

# TWENTY CENTURIES

## A Survey of Church History



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### THE NINTH CENTURY

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- The Crowning of Charlemagne (800 A.D.)
- Continued Missionary Expansion
- Theological Controversies
- The Photian Schism

# The Crowning of Charlemagne (800)



- **The Papacy and the Carolingian Dynasty**
  - The Carolingian rulers needed the credibility that papal endorsement could provide
  - The papacy needed land and military support from the Franks.
  - Charles was the protector of the church. In 773-4, Charles invaded Italy to overthrow the Lombards, visiting Rome and confirming lands upon the pope.
  - The court of Charles was a source of literary, artistic, and spiritual “Carolingian Renaissance” in northern Europe.
  - In 781, Charles had two of his sons made kings (Italy and Aquitaine). They were crowned by the pope.
  - Charles’ motto: “It is my duty, with the help of the divine Mercy, to defend the Holy Church of God with my arms, everywhere.” Charles spent his whole life fighting for the Franks and for the Church, waging 55 military campaigns.
  - Though Charlemagne practiced conversion by coercion, “even in the terror of these campaigns, a gospel work was done: the seed of Christianity was planted in lands where Charles’ sword had parted the furrow” (I. Campbell).

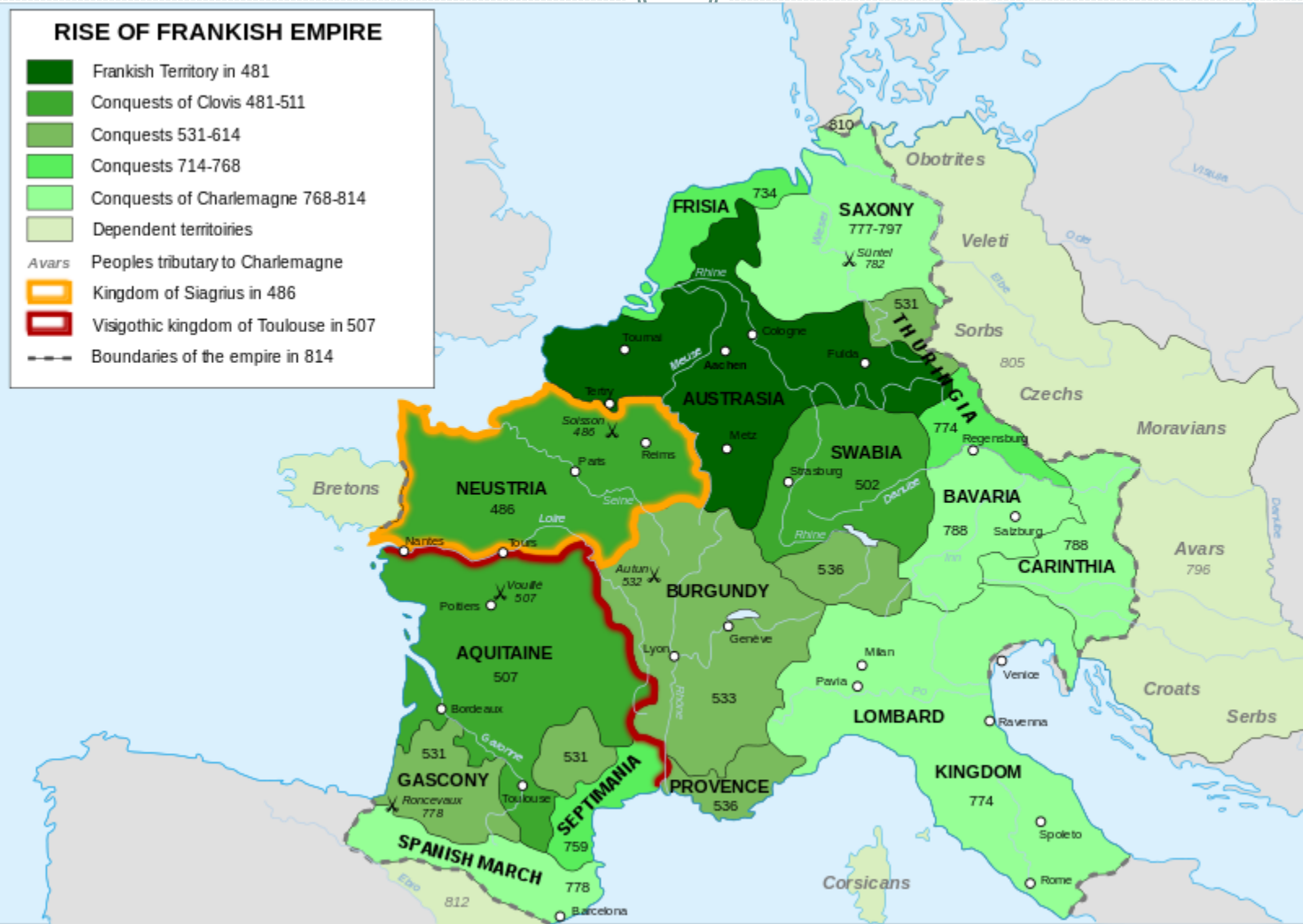
# The Crowning of Charlemagne (800)



- **Charlemagne as Holy Roman Emperor**
  - In 799, the pope was forced to flee to Charles' court because of violent opposition in Rome.
  - Charles travelled to Rome to hold a council. While praying at the altar in the Basilica of Saint Peter on Christmas Day, Pope Leo III came up and placed the imperial crown on his head.
  - The coronation of Charles further divided East and West, since the Byzantine emperors regarded themselves as the Roman emperors.
  - Charles exploited the coronation to declare himself the God-anointed emperor called to restore glory to the Roman Empire and the Church.
  - After Charlemagne's death (814), violence and fragmentation afflicted the empire.



