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The 25 Most Influential People in the Post-Apostolic Christian Church



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Christian Theology and History Adult Sunday School Courses

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I've always been a strong believer in adult Sunday School classes and Bible studies in our churches. And many churches have quality, Biblically-based adult-focused programs. Unfortunately, just as many churches tend to downplay adult education, focusing on children's education (not a bad thing in itself), or focusing on the needs of the "unchurched", where topics such as church history and theology are often purposely ignored.

Yet there is a strong need for adult education focused on both the Bible and the basic tenets and history of the Faith. Among the reasons:

- Not all adults come from a strong childhood background in the church – adult Sunday School classes/Bible studies may be their first serious introduction to what Christianity is all about
- Christianity (and especially Evangelical Christianity) is under constant attack from the media and popular culture (movies, music, etc.). We need to give fellow Christians the tools to defend the Faith against attack (or to provide a "ready defense" as Peter says in 1 Peter 3:15)
- Even adult Christians that have a strong Biblical background often know little about the origins and history of their Faith

To better meet the needs of adult Christians (both those mature in their Faith, and those just starting out in the "School of Christ"), I've written a series of courses that focus on the history of the Christian Church (including the Jewish roots), as well as the development of doctrine in the Church. The topics represented in these courses are intended to both further the participant's walk in the Faith, as well as serve as a starting point for Christian apologetics.

While the primary purpose of these courses is for use in churches, they also may be useful for High School and College projects, especially the courses focused primarily on historical aspects.

One note: these courses are primarily written from an Evangelical Protestant viewpoint (I come from a Reformed Church background), but I hope I've given ample time to other points of view throughout the various courses.

Cover photo: Southwest porch of Canterbury Cathedral (Photo by Robert C. Jones)

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Contents

Note: This free .pdf only contains people #1 through #10. To get the complete list of 25, please order the accompanying book, or the accompanying Teacher's Pack/PowerPoint.

Contents.....	4
Introduction.....	5
#10 - Tertullian.....	6
#9 - Eusebius.....	8
#8 - John Paul II.....	9
#7 - Billy Graham.....	11
#6 - Charles Martel ("The Hammer").....	12
#5 - Martin Luther.....	13
#4 - John Calvin.....	15
#3 - Augustine.....	18
#2 - Athanasius.....	20
#1 - Constantine.....	21
Sources.....	24
About the Author.....	26

Introduction

How did the Christian church become what it is today? How did a tiny splinter group of Judaism in the First Century A.D. become the dominant religion in the world 2,000 years later? One way to examine these questions is by examining key individuals in the history of the church. This book will look at 25 of the most influential people in the post-apostolic history of Christianity. Most of the ones who made the list had a positive impact, but one tarnished the reputation of Christianity for hundreds of years.

Any list of influential people is by nature subjective. You can probably think of people who didn't make the list, or that you would have rated higher or lower. Was Constantine rated too high? Should Aquinas have been on the list? Origen? Should Luther have been listed higher than Calvin? However, lists are useful starting points for discussion. Why would you have listed someone higher or lower? Who would you have added (or subtracted) to the list?

The 25 people that I chose break down into these categories:

- 3 were warriors
- 2 were composers
- 7 were noted theologians
- 2 were the greatest preachers of their day
- 2 were mystics
- 9 were monks, or started religious orders
- 4 started Protestant denominations or movements
- 2 were popes
- 12 were saints
- 8 were Doctors of the Church

I hope you enjoy this look at key figures in the history of the (post-apostolic) Christianity Church.

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#10 - Tertullian

Date	Events
c. 160	Born in Carthage
c. 197	Tertullian, a life-long pagan, converts to Christianity
c. 197	Writes his <i>Apology</i> (<i>Apologeticus adversus gentes pro Christianis</i>), essentially inventing Christian apologetics
c. 200	Ordained as a priest in Carthage (some dispute this)
c. 206	Becomes a Montanist
c. 220	Death of Tertullian



Tertullian¹

Tertullian is sometimes called “the Father of Latin Christianity”. He is certainly one of the fathers of Christian apologetics (along with, perhaps, Irenaeus). He was renowned as a scholar and author, writing extensively against Gnosticism and in defense of Christianity. One example of his anti-Gnosticism works is below:

For as they are heretics, they cannot be true Christians, because it is not from Christ that they get that which they pursue of their own mere choice, and from the pursuit incur and admit the name of heretics. Thus, not being Christians, they have acquired no right to the Christian Scriptures; and it may be very fairly said to them, “Who are you? When and whence did you come? As you are none of mine, what have you to do with that which is mine? Indeed, Marcion, by what right do you hew my wood? By whose

¹Library of Congress <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/LAMB2006001701/>

permission, Valentinus, are you diverting the streams of my fountain?" (Tertullian, *The Prescription against Heretics*, translated by Rev. Peter Holmes, D.D.²)

Valentinus was the head of a 2nd century Gnostic sect. Marcion (c. 85 - c. 160 A.D.) was a Gnostic ship owner, who believed that there were two Gods in the universe (dualism) - the God depicted in the Old Testament, and the God represented by Jesus in the New Testament. He believed that the God of Goodness took pity on man and sent his Son to rescue him from the evil god. He believed also that Jesus was a spirit (docetism) and did not appear in the flesh. As such, he rejected the infancy narratives about Jesus, as well as the crucifixion and resurrection.

