) Council. Dioscorus, Patriarch of Alexandria, presided. This Council declared Eutychianism, which held that Christ had only one nature, to be orthodox. According to this heresy, His humanity was not like ours. This would make redemption impossible. The council deposed Flavian, the orthodox Patriarch of Constantinople
- 451 Council of Chalcedon. Eutychianism is condemned, Dioscorus is deposed, The Tome of Leo is confirmed. Jesus Christ is "two natures, the Divine of the same substance as the Father (against Arianism), the human of the same substance as us (against Eutychianism), which are united unconfusedly, unchangeably, indivisibly, inseparably (against Nestorianism)." The church remains divided over these issues for the next 200 years
- c. 461 d. St. Patrick
- 461 d. Leo the Great

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- 476 The last Emperor, Romulus Augustulus, is deposed by Odoacer, a German general

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The Early Middle Ages: 476-1000

- 480 b. Boethius, a significant thinker who influences the Middle ages. In The Consolation of Philosophy he tries to find comfort in reason and philosophy. He doesn't quote scripture
- 480 b. Benedict of Nursia, who wrote the normal Rule for Western monks to the present
- 521 b. Columba, Irish missionary to Scotland working from the isle of Iona
- 540 b. Columban, Irish missionary to the continent when it was struggling with a resurgence of paganism
- 525 d. Boethius
- 529 The Council of Orange approves the Augustinian doctrine of sin and grace, but without absolute predestination
- 540 b. Gregory the Great
- 550 d. Benedict of Nursia
- 560 b. Isidore of Seville, whose Book of Sentences was the key book of theology until the twelfth century
- 575 Gregory the Great becomes a monk
- 590 Gregory the Great becomes pope. He was a very effective and popular pope during a time when the government was weak. He fed the peasants and protected farms and villages from Lombard invasion. His development of the doctrine of purgatory was instrumental in establishing the medieval Roman Catholic sacramental system
- 596 Gregory sends Augustine of Canterbury to convert the pagans in England. He imposed the Roman liturgy on the old British Christians
- 597 d. Columba, missionary to Scotland
- 602 Through Gregory's influence and his baptism of a Lombard King's child, the Lombards begin converting from Arianism to Orthodoxy
- 604 d. Gregory the Great
- 613 d. Augustine of Canterbury
- 615 d. Columban, missionary to the continent
- 622 Mohammed's flight from Mecca to Medina, the beginning of Islam
- 635 The Nestorian church did not disappear after the council of Ephesus in 431. They evangelized east. By 635 Nestorian Christianity had reached the heart of China, but it disappeared after two hundred years
- 636 d. Isidore of Seville
- 637 b. Wilfrid, British missionary to Belgium
- 663 Synod of Whitby reconciles the old British liturgy and the Roman liturgy
- 675 b. John of Damascus, an important Eastern Orthodox mystic
- 680 b. Boniface, who brought Anglo-Saxon Christianity to the pagans in Germany. He cut down the pagan's sacred tree and built a church out of it
- 8th Century Composition of Be Thou My Vision
- 709 d. Wilfrid

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- 711 Islam has spread from India to North Africa. All of North Africa is under Islamic control
- 720 Muslims take Spain
- 726-787 The iconoclastic controversy. Emperor Leo III attacked the use of images. John of Damascus defended the use of icons in worship by differentiating between veneration and worship. He also argued that the use of images is an affirmation of Christ's humanity, because a real person can be depicted. The opposition responds that images of Christ are not valid depictions because they can only represent his humanity, but not his divinity
- 732 Europeans turn back the Muslims at the Battle of Tours
- 749 d. John of Damascus
- 754 d. Boniface
- 787 Council of Nicea supports the decision of John of Damascus concerning icons. This decision was not well received in the West because John's words for veneration and worship were difficult to translate
- 800 Pope Leo III crowns Charlemagne head of the Holy Roman Empire (a.k.a. the Nominally Christian Germanic Kingdom). His dynasty is called the Carolingian Empire. His reign is the cultural high point of the Early Middle Ages
- 875-950 The Dark Ages. The Carolingian Empire was weakened and was assailed by new invaders. This period also marks the low point of the papacy

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The High Middle Ages: 1000-1300