# Frankish Conquests 481-814



# Continued Missionary Activity in Europe



- **Missionary Expansion in Eastern and Northern Europe**
  - Cyril and Methodius, from Thessalonica, the *Apostles to the Slavs* (864). Cyril invented a written form of Slavic in order to translate the Bible. Became the foundation of the Russian (Cyrilic) alphabet. They evangelized the area of the Black Sea and Moravia became a stronghold of Christianity for long years.
  - Ansgar, *the Apostle of the North* (801-865). Entered Denmark with the gospel in 826. Driven out, he moved to Sweden in 829. Appointed archbishop of Hamburg in 831, as a base for Scandinavia. Hamburg was destroyed by the Danes in 845, and Ansgar moved to Bremen.
- **Viking depravations in Britain and the Scottish Kingdom**
  - The Celtic church of Britain was devastated by Viking attacks. Centers of learning were destroyed and the people taken captive.
  - Kenneth MacAlpine crowned as King of Picts and Scots (843), established court at Scone.
  - Established Columban monastery at Dunkeld to serve a Christian kingdom. Scottish kingdom and church independent of Rome.

# Theological Controversies



- **Gottschalk of Orbais (803-68).**
  - Noble-born Saxon Benedictine monk. Served as a missionary to the Balkans. Studied writings of Augustine. His name means “God’s servant.”
  - Revived doctrine of double-predestination (contrary to Gregory I’s denial of reprobation), anticipating the Westminster Confession.
  - Argued that God’s grace for salvation limited to the elect.
  - Taught that God’s decrees are independent of the will of man.
  - Condemned by Council of Mainz in 848 for “making God the author of sin”. Branded a heretic, flogged, deposed, imprisoned, and forced to cast his writings into a fire.
  - A council at Valence in 855 supported Gottschalk’s teaching, leading to on-going debate.

# Theological Controversies



- **Paschasius Radbertus (785-865).**
  - Published a treatise on the Lord's Supper in 831.
  - Taught that only a believer can receive the elements in a fitting manner.
  - Also taught that the elements of bread and wine become the very body and blood of Christ. This is the origin of the doctrine of transubstantiation, adopted in 1215.
  - Ratramnus of Corbie (d. 825) opposed Radbertus's teaching. Argued that the sacrament is received invisibly and by faith alone. The Sacrament contained not the body which the virgin conceived and bore but the power of the divine Word, a spiritual body, to minister to our faith.
  - The Roman church would debate this until siding with Radbertus.



# Theological Controversies



- John Scotus Eriugena (810-77).
  - Scots-Irish theologian of Charlemagne's court. Sought to reform theology according to Scripture
  - Questioned teachings of the church fathers when not supported by the Bible.
  - Demanded personal faith for those who would receive the Lord's Supper; emphasized its spiritual content. "We receive the sacrament mentally, not dentally."



# The Photian Schism



- **Photius v. Ignatius**
  - In 858, the Easter Emperor Michael III replaced Ignatius as Patriarch of Constantinople with Photius, a loyal civil servant.
  - Ignatius appealed to the Roman pope, Nicholas I, who excommunicated Photius.
  - Photius called a synod, which excommunicated the pope for meddling.
  - Many years of conflict followed, with successive councils deposing or restoring Photius from office. Emperor Leo VI finally deposed Photius in 886.
- **A Struggle over Ecclesiastical Authority**
  - Rome asserted itself as the true church, with authority over the Eastern Church.
  - The conflict caused the growing rift between East and West to widen.
  - The pope disallowed Slavic liturgy in 885, requiring all priests to employ a Latin liturgy. This further strained relationships.
  - Photius raised a controversy over the Roman addition of the words “and from the Son” in the Nicene Creed.
  - Photius became popular in the East as a challenger to the idea of Roman supremacy.
- **Pope Nicolas I (858-867)**
  - The “first great Medieval Pope.” Handsome, moral, energetic, courageous.
  - Challenged the King of Italy for divorcing his wife, required him to take her back.
  - Opposed appointment of Photius, since secular power was being too assertive with the church.
  - Was a champion of Roman supremacy in the Church.

# Chief Lessons



- Church and State: The church often finds it convenient to ally itself with secular powers, but usually pays a price for doing so.
  - By taking Charlemagne as protector, the Church had to support Charlemagne's program.
  - The church aimed its efforts increasingly at secular rather than eternal concerns.
- Attempts at hierarchical institutional unity lead to power struggles and schisms.
- Doctrinal decisions are sometimes the product of power struggles (i.e. the *filioque clause*).
- There is deep-seated human opposition to the doctrines of sovereign grace and total depravity, but Scripture wins out in the end.
- Believers who are willing to surrender their lives to Jesus (Cyril and Methodius) bear much fruit (Jn. 12:24).
- When God brings to an end great works (British missions), he begins new great works elsewhere.