On this topic, Tertullian wrote:

...it was that Marcion actually chose to believe that He was a phantom, denying to Him the reality of a perfect body. Now, not even to His apostles was His nature ever a matter of deception. He was truly both seen and heard upon the mount; true and real was the draught of that wine at the marriage of (Cana in) Galilee; true and real also was the touch of the then believing Thomas... (Tertullian, *A Treatise on the Soul*, translated by Rev. Peter Holmes, D.D.³)

To accommodate these (and other) Gnostic beliefs, Marcion created a list of books that he considered authoritative. These included a condensed version of the Gospel of Luke (lacking the Nativity and Resurrection scenes), and 10 of Paul's letters. Tertullian commented (somewhat ironically) on Marcion's pre-canonical list of books :

Marcion expressly and openly used the knife, not the pen, since he made such an excision of the Scriptures as suited his own subject-matter. (Tertullian, *Prescription Against Heretics*, translated by Rev. Peter Holmes, D.D.⁴)

Somewhat ironically, Tertullian, the great defender of Christian orthodoxy against heretics, joined a schismatic (not Gnostic) sect called the Montanists (founded by Montanus c. 156 in Phrygia, Asia Minor – modern day Turkey) later in his life. Among the characteristics of Montanism:

- Like the followers of Peter Waldo and St. Francis in the Middle Ages, Montanus wanted a return to simpler church, as well as a more ascetic focus for believers (fasting, celibacy, separation from the world)
- Like the later Protestant Reformers, he questioned the authority of church hierarchy, and believed that the Word of God was the only true authority, revealed through the prophets
- He fostered a very charismatic environment, and believed that the Holy Spirit spoke directly through him, and his followers

So what was the problem, as far as the established church was concerned? The main issue seemed to be about the fact that the Montanists believed that they were receiving Divine Revelation, like the Old Testament prophets. Some of the bishops of the time (such as Serapion, bishop of Antioch) were concerned that such prophesying might be viewed on the same level as Holy Scripture – and could interfere with people's understanding of the core message of the Scriptures.

²*The Ante-Nicene Fathers Volume 3*, Edited by A. Roberts and J Donaldson, Ages Software 1999

³*Ibid*

⁴*Ibid*

During the time Tertullian was a Montanist, he wrote in support of the doctrine of Trinitarianism, and in fact may have been the first Latin writer to use the word “Trinity”.

Before we leave Tertullian, one other area that he commented on is worth mentioning. According to the Roman Catholic Church, Christianity came to Britain/England around 597 when St. Augustine of Canterbury was sent to England as a missionary from Pope Gregory the Great. However, legend records that Joseph of Arimathea started a church in Glastonbury, England in 63 A.D. Tertullian seems to support the idea of a pre-Canterbury Christianity in Britain, in his *An Answer to the Jews*, written in the late second century:

All the limits of the Spains, and the diverse nations of the Gauls, and **the haunts of the Britons — inaccessible to the Romans, but subjugated to Christ**, and of the Sarmatians, and Dacians, and Germans, and Scythians, and of many remote nations, and of provinces and islands many, to us unknown, and which we can scarce enumerate? In all which places the name of the Christ who is already come reigns, as of Him before whom the gates of all cities have been opened, and to whom none are closed, before whom iron bars have been crumbled, and brazen gates opened. (Tertullian, *An Answer to the Jews*, translated by Rev. Peter Holmes, D.D.; Emphasis added)⁵

Because of his sojourn with the Montanists, Tertullian is neither a Saint or a Doctor of the Church, but his writings on apologetics, the Trinity, and his anti-Gnostic works are an important part of the Early Church Fathers library.

#9 - Eusebius

Date	Events
c. 260	Birth of Eusebius, possibly in Caesarea Maritima
c. 280s	Eusebius becomes a student of Pamphilus
c. 314	Appointed Bishop of Caesarea Maritima
c. 290s	First drafts of <i>Ecclesiastical History</i> completed
325	Eusebius plays an important role in the Council of Nicaea, including giving an opening address
c. 337	Writes the biography <i>Life of Constantine</i>
c. 339	Death of Eusebius

Eusebius, Bishop of Caesarea from c. 314 to his death c. 339, was a prominent churchmen in the early part of the 4th century, concurrent with the rise of Constantine to be emperor of the combined Roman Empire. He was seemingly a friend, or at least a trusted associate of Constantine after the latter assumed the title of emperor. Constantine, for example, gave Eusebius the honor of giving the opening speech at the Council of Nicaea, convened in 325 A.D. To settle the Arianism verses Trinitarianism conflict raging in the Christian world at the time. While Eusebius was seemingly sympathetic to the views of Arius, he did not vote against the famous anti-Arian Creed which was produced as a result of the Council.

