

THE HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY

REFORM, DIVISION, EXPANSION

1517 – 2024 CE

“For We Walk by Faith, Not by Sight.” (2 Cor. 5:7)

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Happy
St Patrick's
Day!



Introduction

- Part One – From Anguish to Triumph: 30 - 476 CE
- Part Two – A Tale of Two Cities: 476 – 1517 CE
- **Part Three – Reform, Division, Expansion: 1517 - 2024 CE**

Warning: The Content to Follow Remains Abridged, Plagiarized and Somewhat Mangled.

Before We Start...A Confession of Sorts.

- History, Like the News Headlines, Tends to Focus on the Big Stories of the Day Involving Powerful People and Major Events.
- But Behind the Story, Are Thousands, Millions, of Everyday Interactions Among People That Don't Make the Newsreel.
- This is Especially True With This Story of Christianity: The Focus Has Been On on the Emperors, Bishops, Popes, and Empires and Tribes and Councils.
- What Has Not Been Explored Adequately Is the Love, Kindness, Care, and Compassion Among Ordinary People That Christianity Nurtured. These Stories Did Not Make the Headlines.
- But Those Little Stories of Love Are the Real Story of Christianity and the Reason For Its Global Success.

Summary of Part One

- 30 Jesus of Nazareth Crucified
- 30 Apostles Witness Resurrected Jesus
- 33 Paul Witnesses Christ
- 50 Paul Leads Conversion of the Pagans
- 250 Exponential Growth of Christianity
- 303 Rome Tries But Fails to Crush Christianity
- 313 Emperor Constantine Endorses Christianity
- 325 Constantine Convenes Council of Nicaea – Jesus is God
- 380 Christianity Becomes Official Religion of Roman Empire
- 381 Council of Constantinople Confirms the Trinity as Official

Summary of Part Two

- 451 Council of Chalcedon Confirms Christ as Fully Human and Fully Divine
- 476 Rome Falls but the Eastern Roman Empire (Constantinople) Remains Intact
- 500's The Benedictine Order and Early Monasticism Develop
- 500's The Papacy in Rome Strengthens; the Pope Becomes Acting Ruler of Rome
- 600's Islam Conquers Most of Middle East and North Africa; Threatens Constantinople
- 800 The Pope Develops Relationship with Charlemagne (The Holy Roman Empire)
- 800's The Vikings Raid and Create Havoc in Europe
- 1054 The Roman Catholic Church and the Eastern Church (Byzantium) Split
- 1099 First Crusade Launched to Repossess Jerusalem and the Holy Land
- 1250 St. Thomas Aquinas – Existence of God is an Article of Faith
- 1300 The Papacy Attains Supreme Power; Monasticism Provides A Solid Foundation
- 1347 Start of the Great Plague
- 1400's The Renaissance Begins in Italy and Spreads
- 1453 Constantinople Falls to the Muslim Ottomans
- 1400's The Pope All Powerful; But Voices of Dissent Emerge

The Whole “Power Corrupts” Thing

1500

- By 1500 the Roman Catholic Church is the Largest Landowner in Europe.
- The Roman Catholic Church is the Wealthiest Institution In Europe via:
 - Tithes and Taxes
 - Sale of Relics, Indulgences, Church Positions, Pilgrim Tours
- The Pope Is Undisputed Head of the Church
 - He Has an Army and Declares War
 - He Has Concubines and Children
 - Other Signs of Excess: Nepotism, Murder, Bribery etc.

The Pope Commands A Formidable Institution

- The Infallible Pope Is Supported By Cardinals, Archbishops, Bishops in a Command Structure
- The Hierarchy is Bolstered By A System of Monasteries, Priests, Convents, Deacons, Laity
- This Is a System Constantine Would Have Wanted – A lot More Efficient Than Calling an Ecumenical Council.
- Succession Issues Could be Complicated However.

Early Challengers Take the Risk

1184-1415

- The Waldensians of France (1184) Led Lives of Poverty and Selected Leaders Outside the Catholic Hierarchy. Excommunicated.
- John Wycliffe of England (1377) Translated Bible into English, Challenged Transubstantiation, Holds Bible as Highest Source of Truth. Heretic. Remains Burned.
- John Huss of Bohemia (1415) Attacks the Corruption and Authority of the Pope. Heretic and Burned At the Stake.
- Like the Roman Empire of Yore, The Papacy is Very Sensitive to Challenges to Its Authority.

Time For a Capital Campaign!

