

HOW DID WE GET HERE?

A Short Course on Church History

The Church's Dark Age: 950-1500

I. INTRODUCTION AND KEY THEMES:

- A. Common perceptions today ...
- B. The ungodly intermingling of sacred and secular ...
- C. Conflicts between state and church ...
- D. The rise of Papal authority ...
- E. The absence of God's Word ...
- F. The need and seeds of reformation ...

II. THE GEO-POLITICAL CONTEXT:

- A. Expansion
- B. Feudalism and *Investiture*
- C. The Collision of Emperors and Popes
 - 1. Henry III and Leo IX
 - a. Leo's reforms ...
 - b. "Papal Election Decree"

2. Hildebrand (Gregory VII)

- a. Papal Decree of 1075
- b. Excommunicated Henry IV

3. Innocent III

- a. Declared: *“the successor of Peter is the Vicar of Christ...he has been established as a mediator between God and man, below God but beyond man; less than God but more than man; who shall judge all and be judged by no one.”*
- b. Once placed all of France under ‘interdict’ ...

III. THE SPIRITUAL CONDITION OF THE CHURCH

Matthew 24:14 (ESV)

¹⁴And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.

Isaiah 59:1 (ESV)

⁵⁹Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save, or his ear dull, that it cannot hear ...

1 Kings 19:18 (ESV)

¹⁸Yet I will leave seven thousand in Israel, all the knees that have not bowed to Baal, and every mouth that has not kissed him.”

Romans 11:3-5 (ESV)

³“Lord, they have killed your prophets, they have demolished your altars, and I alone am left, and they seek my life.” ⁴But what is God's reply to him? “I have kept for myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal.” ⁵So too at the present time **there is a remnant**, chosen by grace.

A. Pockets of Christianity ...

B. A church adrift ...

IV. THE CRUSADES

The actual period of the Crusades lasted just two centuries - from Pope Urban's proclamation in France of the first official Crusade in 1095 and the successful capture of Jerusalem in 1099 and the final expulsion of the last Crusaders from their toehold in the Holy Land, Acre in 1291.

- A. In 1009 the Fatimid Caliph of Cairo, Al-Hakim, who controlled Jerusalem at this time, ordered the destruction of the Holy Places.
- B. The Christian response came in 1095. Pope Urban II declared that Muslim dominance of the Middle East had to be brought to an end. Thus began the “First Crusade” ...
- C. The infamous “Fourth Crusade” and the ultimate division of East and West ...
- D. Other Crusades ...
- E. The Inquisition ...
- F. Christians and the Crusades Today:
 - 1. The Crusades left hardly anyone _____, Christian or Muslim.
 - 2. Because we understand human nature to be _____, we should not be surprised at the wrongs or even evil sometimes committed in the name of our faith.
 - 3. We should see the Crusades in the context of the many other problems plaguing the Medieval Church ...

V. MEDIEVAL CHURCH COUNCILS

- A. The Fourth Lateran Council
- B. The Council of Constance

VI. MONASTICISM

While popes like Gregory and Innocent tried reform from the top, most reform came from much lower, in the monasteries. The most important of these orders were the Cluniacs, the Cistercians, and the Franciscans.

VII. SCHOLASTICISM

Scholasticism at its heart looks back to classical Greek and Roman texts, and principally Plato and Aristotle, to use rational principles of inquiry to reach conclusions about the world and especially the relationship of faith and reason.

A. Anselm

1. His motto:
2. The _____ argument for the existence of God
3. “Why God Became Man”

B. Aquinas

1. Summa Theologica
2. Second only to _____ for theological importance pre-Reformation
3. The _____ argument for the existence of God

Question: What are the limits of human reason in regard to knowing God?

Romans 1:18-23 (ESV)

¹⁸For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. ¹⁹For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. ²⁰For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, ²¹in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. ²²For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. ²³Claiming to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.

- 1) Our reasoning is tainted by _____.
- 2) Provides framework for _____ righteousness and eliminates need for _____.
- 3) Minimizes need for _____.
- 4) Fuels semi-Pelagianism ...

VIII. **FORERUNNERS TO THE REFORMATION**

A. Peter Waldo (1140-1218)

B. John Wycliffe (1328-1384)

C. Jan Huss (1369-1415)

D. Girolamo Savonarola (1452-1498)

Next week: Luther and the Early Reformers