⁵*Ibid*



Ruins at Caesarea Maritima (Photo by Barbara Brim)

Eusebius wrote the first history of the Christian Church, named, simply, *Ecclesiastical History*. First drafts of the work appeared as early as the end of the 3rd century, although Eusebius continued to update it into the 4th century. In the preface, Eusebius discusses the fact that no one had attempted to write a comprehensive history of the church prior to *Ecclesiastical History*:

It is my purpose to write an account of the successions of the holy apostles, as well as of the times which have elapsed from the days of our Savior to our own; and to relate the many important events which are said to have occurred in the history of the Church; and to mention those who have governed and presided over the Church in the most prominent parishes, and those who in each generation have proclaimed the divine word either orally or in writing...This work seems to me of especial importance because I know of no ecclesiastical writer who has devoted himself to this subject; and I hope that it will appear most useful to those who are fond of historical research. (Eusebius, *Church History*, Book 1, Chapter 1, translated by Arthur Cushman McGiffert, Ph.D.⁶)

As part of his church history, Eusebius produced a list of “Accepted”, “Disputed/Rejected”, and “Absurd and Impious” books at a time when there was no fixed New Testament canon. The “Accepted” list is similar to our modern New Testament, with a few exceptions – he didn’t include James, Jude, Hebrews, 2 Peter, 2 John or 3 John. He included Revelation on both his list of “Accepted” books, as well as his “Disputed/Rejected” list. While not an exact match with the New Testament canon fixed by his rival Athanasius in 367 A.D., it was certainly an influence, and was the first authoritative attempt at fixing a canon.

#8 - John Paul II

Date	Events
1920	Karol Józef Wojtyła born in Wadowice, Poland
August 6, 1944	Barely escapes “Black Sunday” in Krakow, Poland when 8,000 men and boys are taken into custody by the Nazis
1946	Ordained as a priest
1958	Appointed auxiliary bishop of Kraków by Pope Pius XII, and then Bishop of Ombi
1962	Attends Second Vatican Council
1964	Appointed Archbishop of Kraków by Pope Paul VI

⁶The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers Second Series, Volume 1, by Philip Schaff, editor, Ages Software 1999

Date	Events
1967	Appointed to College of Cardinals by Paul VI
1967	Helps craft the encyclical <i>Humanae Vita</i> , which forbids abortion and artificial birth control
1978 - 2005	Pope John Paul II; first non-Italian pope since 1522
1979	Pope John Paul II's trip to Poland helps spark the formation of the <i>Solidarity</i> movement, which eventually brings Communism down in Poland
1979	First pope to visit the White House (with President Jimmy Carter) and Mexico
1981	Attempted assassination by a Turkish gunman; a later Italian investigatory commission viewed that the Soviet Union was behind the attempt
1982	First Pope to visit United Kingdom; visits with the Queen, the head of the Church of England
1992	Galileo pardoned by Pope John Paul II
1994	Establishes official diplomatic ties with the State of Israel
1995	Speaks to an estimated crowd of 5,000,000 in Manila
1999	Visit to Romania, the first time a pope had visited an Eastern Orthodox country since the Schism in 1054
October 31, 1999	"The Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification" is signed by the Catholic Church and the Lutheran Church, seemingly bringing the Catholic Church closer to Martin Luther's view of salvation by "faith alone"
2000	First pope to visit the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem; apologizes for past persecution by the Roman Catholic Church against Jews
2004	Receives Presidential Medal of Freedom from President George W. Bush, in a ceremony at the Vatican
2005	Death of Pope John Paul II in the Vatican
2009	Declared "Venerable", or "heroic in virtue" by Pope Benedict XVI

Pope John Paul II, born Karol Józef Wojtyła in Wadowice, Poland, served longer as pope than anyone else except Pope Pius IX. He was the first Polish pope, and the first non-Italian pope since 1522. He is renowned for reaching out to other faiths, including Judaism and Islam, as well as to other groups within Christianity (including Lutheran, Anglican and Eastern Orthodox). He visited many countries that either hadn't ever had a papal visit, or hadn't had one in hundreds of years, including Mexico, the United Kingdom, Israel, Romania and Egypt. He apologized for the actions of the Roman Catholic Church during the Inquisition, and pardoned Galileo in 1992.



“Pope John Paul II visit to U.S.” (Thomas J. O'Halloran, photographer)⁷

The primary reason for including Pope John Paul II in this list is for his role in the downfall of Communism in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. Pope John Paul II's trip to Poland in 1979 helped spark the formation of the *Solidarity* movement, which eventually brought Communism down in Poland. It also had a chain reaction effect, leading to the eradication of Communism in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union by the end of 1989. Communism, one of the great enemies and persecutors of Christianity in the history of the church, was brought to its knees by a simple Polish priest⁸.