- The Basilica at St. Peter's Was in Need of Repair.
- The Pope (Leo X) Thought: "I'll Tell You What, Let's Sell Some Indulgences."
- What in the World is an Indulgence?
 - Well, For a Very Reasonable Price You Get A Document Which Provides Forgiveness of Sins. Gets You Into Heaven From Purgatory Fast! Satisfaction Guaranteed!! And Wait...There's More....But You Gotta Act Fast!
- A Dominican Prior Named Johannes Tetzel Was the Chief Salesman. His Slogan: "As Soon As the Coin in the Coffer Rings, The Soul From Purgatory Springs!"

This Is A Face You Can Trust



Step Right Up!



I Got A Hammer: Martin Luther 1517

- Martin Luther, an Augustinian Friar and Doctor of Theology, takes exception to the fund raising efforts of the local Archbishop, (i.e. The Indulgences).
- Famously, Luther Decides to Express His Dissatisfaction with the Church by Nailing His Theses of 95 Objections to the Church Door of the Wittenberg Church.
- Luther Is Not Trying to Start a New Church, He Wants The Church to Reform Itself.

I Got A Hammer: Martin Luther 1517



And A Song To Sing: Martin Luther

- But, his criticism of the Church expands. Luther Contends:
 - Scripture Alone (Scriptura Sola) Is the Sole Authority for the Church (Rejects Absolute Authority of the Pope).
 - Faith Alone (Not Good Works) Is the Key to Salvation.
 - Salvation Is Possible Only Through God's Grace (Which is free).
- In addition Luther:
 - Translates Bible into German.
 - Acknowledges Only Two sacraments: Lord's Supper (Christ present) and Baptism (infant).
 - Disavows Monasticism and Celibacy – marries!
 - Sees State and Church as Parallel but Separate Entities.

Emperor: “Let’s Talk”.

- Luther Has to Face the Diet of Worms. Yuk.
- Luther States: “Here I Stand.”
- But Luther Has Something Huss Did Not have:
 - Protection (Frederick the Wise, Who Lets Him Hide in a Castle)
 - Social Media (Printing Press) – Creates a Mass Market for Cheap Pamphlets
 - Increasing Distrust in Northern Europe of the Catholic Church.
 - Stronger Secular Powers.
 - Weakening Papacy.

**You Would Be Disappointed If I Didn't Show
This Image**



But Who Is This Dude?



Getting into the Swing of Things: Ulrich Zwingli of Zurich 1519

- Zwingli claims to have independently Developed a Criticism of the Catholic Church that Sounds Remarkably Similar to Luther's. Great Mind's...
- Zwingli's Ideas and Written Work are Well Received and Quickly Spread.
- Wouldn't it Makes Sense to Have Luther and Zwingli Unite?
- Of Course – A Meeting is Arranged Between Luther and Zwingli
- However - A Clash of Egos – Can't Agree on Bread ("This is My Body.")
- Zwingli Shortly Thereafter Killed Fighting Catholics – Other Attempts at Protestant Unity Fail – a Harbinger of Things to Come?

You Must Know This Guy



Calvin and the Monks

1549

- John Calvin (Jehan Calvin), a Lawyer and Theologian Comes to Geneva (Geneve). Formerly, Devout Catholic, He Has A Conversion Experience.
- Calvin, Regarded as the Founder of the Reformed Church, Was a tireless Preacher and Author of the Highly Influential *Institutes of the Christian Religion*
- Calvin Calls for Protestant Reconciliation - The Swiss Protestants Do Reconcile.
- However, the Lutherans and Swiss Protestants (i.e. Reformed) Cannot Agree on Predestination.
- Meanwhile, Away From the Fray, a Radical Fringe Group Emerges: Independent, Uncompromising, Fearless and Despised by Lutherans, Calvinists and Catholics Alike...

The Mennonites

1525



Mennonites/Anabaptists

- The Anabaptists, Centered in Switzerland Desire to Live Their Lives Straight Out of the New Testament: No Loyalty Oaths, No Military Service, Common Ownership of Property (Can Be Seen To This Day with the Hutterites).
- Loyalty Only to God and Scripture: Political Authority Does Not Apply.
- The Authorities, Even the Protestants, Are Not Pleased. Zwingli Persecutes the Anabaptists.
- The Anabaptist Practices, Particularly Pacifism and Adult Baptism Prove Influential in the future.