- 1014 Pope Benedict VIII officially added *filioque* to the Nicene Creed. It means that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son. He did this to insist on the equality of the deity. But the Eastern Church insists that the Holy Spirit came from the Father through the Son. They are offended that the West altered the Creed without an ecumenical council
- 1033 b. Anselm, father of scholasticism. He proposed the ontological argument for the existence of God. He argued for the necessity of the Incarnation and Redemption of Christ
- 1054 Pope Leo IX's delegate, Cardinal Humbert, laid a sentence of anathema on the altar of St. Sophia, the most prestigious Eastern Orthodox church. The two churches are permanently separated
- 1073 Pope Gregory VII excommunicated Emperor Henry IV. The high point of papal supremacy
- 1079 b. Peter Abelard, the Refiner of Scholasticism. He came to some heretical conclusions. For example, he believed that the death of Christ was just a moral example for us to follow. His autobiography is called *A History of Calamities*, in part because he was emasculated for having an affair with his young niece
- 1079 Under the Seljuk Turks, the Muslims are more determined than previously to keep the Christians from making pilgrimages to the Holy Land
- 1093 b. Bernard of Clairvaux, the most influential person of his day. He helped reform the monasteries. He was a great preacher, in spite of his allegorical exegesis. And he was Augustinian in his doctrines of grace, which later gave Calvin and the other reformers an anchor in the High Middle Ages
- 1096-1099 The First Crusade fought for lofty ideals. The pope wanted to save Constantinople, save the Byzantine Empire, and thus heal the breach between the Eastern and Western Church. They were able to temporarily regain the Holy Land
- 1100 b. Peter Lombard, scholastic author of *Four Books on the Sentences*, the standard theological text for 200 years. It influenced Calvin's *Institutes*
- 1109 d. Anselm
- 1140 b. Peter Waldo in Lyons, France. He is the founder of an old, old protestant church (300 years before Luther). The Waldensian church still exists in some parts of the world today, but in most countries it merged with the Methodists and Presbyterians. Waldensians stress the authority of scripture and lay preaching. They also come to reject salvation by sacraments
- 1143 d. Peter Abelard
- 1147-1148 The Second Crusade. Bernard of Clairvaux was the chief motivator of this crusade, but somehow his reputation survives it. It was a disastrous failure. The failure was blamed by the Westerners on the lack of commitment of the Eastern Church. The wedge is driven deeper
- 1153 d. Bernard of Clairvaux
- 1174 Peter Waldo converted

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- 1179 Two of Waldo's followers (called Waldensians) are laughed out of the Third Lateran Council after being tricked into saying that Mary was the mother of Christ. They didn't know they were agreeing with Nestorius
- 1181/82 b. Francis of Assisi
- 1184 Waldensians are declared heretical
- 1187 Muslims retake Jerusalem
- 1189-1192 The Third Crusade is an ineffective attempt to recover Jerusalem
- 1200-1204 The Fourth Crusade. The Crusaders finished this crusade by looting Constantinople, the seat of the Eastern Orthodox church. So much for the lofty ideals of the First Crusade
- 1209 Innocent III proclaims a "crusade", a papal inquisition, against the Waldensians
- 1212 The Children's Crusade. The children felt they could take the Holy Land supernaturally because they were pure in heart. Most of them were drowned, murdered, or sold into slavery
- 1215 Fourth Lateran Council requires annual communion for salvation. Also condemns the Waldensians. They are persecuted for the next 600 years. They sought refuge in the Alps, and thus were not directly involved in the Reformation of Luther until later
- 1216 Papal approval for the Dominicans, the Order of Preachers. Their purpose was to oppose heresy with piety, learning and zeal
- 1219-1221 The Fifth Crusade. The crusaders temporarily held Damietta in Egypt. Francis of Assisi went with the crusaders. But where they stopped, Francis kept going. He went unarmed into the presence of the sultan and preached to him
- 1224 St. Francis's Stigmata, a mystical experience of the wounds of Christ
- 1224/25 b. Thomas Aquinas, the chief teacher of the Catholic Church. Author of Summa Contra Gentiles, an apologetic handbook for Dominican missionaries to Jews, Muslims, and heretics in Spain, and Summa Theologica, the theological textbook that supplanted Lombard's Sentences as the chief theological work of the Middle Ages
- 1225 Francis writes "The Canticle of the Sun", which we know as "All Creatures of Our God and King"
- 1226 d. Francis
- 1229 The Sixth Crusade. Frederick II temporarily gained Jerusalem by making a treaty with the sultan
- 1232 b. Raymund Lull, first missionary to the Muslims
- 1248 The Seventh Crusade. St. Louis IX of France is defeated in Egypt. This was the last crusade. The final result of the crusades is that the western Christians drove a wedge between the Church and the Jews, between the Church and the Muslims, and between the Western and Eastern Church.