#7 - Billy Graham

Date	Events
November 7, 1918	William Franklin "Billy" Graham, Jr. is born near Charlotte, North Carolina
1934	Graham becomes a Christian (age 16)
1944	Graham hosts his first radio show, ""Songs in the Night"
1949	Greater Los Angeles Revival runs for 8 weeks
1950	Billy Graham show "The Hour of Decision" begins – it would eventually be broadcast on 1,000 stations nation-wide
1950	Founding of Billy Graham Evangelistic Association (BGEA)
1954	Billy Graham crusade in London draws 2,000,000(!)
1954	Graham appears on the cover of <i>Time</i> magazine
1956	Billy Graham co-founds <i>Christianity Today</i>
1957	Many Fundamentalists break from Billy Graham because of his ecumenicalism and support for desegregation
1983	Receives Presidential Medal of Freedom from Ronald Reagan
1991	Graham speaks to 250,000 people in Central Park

⁷Library of Congress <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2003673987/>

⁸With a little help from Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher



Rev. Billy Graham⁹

Evangelicalism and Fundamentalism as we know them today were being formed in the mid-20th century in “parachurch” organizations, not linked to a specific denomination. An early example was in 1933 when Henrietta Mears founded Gospel Light Press, originally focused on Sunday School curriculum. Other Evangelical and Fundamentalist parachurch organizations would be formed in rapid succession, including Young Life (1941), the National Association of Evangelicals (1941) and Youth for Christ International (1945).

Youth for Christ International hired a young Southern Baptist preacher named Billy Graham in July 1945. Over the next year, Graham would preach in 47 of 48 states.

Graham’s career would really take off in 1949 during the Greater Los Angeles Revival. A now-famous memo from William Randolph Hearst was sent to reporters and newspapers around the country that said “puff Graham” (“puff” as in “play up someone in a favorable way”). Graham would soon be known throughout the United States and throughout the world as the most prominent Protestant preacher. In 1954, the Billy Graham Crusade in London drew 2,000,000(!) people.

The New York Crusade in 1957 would be an auspicious one for the future of Evangelicalism for two reasons. First, Evangelicals would use a new medium to spread their message when ABC televised the Billy Graham Crusade. Second, Billy Graham would speak out against segregation, and on one evening, he invited Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. to join him on the stage. Graham also extended a hand of fellowship to Roman Catholics. As a result, many Fundamentalists split from Billy Graham’s ministry, and the terms Evangelical and Fundamentalist came to no longer be used synonymously. However, the New York Crusade, which ran Memorial Day to Labor Day, was a huge success, with attendance of 2,000,000.

Billy Graham is also known as the “preacher to presidents”. Graham has had close relationships with every president since (and including) Dwight Eisenhower.

⁹ Library of Congress <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2004672755/>

To a large extent, it was Billy Graham who shepherded Protestantism into the electronic communications age, making effective use of radio and television as a platform for his sermons.

A good way of judging the impact of Billy Graham is through the number of people that he has reached in his ministry. According to Wikipedia:

Graham has preached in person to more people around the world than any protestant who has ever lived. As of 1993, more than 2.5 million people had stepped forward at his crusades to "accept Jesus Christ as their personal saviour." As of 2002, Graham's lifetime audience, including radio and television broadcasts, topped two billion.¹⁰

Prior to World War II, Europe was the heart of Christianity. Post World War II, America became the heart of Christianity, due in no small part to the evangelist Billy Graham.

#6 - Charles Martel ("The Hammer")

Date	Events
688	Birth of Charles in Herstal (modern Belgium)
c. 717	Charles becomes "Mayor of the Palace"
717-732	Charles wins a series of battles against foes both domestic and foreign
October 732	Defeats Abd-er-Rahman, Moslem Governor of Spain, at Tours
737	After the death of King Thierry IV, Charles unofficially rules France, under the title Duke and Prince of the Franks
741	Death of Charles Martel in Quierzy-sur-Oise, France
800	Charles Martel's grandson Charlemagne is crowned emperor of the Holy Roman Empire by the pope

It is easy to forget in modern times that by the time of the First Crusade, Islam had made alarming (from the point of view of Christendom) gains throughout the Middle East, North Africa, and even into Europe itself. Moslems had occupied the Holy Lands by the end of the 7th century, and had built the Dome of the Rock in c. 700 A.D. on top of one of the most sacred sites in Judaism. In the 8th century, Moslems attacked (unsuccessfully) Constantinople, the center of the Eastern Church, and took over Spain. Moslem armies had gotten as far into the heart of Europe as Tours, in modern day France, when they were finally checked in 732 A.D. by Charles Martel at the Battle of Tours.

If Charles Martel hadn't stopped the Moslem incursion into Europe in 732 A.D., there literally might not be any Christianity today. Edward Gibbons described the Moslem march into France, and the potential outcome had they not been stopped by Charles Martel:

A victorious line of march had been prolonged above a thousand miles from the rock of Gibraltar to the banks of the Loire; the repetition of an equal space would have carried the Saracens to the confines of Poland and the Highlands of Scotland; the Rhine is not more impassable than the Nile or Euphrates, and the Arabian fleet might have sailed without a naval combat into the mouth of the Thames. Perhaps the

¹⁰<http://www.wikipedia.org/>

interpretation of the Koran would now be taught in the schools of Oxford, and her pulpits might demonstrate to a circumcised people the sanctity and truth of the revelation of Mahomet.

From such calamities was Christendom delivered by the genius and fortune of one man. Charles, the illegitimate son of the elder Pepin, was content with the titles of mayor or duke of the Franks; but he deserved to become the father of a line of kings...The epithet of Martel, the hammer, which has been added to the name of Charles, is expressive of his weighty and irresistible strokes... (*The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, Volume 6*, by Edward Gibbon¹¹)

Toward the end of his life, Charles Martel was a benefactor of Saint Boniface, who helped Christianize Germany.