Anabaptists Being Drowned For Their Beliefs



But They Survive



Meanwhile, In England, King Henry VIII Has Girl Problems 1533

- King Henry VIII: “Take My Wife – “Please”
- In 1521, To Curry Favor With the Pope by Showing His Anti-Lutheranism, Henry Wrote a Little Piece Called “Why I Like the Seven Sacraments” – The Pope Gives Him the Defender of the Faith Title – Sweet!
- Henry Decides to Ditch His Wife, Catherine of Aragon, Because She Has Not Produced a Male Heir. (Tries The Ol’ Annulment Scheme).
- The Pope Says “No”.
- Henry Decides to Create His Own Church, Has His Marriage Annulled and Helps Himself to the Catholic Church’s Land.
- Hence, the Church of England – Anglicism.

Christianity in Europe 1533

- Despite the Reformation, The Roman Catholic Church is the Primary Christian Church in Europe With Far More Adherents. Italy, Spain, France, Portugal, Ireland (except for the Northern Bit!) Poland Writ Large and the South and East of Germany.
- The Reformed (Calvinism) Churches – Are Growing in Parts of Switzerland, France (Huguenots), the Netherlands and Most Famously, Scotland.
- Lutheranism – Growing in the North and East of Germany
- Anglicism Established in England by Decree
- Anabaptists – Scattered Here and There.

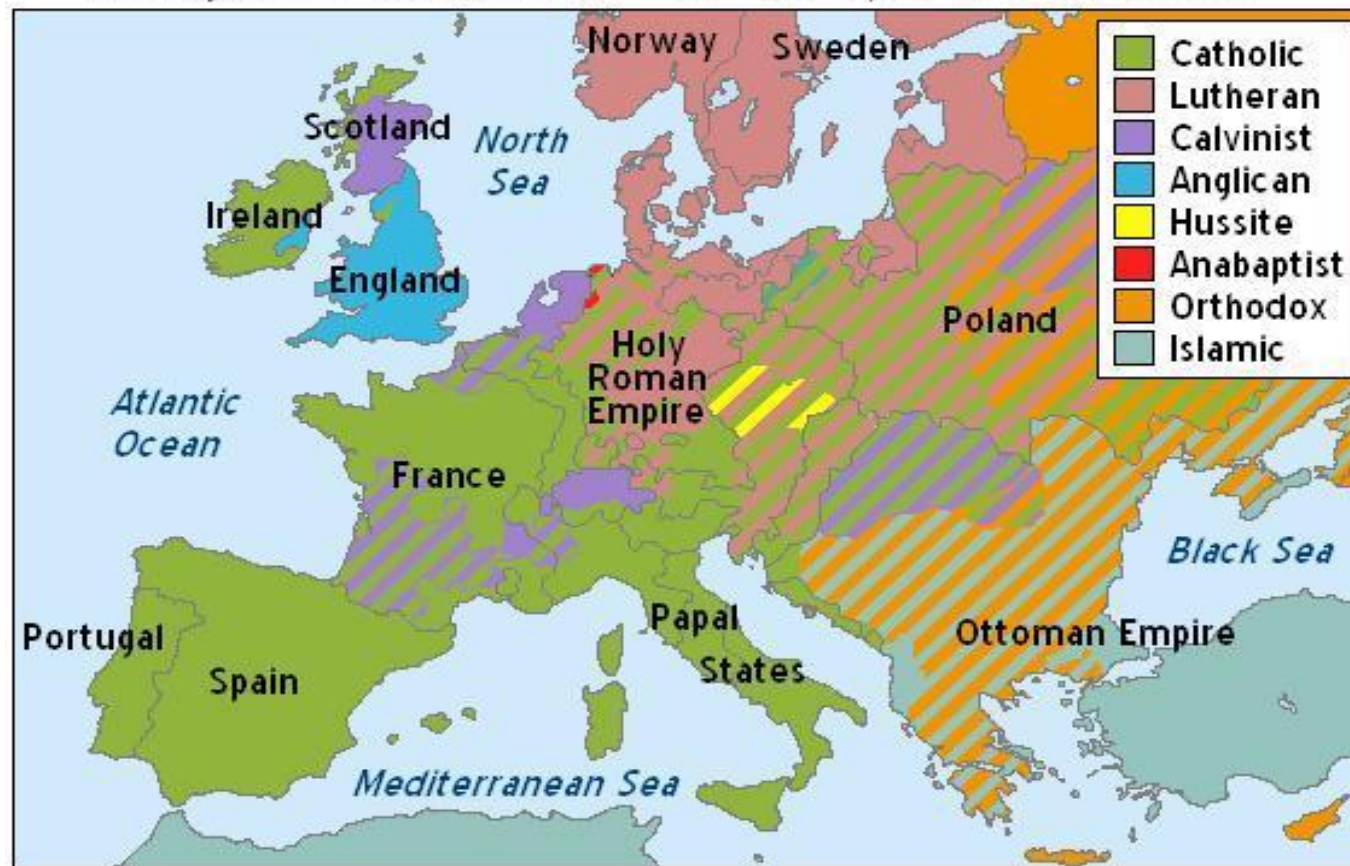
Crush the Heretics!