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The Late Middle Ages: 1300-1500

- c.1300-c.1400 The Black Death. 1/3 of the population from India to Iceland is wiped out, including about 1/2 of Britain
- 1309 The beginning of the "Babylonian Captivity of the Church." For 70 years the papacy was in Avignon and under the thumb of the King of France. The papacy was pro-France, and Britain was at war with France
- 1316 Raymund Lull stoned to death
- 1330 b. John Wycliffe, the most important theologian in Oxford, the most important university in Europe. He taught that we must rely altogether on the sufferings of Christ. "Beware of seeking to be justified in any other way than by His righteousness"
- 1337 Beginning of the Hundred Years' War
- 1349 d. Thomas Bradwardine, who influenced Wycliffe to adopt Augustine's doctrine of grace and to reject the Semi-Pelagianism of the Roman Catholic church
- 1371 b. John Huss, Bohemian pre-reformer. He was greatly influenced by Wycliffe. He rejected indulgences and said Christ is the head of the Church, not the pope
- 1377 The end of the "Babylonian Captivity"
- 1378 The Great Schism. Pope Gregory XI moves the papacy back to Rome. France declares Clement VII pope in Avignon. There are two competing popes for close to 40 years
- 1380 b. Thomas a Kempis, author of Imitation of Christ
- 1381 The Peasant's Revolt. 30,000 angry peasants descend on London
- 1381 Because of his sympathy for the peasants, Wycliffe is suspected of involvement with the revolt. He is banished from Oxford. During this period, he and his followers translate the Bible from the Vulgate into English
- 1384 d. Wycliffe, of natural causes
- 1415 Council of Constance condemns Wycliffe
- July 6, 1415 Council of Constance burns John Huss, in violation of the Emperor's promise of safe conduct. The Emperor is told "It is not necessary to keep one's word to a heretic."
- 1417 The Council of Constance deposes both popes and elects a new one. This ends the Great Schism. It is a high point for Conciliarism, the idea that the councils are superior to the papacy
- 1428 The Catholic Church burned the bones of Wycliffe and threw them in the Swift river
- 1452 b. Savonarola, the great preacher. He taught the authority of scripture and understood the shortcomings of the Church
- 1453 End of the Hundred Years' War
- 1483 b. Martin Luther
- 1492 Erasmus ordained. Erasmus's Humanist movement was beginning to stir some members of the church to moral reform

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- 1492 Columbus sails. Repercussions ensue
- 1497 b. Philip Melanchthon
- 1498 d. Savonarola

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The Reformation: 1500-1599

- 1504 b. Heinrich Bullinger
- 1507 Luther is ordained as a priest at Erfurt
- Henry VIII becomes King of England in 1509
- 1509 b. John Calvin
- 1510 Luther sent to Rome on monastic business. He saw the corruption of the church
- 1513 Leo X becomes Pope
- 1514 b. John Knox
- 1515 While teaching on Romans, Luther realizes faith and justification are the work of God
- 1517 Luther nails his 95 Theses to the door of the church in Wittenburg. It is the first public act of the Reformation
- Zwingli's reform is also underway
- 1519 Charles V becomes Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire
- 1521 Luther is excommunicated
- 1525 The Bondage of the Will. Many of the essays, discourses, treatises, conversations, etc. that Luther had over the years are collected in his Table Talk
- 1529 The Colloquy of Marburg
- 1531 d. Ulrich Zwingli
- c. 1532 or 1533 Calvin's conversion
- 1534 Henry VIII declares himself "The only supreme head in earth of the Church of England"
- 1535 Anabaptists take over Muenster
- 1536 d. Erasmus
- 1536 Menno Simons rejects Catholicism, becomes an Anabaptist, and helps restore that movement back to pacifism
- 1536 William Tyndale strangled and burned at the stake. He was the first to translate the Bible into English from the original languages
- 1536 First edition of Calvin's Institutes
- 1540 Jesuit order is founded. The Catholic Reformation is under way
- c. 1543 Knox converted
- 1545 The Council of Trent begins
- 1546 d. Luther
- 1547 The young Edward VI becomes King of England. The Duke of Somerset acts as regent, and many reforms take place
- 1549 Consensus Tigurinus brings Zwinglians and Calvinists to agreement about communion
- 1553 Mary Tudor (Bloody Mary) begins her reign
- Many protestants who flee Mary's reign are deeply impacted by exposure to a more true reformation on the continent. John Knox is among them
- 1558 Elizabeth is crowned, the Marian exiles return