While Charles was not always a friend of the Church in France, in the moment of its greatest peril, Charles Martel saved the Church from being swept away by the tide of Islam.

#5 - Martin Luther

Date	Events
1483	Born in Eisleben, Saxony
1505/07	Becomes Augustinian monk; ordained as a priest
1512	Doctorate in Theology; Professor of Biblical Literature at Wittenburg University
1517	Protests sale of indulgences by Pope Leo X
October 31, 1517	Tacks 95 theses to door of Wittenburg Castle
1521	Luther excommunicated
April 17/18, 1521	Council (Diet) of Worm, convened by Charles V, Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire. Luther ordered to recant. Luther replied, "Here I stand. I can do no other."
1521-1522	Luther in hiding at Wartburg Castle; translates New Testament into German, and battles with the Devil
1527	Writes "A Mighty Fortress is Our God" (Luther wrote a total of 41 hymns)
1528	Publishes "Large Catechism", "Small Catechism"
1530	Luther is the doctrinal inspiration for the Augsburg Confession
1534	Publishes German Bible - 100,000 copies of the New Testament printed in Wittenberg during his lifetime
February 18, 1546	Dies in Eisleben
October 31, 1999	"The Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification" is signed by the Catholic Church and the Lutheran Church, seemingly bringing the Catholic Church closer to Martin Luther's view of salvation by "faith alone"

¹¹The Ages Digital Library Collections, 1999



Luther burns the papal bull of excommunication¹²

On October 31, 1517, an obscure Augustinian monk named Martin Luther tacked his 95 theses to the door of Wittenburg Castle in Germany. While the 95 Theses was essentially a laundry list of things that annoyed Martin Luther about the Church of the day (especially focusing in on the sale of indulgences), in time, using the then revolutionary technology of the printing press, the theological views of Martin Luther would be known throughout Europe, and would be the spark that ignited the Protestant Reformation.

In April of 1521, the Council (Diet) of Worms was convened by Charles V, Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire. Luther was ordered to recant his theological views (which included a “priesthood of believers” and “salvation through faith alone”). At Worms, both Church and State were arrayed against Luther. His simple reply after two days of cross-examination changed the course of history forever.

“Here I stand. I can do no other.”

It would be hard to overstate the effect of Martin Luther. By successfully refuting the pope and his bull of excommunication (1520), Luther lessened the hegemony of the Roman Church over Europe. By successfully refuting the Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, Luther helped bring about the rise of nationalism. And, of course, Luther was the spark that ignited the Reformation, which forever changed the face of Christianity in the world.

Luther’s influence continues in modern times. On October 31, 1999 in Augsburg, a Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification was signed by the Lutheran World Federation and the Catholic Church. Among the contents:

Together we confess: By grace alone, in faith in Christ’s saving work and not because of any merit on our part, we are accepted by God and receive the Holy Spirit, who renews our hearts while equipping and calling us to good works.¹³

This understanding of justification by faith would seemingly bring the Catholic Church closer to Luther’s interpretation.

Other legacies of Luther include:

- As the founder of the Lutheran Church, Martin Luther could view with satisfaction that there are over 65,000,000 Lutherans worldwide as of 2002¹⁴

¹²Library of Congress <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/94504464/>

¹³http://www.lutheranworld.org/Special_Events/EN/jd97e.pdf

¹⁴<http://www.wfn.org/2002/08/msg00041.html>

- Luther was the first to use the term "evangelical" to describe the essential Reformation theology. By some estimates, there are over 65 million evangelical Christians in the United States today.
- Luther was the first proponent of congregational hymn singing in church
- Luther wrote what many consider to be the greatest hymn of all time – *A Mighty Fortress is Our God*

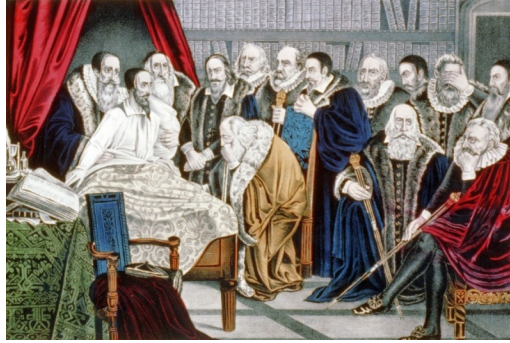
#4 - John Calvin

Date	Events
1509	Born in Noyon, France
1523	Studies for priesthood in Paris
1528/29	Studies law in Orleans, Bourges
1533	"Conversion" - breaks with Roman Church
1536	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publishes <i>Institutes of the Christian Religion</i> • Flees to Geneva Switzerland, which declared for the Reformed Faith two months before Calvin arrived • At the urging of William Farel, becomes an evangelical preacher in Geneva
April 23, 1538	Farel and Calvin deposed by the Great Council of Geneva – Calvin goes to Strasbourg, Farel to Basel
1541	Prodded by commercial interests, and fear of a revived Catholicism, the Great Council asks Farel and Calvin to return to Geneva
1541/1564	Theocratic ruler of the "City of God" in Geneva, Switzerland
1542	"Ecclesiastical Ordinances" passed - Government of the Reformed Church established (no bishops, cardinals, etc.)
1564	Death of Calvin, probably from tuberculosis
1610	Long after Calvin's death, Dutch Calvinist's debate Arminians (believers in free will) in Dort; the Calvinist's develop the acronym TULIP ¹⁵ to describe Calvin's theology.