1546 - 1598

- The Catholic Church And Holy Roman Empire Attack Protestant States on the Principle That All Protestants Are Heretics (and for Political Control)
- Peace Is Agreed to in 1555 in Which Lutheranism is Recognized (Calvinists Still Heretics) and Establishes the Principle of Cuius Regio, Eius Religio – Let the Prince Decide the Religion.
- In France 1559-1598 Huguenots (Calvinists) Have Broad Support with the Bourgeoise and Nobility.
- However, When Huguenot Henry IV Becomes King, He Becomes Catholic and Decides in 1598 to Make Catholicism the Official Religion of France While Granting Toleration of the Huguenots.

Religious Divisions in Europe 1555

Religious Divisions of Europe as of 1555



Holy Roman Empire 1500



War is Over! (if you want it). Apparently Not. 1618-1648

- During the Period 1555-1618, Catholicism Regained Much of Its Lost Territory.
- In 1618 Several Catholic Representatives Of the Holy Roman Empire Were Unceremoniously Tossed Out the Window of A Prague Castle By Some Protestants. The Incident Known as “The Defenestration.”
- They Survived But the Incident Sparked the Thirty Year’s War Between Protestant versus Catholic States. Catholic France Sides With Protestants.
- The Thirty Years’ War Was Very Ugly and Destructive – A Third of Germans Killed.
- Peace in 1648 Recognizes Both Lutheranism and Calvinism (But Not the Poor Anabaptists.)

The British Isles

1560-1660

- Scotland – Conflict Between the Calvinist/Nationalists and the Catholics/French Sympathizers Occurs.
- The Calvinists, Known As Presbyterians Win and John Knox Becomes Head of the Church of Scotland in 1560. Go Presbyterians!
- England – Tension Between Anglican King, Charles I, and Puritan Parliament Results in the English Civil War (1642-1651)
- Parliament Wins Only To Have the Monarchy, and Anglicanism, Restored 1660.
- The Puritan Revolution Spawned New Christian Sects in England Such As the Congregationalists, Baptists, and Quakers (Society of Friends)

Map of Christianity 1648



By the Way, Whatever Happened to the Eastern Orthodox Church? 1648

- Remember the Eastern Orthodox Church? We Last Saw Them When the Ottoman Turks (Islamic) Conquered Constantinople in 1453.
- All of the Eastern Roman Empire (Byzantium), The Heart of the Early Christian Church, Was Muslim By This Time.
- The Ottoman Turks Take Over the Greece and the Balkans and Besiege Vienna Unsuccessfully in 1683 -- but Left Behind Coffee.
- The Ottomans Allow the Eastern Orthodox to Practice Christianity; Many Convert to Islam. Greece Does Not Win Independence Till the 19th Century.
- The Orthodox Church Became Firmly Established in Russia which Remained Beyond the Control of the Turks. Moscow is Deemed “The Third Rome”.

Let's Leave Europe...We Can Always Go Back.

- To Review:
- After the Collapse of the Eastern Roman Empire in the East at the Hands of Islam, Western Europe Becomes the Bastion of Christianity.
- The Catholic Church Becomes An Extremely Powerful Institution in Directing the Lives of People and Societies.
- The Protestant Movement Unleashed the Forces of Individual Conscience, Freedom of Choice, Equality and Demand for Toleration.
- As European Societies Have Grown Wealthier, Consumer Demand Has Increased as Well as Military (Guns, Armor) and Naval Technologies.

Land Ho!



- Christopher Columbus Stumbles Upon 16 Million Square Miles of Land.
- The Indigenous Peoples of Those Lands Are Armed with Bows and Arrows.
- They Aren't Christians...Yet.