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- 1559 Last edition of the Institutes
- 1559 The Act of Uniformity makes the 1559 Book of Common Prayer the standard in the Church of England and penalizes anyone who fails to use it. It is not reformed enough for the Puritans
- 1560 b. Jacobus Arminius
- Parliament approves the Scot's Confession, penned by the six Johns (including Knox)
- 1561 d. pacifist Anabaptist leader Menno Simons
- 1563 The Council of Trent is finished
- 1564 d. John Calvin
- 1566 Bullinger writes The Second Helvetic Confession
- 1567-1568 The Vestments Controversy. Puritans did not want the ceremony and ritual symbolized by the robes of the Church of England
- 1571 Thirty Nine Articles are finalized
- 1572 d. John Knox
- 1572 b. John Donne, devout Anglican minister and poet
- 1572 Massacre of St. Bartholomew's Day, the worst persecution of Huguenots
- 1575 d. Bullinger
- 1582 The General Assembly in Scotland, with Andrew Melville as moderator, ratifies the "Second Book of Discipline." It has been called the Magna Carta of Presbyterianism
- 1593 b. George Herbert, Anglican country parson and poet
- 1596 b. Moses Amyrald, founder of Amyraldianism, which is basically Calvinism minus limited atonement. Amyraldianism became the theology of the School of Saumer in France
- 1596 b. Descartes, founder of rationalism
- 1598 Edict of Nantes grants Huguenots greater religious freedom

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The Puritans: 1600-1699

- 1603 Arminius takes the position that predestination is based on fore-knowledge
- 1603 James I becomes King
- 1604 The Puritans meet James at Hampton Court. Their hopes are dashed
- 1609 d. Jacobus Arminius
- 1610 b. Brother Lawrence
- 1610 The Arminians issue the Remonstrance containing 5 articles
- 1611 The King James Version, the most influential English translation of the Bible
- 1615 b. Puritan Richard Baxter, author of The Reformed Pastor
- 1616 b. Puritan John Owen, called the Calvin of England
- 1618 The Book of Sports is published. It contradicts the Puritan view of the Sabbath, but Puritans are forced to read it
- 1618-1619 The Synod of Dort is called in the Netherlands to answer the Arminians. The response forms 5 point Calvinism
- 1620 Plymouth, Massachusetts colony founded by Puritans
- 1623 b. Blaise Pascal
- 1623 b. Francis Turretin
- 1625 Charles I becomes King. He too is against the Puritans
- 1628 William Laud becomes Bishop of London and steps up oppression of the Puritans
- 1628 b. Puritan John Bunyan, author of Pilgrim's Progress among many other works of poetry and prose
- 1629 Charles I dismisses Parliament
- 1630 John Winthrop and many Puritans migrate to America
- 1632 b. Locke, founder of empiricism
- 1633 The Book of Sports is renewed
- 1636 Harvard founded by Puritans
- 1638 The National Covenant
- 1640 Charles I summons Parliament. They curtail his power
- 1643 The Solemn League and Covenant
- 1643-1646 The Westminster Assembly
- 1646 Cromwell's army defeats the King at the Battle of Naseby
- 1647 George Fox founds the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)
- 1649 Charles I is executed. Oliver Cromwell becomes Lord Protector
- c. 1650's Brother Lawrence became a monk, and "walk(ed) with God around a kitchen for forty years" (Great Christian Books, 57) But he did it to glorify God
- 1654 Conversion of Pascal. He started collecting notes for an Apology for the Christian Religion. It was unfinished, but his notes were published posthumously as Pensees
- 1658 d. Cromwell
- 1660 Charles II becomes King of England