John Calvin (1509-1564) was a Protestant theologian who fled persecution in France, and became an evangelical preacher in Geneva in 1536. Because of the strictness of his beliefs (and their strict application to everyday life), Calvin was deposed by the Great Council of Geneva in 1538. Calvin left Geneva for Strasbourg.

In 1541, prodded by commercial interests, and fear of a revived Catholicism, the Great Council asked Calvin to return to Geneva. Calvin would rule as the *de facto* theocratic ruler of Geneva for the next 25 years.

¹⁵Total Depravity, Unconditional Election, Limited Atonement, Irresistible Grace, Perseverance of the Saints



Death of Calvin¹⁶

Calvin was an early proponent of the separation of Church and State. While he believed that both Church and State were responsible to God, he felt that they should not rule over each other. He felt that Divine/Natural Law should form the foundation for all secular government, and that God establishes States to enforce Divine Laws.

Calvin believed that ministers, elders and deacons should be appointed by the people, and he had no bishops, cardinals, or popes in his ecclesiastical hierarchy. Calvin believed that democratically elected rulers are most likely to rule justly.

A somewhat controversial view of Calvin's given the times was his belief that the populace should obey the law, unless commanded to do what is contrary to God's Law. To Calvin, unjust rulers or dictators could be removed by the populace.

John Calvin was the preeminent theologian of his time, and perhaps one of the 2 or 3 greatest theologians in history. He continued Zwingli's Reformed Church, out of which the Presbyterian, European Reformed churches, French Huguenots, and English Puritans grew. He wrote the most complete theology of Protestantism ever written – *Christian Institutes*, which is still the foundation of much of Protestantism today. His views on God and work would later be known as the “Protestant Work Ethic”, which was a key to the success of the industrial revolution in the United States in the 19th century.

Calvin's views on the desirability of democratically electing leaders would later be adopted by the Presbyterian Church, and still exists today. Calvinists in 18th century America would influence the American Revolution and the U.S. Constitution.

Calvin's view that unjust rulers or dictators could be removed by the populace was put into very practical use in World War II resistance movements, and in anti-Communist resistance movements in Eastern Europe after World War II.

"If I had such servants my dominion would extend from sea to sea." - Pope Pius IV, c. 1564

¹⁶Library of Congress <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/91792458/>

#3 – Augustine

Date	Events
354 A.D.	Born at Tagaste, Numidia (Algeria)
Early 370s	Augustine as a dissolute student
Late 4 th century	Writes <i>Confessions</i>
387	Baptized by St. Ambrose on Easter
391	Ordained a priest
396-430	Bishop of Hippo (in modern times, Annaba, Algeria)
Late 4th/early 5th century	Augustine writes several letters and sermons which outline the rules for monastic life
411	Augustine soundly defeats the Donatists at the Council Of Carthage
413-426	Writes <i>City of God</i>
417-418	Augustine soundly defeats the Pelagian heresy
430	Dies in Hippo
unknown	Canonization
1295	Designated a Doctor of the Church by Boniface VIII



St. Augustine¹⁷

St. Augustine is perhaps the most influential of all of the Early Church Fathers, establishing core Church doctrine of many topics, including baptism, predestination, original sin, and salvation by grace. He wrote over 100 works, the most famous being *Confessions*, an autobiography of his wild younger years, and *City of God* and *On Christian Doctrine*, both theological tracts.

Augustine also greatly influenced the course of Western monasticism when in a letter to the nuns at Hippo (423), he outlined some basic precepts of monastic living. This letter, along with parts of other

¹⁷ <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/LAMB2006000838/>

writings of St. Augustine would be adapted into a rule during the Middle Ages, and used by both the Augustinian (or Austin) Canons and the Premonstatensian Canons.

Baptism

Largely through his anti-Donatist writings, Augustine established key Roman Catholic doctrines on baptism which are still in use today, including:

- Baptisms are conferred by Christ, not by the priest or bishop doing the baptism. Thus, baptisms conferred by impure or schismatic bishops could be accepted as “official”.
- Baptism is necessary for salvation
- Children are tainted with the original sin of Adam and Eve. Thus, infant baptisms are not only desirable but necessary in case of an untimely death.

If, therefore, as so many and such divine witnesses agree, neither salvation nor eternal life can be hoped for by any man without baptism and the Lord's body and blood, it is vain to promise these blessings to infants without them. (Augustine, *A Treatise On The Merits And Forgiveness of Sins and On the Baptism of Infants*, p. 172, translated by Peter Holmes, D.D. And Rev. Robert Ernest Wallis, PhD.¹⁸)

Original sin

While the concepts behind original sin date back to Paul of Tarsus and Irenaeus, the 2nd century Bishop of Lyon, perhaps its most famous proponent among the Early Church Fathers was Augustine. His views on original sin, predestination, and salvation by the grace of God were all common themes in Reformation theology a 1,000+ years later. Luther and Calvin especially were advocates of Augustinian theology on these topics.