The Spread of Christianity – South America

- Spain, By Virtue of Columbus' Discovery, Claimed the Americas for Herself.
- To Forestall Wrangling Between Two Catholic Powers, the Pope Brokered a Line of Demarcation Through South America which is Why Brazil Speaks Portuguese and Rest of South America, Spanish.
- All Solidly Roman Catholic – Except for Pockets of Different Religious Views, Over Time, Here and There.

The Spread of Christianity – South America

The Indigenous Population

- In Spanish America, The Popes Effectively Ceded Ecclesiastical Power to Spain – The Spanish Crown Could Appoint Bishops, etc.
- The Spanish Required the Native Americans to Convert to Christianity and Submit to Spanish Authority.
- At the Same Time, The Spanish Monarchy and the Church Were Concerned With the Treatment of The Native Americans. “Are They Not Human Beings?” “Are You Not Obligated to Love Them As You Love Yourself?” The Pope Paul III in 1537 Forbade the Enslavement of Native Americans.
- The Settlers, However, Had a Different Perspective.
- Even If They Converted To Christianity (and Hundreds of Thousands Did), The Native Americans Were Still Forced Into Harsh “Labor Camps.” There Was Money to Be Made. Labor Was Needed.
- Forced Labor and Especially Disease Decimated the Native Populations.

The Spread of Christianity – South America Slavery

- Because the Land Routes to Asian Markets Were Controlled by Muslims, Europeans Developed Trade Routes and Ports Around Africa to Enhance Trade with Southeast Asia.
- The number of Indigenous People Was Not Sufficient to Satisfy the Demand For Labor in South America for Lucrative Agricultural Products Such As Sugar Cane. Slave Merchants Saw the Opportunity.
- By 1533, Tens of Thousands of Africans Were Being Imported as Slaves to South America.
- Though Some Clergy Protested the Slavery of Africans, the Church Did Not Prohibit the Practice Though It Did Require Baptism and Allowed Slaves to Attend Mass.
- The Abolition of Slavery Did Not Occur Until the Wars of Independence in the early 19th Century. Brazil, by Far the Largest Importer of African Slaves, Did Not Abolish Slavery Until 1888.

The Spread of Christianity – North America

- Spain Populated New Spain With Catholic Missions: Florida, Texas, California and In Between.
- On the East Coast, the British, Dutch, and French Found Colonies: Protestant for the First Two (With One Exception), Catholic for the Latter.
- The British Colonies and Later the United States Will Attract and Create a Plethora of Protestant Denominations: Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists, Anabaptists, Society of Friends, Reformed German, Moravians etc. This was Discussed in A Previous Class “Why So Many Denominations”

Religious Foundations In America*

1607-1681

*New France is Catholic

Colony	Date	Original Founding Religion
Virginia	1607	Anglican
Massachusetts	1620	Reformed (Puritan)
New York	1624	Reformed (Dutch Reformed)
Maryland	1634	Roman Catholic
Delaware	1638	Lutheran (Swedish)
Carolina	1663	Anglican
Pennsylvania	1682	Society of Friends (aka Quakers)

The Spread of Christianity – North America Indigenous People

- The Relations Between Native Americans and the European Christian Colonists Was Not Always Cordial. (This Is an Example of an Understatement).
- The Conflict Over Land Rights Led to Wars and Enslavement (Early Colonial Times).
- Missionaries Sought to Convert Native Americans With Mixed Success.
- American Indian Boarding Schools, Often an Extension of a Missionary, Were Established Starting in the Mid 17th Century With a View to Immerse Native American Children in European/American Culture: Hair Cut, Uniforms, English Only, and a Christian Education.

The Spread of Christianity – North America Indigenous People



HENRY STANDING BEAR
WOUNDED YELLOW ROBE
CHAUNCY YELLOW ROBE

SIoux BOYS AS THEY ENTERED THE SCHOOL IN 1883.

THREE YEARS LATER.

The Most Famous Student From The Carlisle Indian Industrial School



The Spread of Christianity – North America Slavery

- Economic Success in the Colonial Era Was Based on Labor Intensive Agriculture (Tobacco, Rice, Indigo,). Much Labor Was Needed. Importing Slaves From Africa Starting in 1619 in Virginia Appeared to Be the Solution.
- There Were No Laws Addressing Slavery: From England There Was a Widespread Principle That Christians Were Prohibited From Holding Fellow Christians as Slaves.
- In 1667 Virginia Passed a Law Declaring that Baptism Declaring that Conversion to Christianity Did Not Change the Status of a Person From Slave to Free.
- You Know the Rest.