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- 1661-1663 John Eliot publishes the Bible in Algonkian, a Native American language. Over the course of his life he also helped plant at least 14 Native American churches
- 1662 d. Pascal
- 1662 New Act of Uniformity, over two thousand Puritan pastors resign or are forced out
- 1675 Philip Jacob Spener's Pia Desideria helps begin the pietist movement
- Edict of Nantes is revoked, making Protestantism illegal again in France. Many huguenots emigrated, some stayed and met in secret
- 1685 b. J.S.Bach, called the fifth evangelist
- 1687 d. Turretin. His Institutes of Elentic Theology were published the next year
- 1688 William and Mary take the throne. Puritans are free to preach and establish their own churches
- 1691 d. Brother Lawrence

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The Great Awakening: 1700-1799

- 1703 b. Jonathan Edwards
- 1706 Francis Makemie founds the first Presbytery in America in Philadelphia
- 1714 b. Immanuel Kant, a leader of the Romantic movement. He said knowledge is not what is, but only what our minds can grasp
- 1714 b. George Whitefield
- 1727 "The Golden Summer." A revival broke out among Count Nikolaus Ludwig Zinzendorf and the Hussite Moravian refugees he had taken in. Many Moravian missionaries were sent overseas
- During the 1720's, revival breaks out as Theodore Frelinghuysen preaches in New Jersey. Revival spreads through Gilbert Tennant to New Brunswick. It is the first stirrings of the First Great Awakening
- 1734-1737 The Great Awakening continues as Jonathan Edwards preaches in Massachusetts. Revival spreads to Connecticut
- 1739-41 George Whitefield joins Edwards. He traveled diligently, traveling between England and America 13 times, and was able to reach about 80% of the colonists with the gospel
- 1739 The Methodists begin as a parachurch society in London
- 1741 The conservative Old Side/ pro-revival New Side controversy in American Presbyterianism
- 1746 Princeton founded by the Presbyterians
- 1754 Dartmouth founded for Native Americans
- 1758 Old Side/New Side schism healed
- 1759 b. Charles Simeon, founder of low-church party of Church of England
- 1759 b. William Wilberforce, an evangelical in the Church of England, who fought against slavery and wrote Real Christianity
- 1761 b. William Carey
- 1764 Brown founded by Baptists
- 1766 Rutgers founded by Dutch Reformed. All these new colleges were fruit of the Great Awakening
- 1768 Lady Huntingdon, who brought Methodism to the upper classes and founded "The Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion", opened Trevecca House as a Methodist Seminary
- 1770 d. Whitefield.
- 1772 b. Archibald Alexander, who would organize Princeton Theological Seminary
- c.1773-1775 Founded, the first black Baptist church in America, Silver Bluff, South Carolina
- 1779 Olney Hymns produced by John Newton and William Cowper. It includes "How Sweet the Name of Jesus Sounds" and "Amazing Grace"
- 1783 b. Asahel Nettleton
- 1784 John Wesley baptizes Thomas Coke, making Methodism a denomination separate from the Church of England

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- 1787 Archibald Alexander at Hampton Sydney College. May be considered the first early stirrings of the Second Great Awakening
- 1791 d. Lady Huntingdon
- 1792 William Carey preaches "Expect great things from God. Attempt great things for God."
- 1792 Particular Baptist Society for Propagating the Gospel among the Heathen founded, later called the Baptist Missionary Society
- 1792 b. Charles Finney, inventor of modern revivalism
- 1795 London Missionary Society founded
- 1797 b. Charles Hodge
- 1799 Church Missionary Society founded
- 1799 Friedrich Schleiermacher's *On Religion: Speeches to its Cultured Despisers* presented Christianity in a Romantic, subjective light. Precursor to Liberalism