Augustine wrote extensively on the topic of original sin as the English monk Pelagius denied the existence of original sin during Augustine's lifetime.

...even if there were in men nothing but original sin, it would be sufficient for their condemnation...even that sin alone which was originally derived unto men not only excludes from the kingdom of God, which infants are unable to enter (as they themselves allow), unless they have received the grace of Christ before they die, but also alienates from salvation and everlasting life, which cannot be anything else than the kingdom of God, to which fellowship with Christ alone introduces us. (Augustine, *A Treatise On The Merits And Forgiveness of Sins and On the Baptism of Infants*, p. 172, translated by Peter Holmes, D.D. And Rev. Robert Ernest Wallis, PhD., p. 154¹⁹)

“Confessions”

As a young man attending school in Carthage, Augustine lived a desultory and often licentious life, living with a woman for 13 years, and having an out of wedlock son by her named Adeodatus. He wrote an autobiography of his life (up to age 45ish) named *Confessions*, which also described his conversion to Christianity. It is the first autobiography ever written in the West, and is considered one of the great works of Western literature. Perhaps its most famous phrase is “Give me chastity and continency, but do not give it yet.”

¹⁸The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers First Series, Volume 5, by Philip Schaff, editor, Ages Software 1999

¹⁹Ibid

But I, miserable young man, supremely miserable even in the very outset of my youth, had entreated chastity of Thee, and said, "Grant me chastity and continency, but not yet." For I was afraid lest Thou shouldest hear me soon, and soon deliver me from the disease of concupiscence, which I desired to have satisfied rather than extinguished. (*The Confessions of St. Augustine*, translated by J.G. Pilkington, M.A.²⁰)

#2 - Athanasius

Date	Events
c. 295	Born in Alexandria
319 A.D.	Becomes a deacon in Alexandria
c. 318 A.D.	Writes <i>On the Incarnation</i>
325 A.D.	Athanasius soundly defeats Arius at the Council of Nicaea, upholding the doctrine of the Trinity
c. 328 A.D.	Becomes Bishop (Patriarch) of Alexandria
c. 330 A.D. +	Athanasius removed (by Arian enemies) – and returned – 5 times as Bishop of Alexandria
Between 356 A.D. and 362 A.D.	Writes <i>The Life of St. Anthony</i> , about the founder of monasticism
367 A.D.	In his "thirty-ninth Letter of Holy Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria, on the Paschal festival", Athanasius lists the books of the New Testament as we know them today
1568	Made a Doctor of the Church by Pius V



St. Athanasius²¹

Athanasius is perhaps the most influential of all the Early Church Fathers, with the possible exception of Augustine. From the point of view of the supporters of Trinitarianism, the young Athanasius is the hero of the 325 A.D. Council of Nicaea. He successfully argued that the Godhead is made up of three equal parts of the same substance (*homoousion*) – Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Thus, the Son is not on a lower

²⁰*The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers First Series, Volume 1*, by Philip Schaff, editor, Ages Software 1999

²¹Library of Congress <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/LAMB2006000184/>

level than the Father, and the Son is not a created being. As a result, Athanasius was known during his lifetime as the "Father of Orthodoxy".

In 367 A.D. "the thirty-ninth Letter of Holy Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria, on the Paschal festival" was written. It contains the New Testament canon as we know it today, in both the Roman Catholic and Protestant churches. And while the development of the New Testament canon was a long and arduous task that encompassed multiple centuries, one can say that it was Athanasius who first wrote down the exact list of books which appear in our Bible today as the New Testament.

...it seemed good to me also, having been urged thereto by true brethren, and having learned from the beginning, to set before you the books included in the Canon, and handed down, and accredited as Divine; to the end that any one who has fallen into error may condemn those who have led him as-tray; and that he who has continued steadfast in purity may again rejoice, having these things brought to his remembrance.

Again it is not tedious to speak of the [books] of the New Testament. These are, the four Gospels, according to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. After-wards, the Acts of the Apostles and Epistles (called Catholic), seven, viz. of James, one; of Peter, two; of John, three; after these, one of Jude. In addition, there are fourteen Epistles of Paul, written in this order. The first, to the Romans; then two to the Corinthians; after these, to the Galatians; next, to the Ephesians; then to the Philippians; then to the Colossians; after these, two to the Thessalonians, and that to the Hebrews; and again, two to Timothy; one to Titus; and lastly, that to Philemon. And besides, the Revelation of John. (Athanasius, *Festal Letter 39*²²)

During his 45 years as bishop of Alexandria, Athanasius was removed multiple times from his post by pro-Arian forces, but returned triumphantly each of the 5 times, once after appealing directly to Constantine.

In his spare time, Athanasius wrote the definitive biography of the man many people consider to be the founder of monasticism, in his *The Life of St. Anthony*.