The Spread of Christianity Around the World

The Missionaries

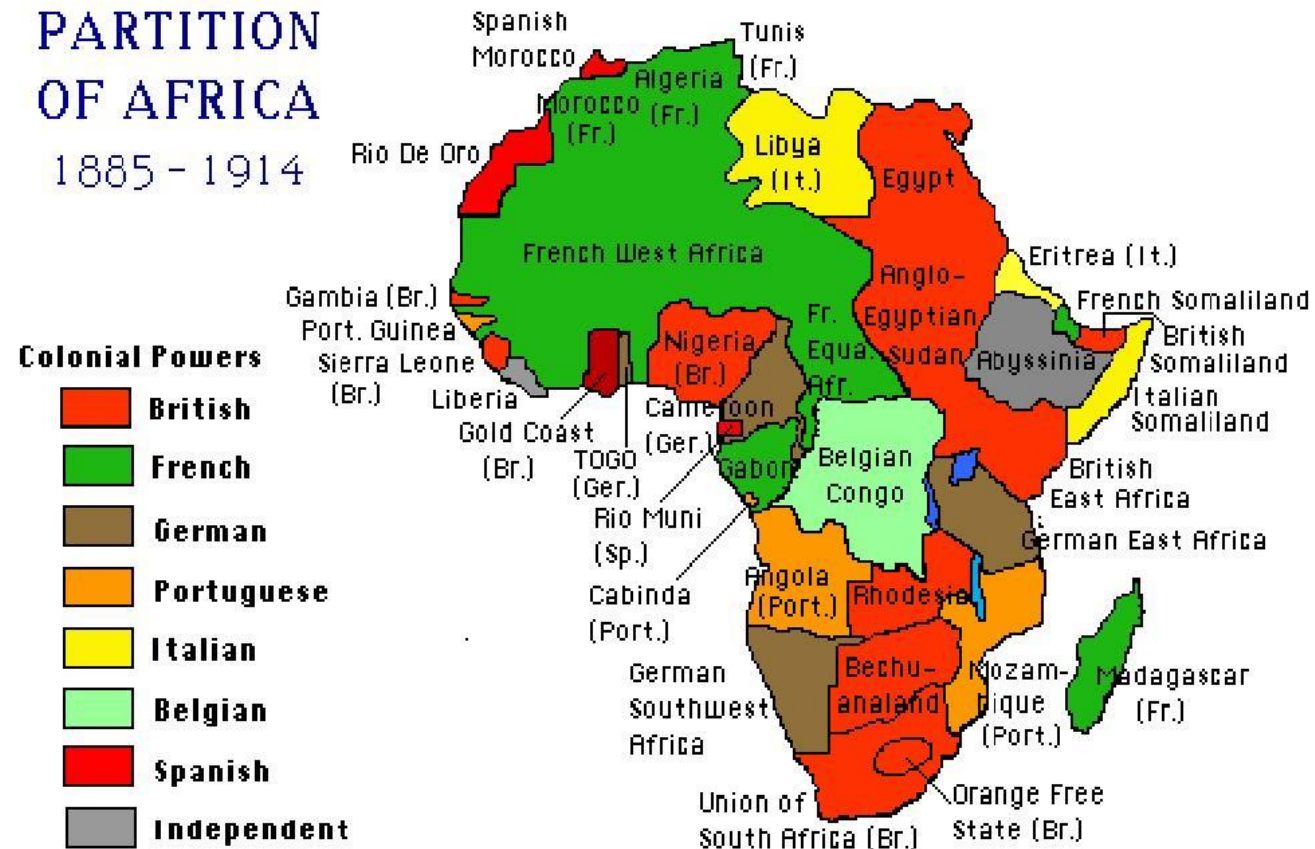
- Well into the 18th Century, Colonizing Governments Typically Supported Missionaries in an Attempt to Convert the Subject Peoples to Christianity as a “Civilizing” Force. Save Souls and Encourage Passivity.
- From the Late 18th Though To The 20th Centuries, Independent Missionary Societies Developed. These Societies Were Voluntary and Not Direct Extensions of Churches or Government Bodies. Their Mission Was to Save Souls and Alleviate Suffering.
- Examples Include: Founded in 1792, the Particular Baptist Society for the Propagating the Gospel Amongst the Heathen (Name Later Changed). Methodists, Presbyterians and Congregationalists founded the London Missionary Society . Congregationalists in the United States Founded the American Board of the Commissioners for Foreign Missions, etc.
- European and the U.S. Government Adopted a Neutral and Even Hostile Stance Toward Missionaries Because of Their Independence.