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The Revivalists: 1800-1899

- 1800 The first camp meeting in Kentucky is presided over by Calvinist James McGready
- 1801 William Carey's Bengali New Testament published
- 1801 The Cane Ridge Revival in Kentucky is an early stirring of the Second Great Awakening
- 1808 Henry Martyn publishes the New Testament in Hindustani
- 1809 Harvard having been lost to Unitarianism, Andover Seminary is founded
- 1812 Princeton Seminary founded
- 1812 b. James Henley Thornwell, the great Southern Presbyterian mind whose influence is still felt in the PCA
- 1813 b. David Livingston, missionary and explorer in Africa
- 1813 b. Soren Kierkegaard
- African Methodist Episcopal Church founded in 1816 by Richard Allen, a freedman who had been the first black Methodist to be ordained as a deacon
- 1824 Charles Finney leads revivals from Wilmingham to Boston. The Second Great Awakening is underway
- 1825 Charles Hodge founds the Princeton Review
- 1834 d. William Carey, called "the Father of Modern Missions"
- 1834 b. C.H.Spurgeon
- 1835 Hodge's Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans
- 1835 Finney's Lectures on Revivals
- 1833-1841 The Oxford Movement, or the Tractarian Movement, attempts to bring the Church of England closer to Catholicism. Tried to popularize the Via Media. Led by John Henry Newman
- 1835-1837 Adoniram Judson translates the Bible into Burmese
- 1837 b. Abraham Kuyper
- 1837 Old School/New School controversy splits American Presbyterianism
- 1843 The Disruption of the church in Scotland
- 1844 d. Asahel Nettleton, Calvinist leader who opposed Finney's formulaic view of revivalism during the Second Great Awakening
- 1845 John Henry Newman converts to Roman Catholicism
- 1848 b. Mary Slessor, who the Africans she would minister to called "The Mother of All of Life"
- 1851 d. Archibald Alexander
- 1851 b. B.B.Warfield, Princeton theologian who would defend inerrancy
- 1852 b. Adolf Schlatter, a respected conservative voice in liberal Germany
- 1854 Doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of Mary
- 1855 d. Kierkegaard
- 1857 Finney's Lectures to Professing Christians written to influence the practice of "Christian Perfection"
- Origen of Species, 1859, Darwin

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- 1860 Essays and Reviews published. A liberal manifesto by 7 Church of England priests
- 1861 Spurgeon moves to the Metropolitan Tabernacle. Soon he is preaching to over 6,000 per week
- 1864 Old School/New School schism healed in the South
- 1869 Old School/New School schism healed in the North
- 1870 Vatican I, and the declaration of Papal Infallibility when speaking ex cathedra
- 1870 Fifty year celebration of Friedrich August Tholuck's professorship at Halle. Tholuck was the spiritual father of thousands of students, and mentored Charles Hodge
- 1873 d. David Livingston
- 1875 d. Charles Finney
- 1874 The Christian Doctrine of Justification and Reconciliation by Albrecht Ritschl reduces Christianity to a social gospel
- 1878 d. Charles Hodge
- 1879 John Henry Newman made a Cardinal
- 1881 b. J.Gresham Machen
- 1886 Abraham Kuyper leads a major succession in the Dutch Reformed Church
- 1886 The Student Volunteer Movement
- 1886 b. Karl Barth
- 1890 d. John Henry Newman, who became one of the most influential Roman Catholic thinkers of his time
- 1892 d. C.H.Spurgeon
- 1898 Kuyper's Stone Lectures urge the development of a Christian worldview encompassing all of life

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The Modern Period: 1900-Present

- 1900 What is Christianity by Adolf Harnack reduces Christianity to the personality of Jesus in the synoptics, without any supernatural elements
- 1905 d. George MacDonald, Christian novelist and Poet
- 1906 Azusa St. Revival, a major catalyst to the Pentecostal and Charismatic churches
- 1921 d. B.B. Warfield
- 1922 "Shall the Fundamentalists Win?" sermon by Harry Emerson Fosdick
- 1922 "Shall Unbelief Win?" sermon by Clarence Edward Macartney
- 1923 Christianity and Liberalism by J. Gresham Machen
- 1925 Scope's Monkey Trial brings national attention to Fundamentalism
- 1929 Machen and others found Westminster Seminary after Princeton is lost to the liberals
- 1934 Conversion of Billy Graham
- 1936 d. G.K. Chesterton
- 1941-43 Rienhold Niebuhr's The Nature and Destiny of Man
- 1945 Dietrich Bonhoeffer hanged by the Nazis
- 1945 d. Charles Williams, who wrote Christian metaphysical thriller fantasy novels and hung out with C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien
- 1950 Doctrine of the Assumption of Mary
- 1950 The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe, the first of The Chronicles of Narnia by C.S. Lewis
- 1951 Richard Niebuhr's Christ and Culture
- 1955 L'Abri Fellowship founded by Francis Schaeffer
- 1962-1965 Vatican II
- 1963 d. C.S. Lewis
- 1968 d. Karl Barth
- 1968 Liberation Theology comes to prominence in the second Conference of Latin American Bishops
- 1968 The God Who is There by Francis Schaeffer
- 1973 Mission to the World of the Presbyterian Church in America
- 1999 The twentieth century had more Christian martyrs than all the other centuries combined. Find out more from The Voice of the Martyrs