#1 - Constantine

Date	Events
c. 272	Constantine is born in Naissus , Illyricum (modern day Serbia)
285	Emperor Diocletian names Maximian his co-emperor
303	Diocletian begins purge against Christians in the empire
305	Constantine named "tribune of the first order"
305	Constantine and his father Constantius begin their campaign in Britain
306	After the death of his father, Constantine is elevated to Augustus (senior emperor); Maxentius seizes power in Rome
312	Constantine sees a cross in the sky, and the words

²²The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers Second Series, Volume 4, by Philip Schaff, editor, Ages Software 1999

Date	Events
	CONQUER BY THIS. Constantine defeats Maxentius near the gates of Rome, pushing much of Maxentius's infantry into the Tiber River
313	Edict of Milan passed by Constantine, assuring religious liberty to Christians
324	After a series of battles, Constantine consolidates all power in the Empire, East and West, under his own control
325	Constantine orders the Council of Nicaea to be held to settle the question of Arianism verses Trinitarianism
337	Constantine is baptized shortly before his death

Constantine is sometimes referred to as the "Savior of Christianity". Prior to his conversion, Christianity was still a persecuted religion in the Roman Empire. As late as 303 A.D., the Emperor Diocletian launched a massive persecution campaign against Christians. With the conversion of Constantine in 312 A.D., Christianity became not only respectable, but also ascendant.

In 312 A.D., Constantine marched on Rome, in an attempt to take over control of the Western Empire. Arrayed against him were the forces of Maxentius, four times as strong. Constantine's battlefield conversion is described by ecclesiastical historian Eusebius, in his 4th-century *The Life of the Blessed Emperor Constantine*:

HOW, WHILE HE WAS PRAYING, GOD SENT HIM A VISION OF A CROSS OF LIGHT IN THE HEAVENS AT MID-DAY, WITH AN INSCRIPTION ADMONISHING HIM TO CONQUER BY THAT.

ACCORDINGLY he called on him with earnest prayer and supplications that he would reveal to him who he was, and stretch forth his right hand to help him in his present difficulties. And while he was thus praying with fervent entreaty, a most marvelous sign appeared to him from heaven, the account of which it might have been hard to believe had it been related by any other person...He said that about noon, when the day was already beginning to decline, he saw with his own eyes the trophy of a cross of light in the heavens, above the sun, and bearing the inscription, **CONQUER BY THIS. At this sight he himself was struck with amazement, and his whole army also**, which followed him on this expedition, and witnessed the miracle. (Eusebius, *The Life of the Blessed Emperor Constantine*, p. 665/66, translated by Ernest Cushing Richardson, PhD.²³)

After having a similar vision of Christ in his sleep, Constantine makes "the priests of God his counselors", and:

...deemed it incumbent on him to honor the God who had appeared to him with all devotion. And after this, being fortified by well-grounded hopes in Him, he hastened to quench the threatening fire of tyranny. (Eusebius, *The Life of the Blessed Emperor Constantine*, p. 668, translated by Ernest Cushing Richardson, PhD.²⁴)

Constantine, of course, goes on to defeat Maxentius, to assume total control of the Western Empire. By 325 A.D., Christianity had become the official religion of the combined Roman Empire (East and West).

²³*The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers Second Series, Volume 1*, by Philip Schaff, editor

²⁴*Ibid*

The impact of Constantine on Christianity cannot be overstated. By some estimates only 10% of the Roman Empire was Christian in the early 4th century. Constantine's conversion made Christianity a dominant and worldwide religion. Today there are 2,000,000,000 Christians in the world, thanks to Paul's missionary journeys and Constantine's conversion.



Column of Constantine the Great in Constantinople²⁵

²⁵Library of Congress <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2003667952/>

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Robert C. Jones grew up in the Philadelphia, Pennsylvania area. In 1981, he moved to the Atlanta, Georgia area, where he received a B.S. in Computer Science at DeVry Institute of Technology. From 1984-2009, Robert worked for Hewlett-Packard as a computer consultant. He now works as an author, researcher and videographer.

Robert is President of the Kennesaw Historical Society, and Director of Programs and Education for the Kennesaw Museum Foundation. He has written several books on Civil War and railroad themes including *Retracing the Route of Sherman's Atlanta Campaign and March to the Sea*, *Images of America: Kennesaw*, and *The W&A, the General, and the Andrews Raid: A Brief History*.

Robert is an ordained elder in the Presbyterian Church. He has written and taught numerous adult Sunday School courses. He is the author of *A Brief History of Protestantism in the United States*, *A Brief History of the Sacraments: Baptism and Communion*, *Heaven and Hell: In the Bible, the Apocrypha and the Dead Sea Scrolls*, *The Crusades and the Inquisition: A Brief History*, *Monks and Monasteries: A Brief History*, *The 25 Most Influential People in the Post-Apostolic Christian Church* and *Meet the Apostles: Biblical and Legendary Accounts*.

Robert has also written several books on ghost towns in the Southwest, including *Death Valley Ghost Towns – As They Appear Today* and *Ghost Towns of the Mojave National Preserve*. He's also written extensively on ghost towns in Nevada, Arizona and New Mexico.

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