The Spread of Christianity – Africa

- The European Powers of France, Italy and Great Britain Took Control of Mainly Islamic North Africa in the 19th Century.
- Conversion to Christianity in Islamic Countries Met with Little Success (noting that Coptic Christians in Egypt are a Significant Minority),
- By the early 20th Century The European Powers Divided All of Sub Saharan Africa into Colonies.
- Missionaries From the U.S. and Europe Followed the Colonization and by 1914 There Were Christian Churches in Every Colony Both in the Cities and in Many Remote Villages.
- There Was Great Success In Converting Sub-Saharan Africa to Christianity – By 2022 There Were 700 Million Christians in Africa.

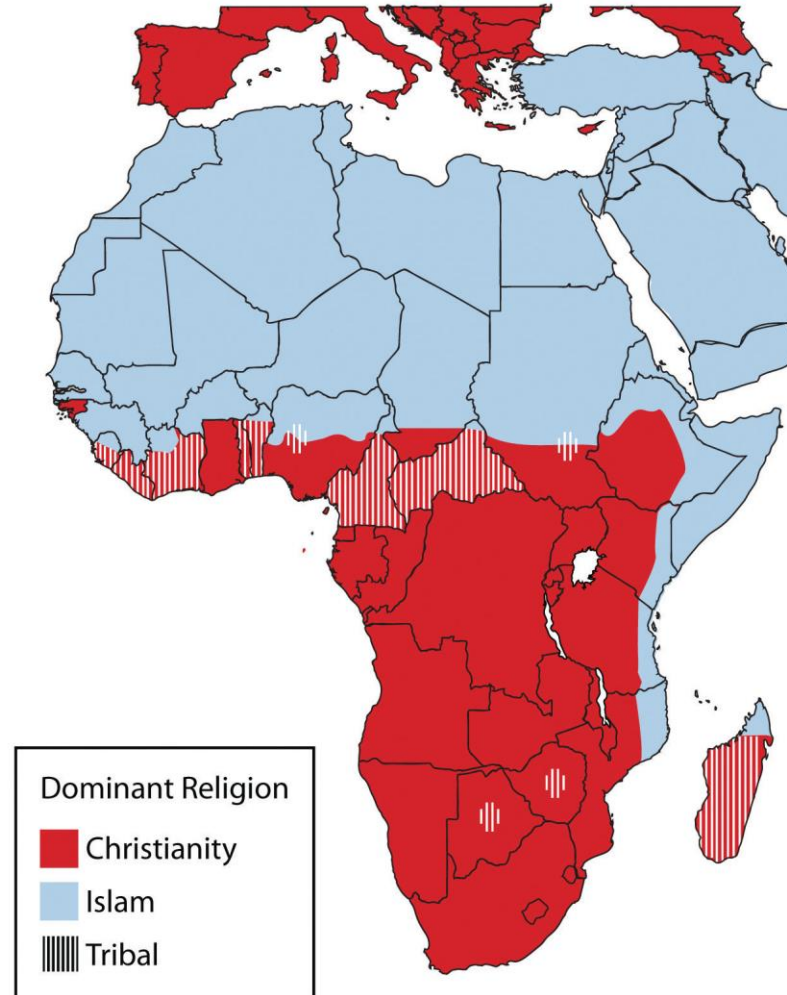
European Colonies Africa 1914

PARTITION OF AFRICA 1885 - 1914

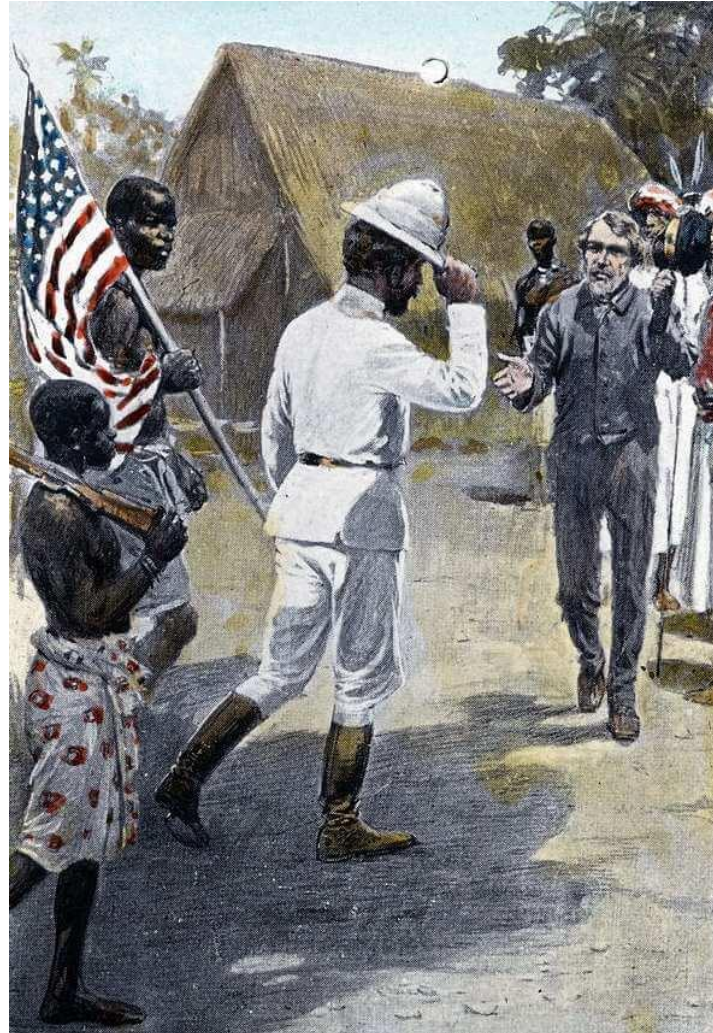


A Map of Africa (1914), showing the extent of colonization

Christianity in Africa



“Dr. Livingston, I Presume?”



The Spread of Christianity – Asia (A Seriously Big Place)

- Beyond the Middle East, Christianity was Introduced Into Asia During the Roman Empire. Armenia Adopted Christianity as Its State Religion in 301.
- Further Spread of Christianity Followed Trading Routes From Europe to the Indian Subcontinent and Far East and as Europeans Established Colonies in India, Burma, Hong Kong, (British), Indochina (French), the Philippines (Spanish).
- Both Catholic and Protestant Missionary Movement Had Some Success (South Korea for Example)
- Foreign Intervention Was Resented as Nationalism Developed as Witnessed by Boxer Rebellion in China in the 19th Century and Communist/Nationalist Success in China, North Korea and Vietnam in the 20th Century.
- Christianity is about 13% of the Total Population of Asia (includes Russia).

Summary Part Three

- 1500 The Roman Catholic Church Needs Reforming
- 1100-1400 Challenges to Papal Authority Are Made
- 1517 Martin Luther Sparks the Reformation
- 1546 – 1648 Religious Wars in Europe; Europe Now Catholic and Protestant
- 1492+ South America Becomes Catholic; Indigenous Populations and Africans Exploited
- 1607+ North America Becomes Predominantly Protestant; Indigenous Populations and Africans Exploited; Christianity Spreads to Africa and Asia
- 2024 Christianity the Largest Religion in the World – For Now

Christianity: Where We Are Now

- To Come Full Circle: Christianity is the Largest Religion in the World with Approximately 2.4 Billion Adherents.
- Islam Has About 1.9 Billion Adherents; Nonreligious Agnostic/Atheist/Secular 1.2 Billion Adherents (?)
- Christianity Is the Dominant Religion In Europe, North and South America, Australasia, and is the Largest Religion in Africa.
- Does Size Matter?

Christianity: The Future?

- According to the Pew Research Center: By 2050
 - The Number of Muslims Will Equal the Number of Christians.
 - Atheists/Agnostics etc. Though Increasing in the United States, Will Make Up a Declining Share of the World's Population
 - In Europe, Muslims Will Make up 10% of the Population
 - In the U.S. , Christians Will Decline From More than three-quarters of the Population to Two-Thirds in 2050.
 - 40% of Christians Will Live in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Does This Matter?

Closing Thoughts About the History of Christianity Series

- Well, You Can't Change History –
- It's Like Ancestry.Com - It Can't Change Who I am, But It Helps Explain How I Got Here.
- Some Takeaways:
 - Part One - The Extraordinary Conversions of The Apostles, Paul and the Pagans. The Growth of Christianity in the Roman Empire.
 - Part Two – The Inexorable Growth and Impact of the Roman Catholic Church within Europe; the Collapse of the Eastern Orthodox Church as a Result of the Growth of Islam.
 - Part Three – The Seeming Necessity for the Reformation and the Global Growth of Christianity by Force and By Choice. Choice is Better.