

# TWENTY CENTURIES

## A Survey of Church History



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- The Rise of Islam
- Continued Theological Divisions
- Celts vs. Catholics in Britain
- British Missions to Europe

# The Rise of Islam



- **Muhammad**

- Born in 570 in Mecca. Lost parents at young age. At 25, married a 40 year-old woman and became a trader. His work brought him into contact with both Jews and Christians.
- In middle years, claimed the angel Gabriel called him as a prophet, the true servant of Allah, the one true god; set out to empty Arabia of polytheism and idolatry.
- Forced to flee from Mecca to Medina (622 – Muslims date their religion from this date). Gathered a large following there.
- Nine years later conquered Mecca with followers from Medina. Gathered 40-50,000 adherents. Died in 632.

- **Growth of Islam**

- Rapid growth after death of Muhammad, based on conversion via conquest.
- Damascus 635, Egypt 640, North Africa 670. Battle of Tours (732) one of history's most decisive – Charles Martel defeated the Muslims in Spain.
- Totalitarian: nations forced to embrace Islam wholly or face conquest. *Islam* means *Submission*.
- Had the positive effect in Europe of promoting an organized Christendom among Germanic nations.

# The Rise of Islam



- **The Quran and Islam**

- Started by Muhammad in 610. Means “recitation.” Claims to be words spoken by Gabriel to Muhammad. 114 suras (or messages) collected into one volume.
- Five Pillars of Islam:
  1. Creed: “There is no God but Allah and Muhammad is the prophet of Allah.”
  2. Prayer: Five times daily, facing Mecca.
  3. Almsgiving
  4. Fasting during the month of Ramadan
  5. Pilgrimage: at least once in his life, a Muslim should visit Mecca.
  6. Jihad: Holy War. The struggle to spread Islam to the world.
- Offered a coherent, ordered life that was attractive to many.

# The Rise of Islam



- In contrast to Christianity, which spread by suffering believers through preaching, Islam was spread by conquerors with the sword.
- Salvation teaching under Islam
  - Christ reduced to level of other prophets; denied atoning death
  - No doctrine of grace, forgiveness, assurance of salvation
    - ✦ “Islam belongs to the category of world religions that lack both a God of infinite holiness and infinite love and the hope of salvation for deeply sinful man” (*Sinclair Ferguson, In the Year of Our Lord, 77*).
  - Assumes man’s fundamental goodness and the necessity of good works for salvation.

# Continued Theological Divisions



- **Filioque Controversy (“*from the Son*”).**
  - Added to the Nicene Creed by Council of Toledo (586).
  - Argued that the Spirit proceeds from Son as well as Father.
  - Had polarizing effect between East and West.
  - The rejection of “from the Son” has marginalized the saving work of Christ in Eastern Christianity
  
- **Adoptionism Controversy**
  - Taught that Christ the man was adopted as Son by God.
  - Council of Toledo (675) condemned adoptionism and affirmed Christ’s eternal Sonship by nature.

# Continued Theological Divisions



- **Monothelite Controversy**

- Q: Did Christ have one will or two? Monothelite = 1 will.
- Was the 1 will of Christ based on his divine nature or a fusion of human and divine?
- Condemned by Council of Constantinople (680-1). Two wills has been the majority view since. Argument is that intelligence and will are integral to a nature, so for Christ to have two natures requires two wills.
  - ✦ Christ had two intelligences, one finite and one infinite.
    - Jn. 2:25 – “Christ knew what was in man.”
    - Yet there were things that Christ did not know.
  - ✦ Christ exercised two wills or operations. One was human and the other divine and almighty.
    - Christ possessed a will that enabled him to command the wind and the waves.
    - Yet Christ could say to the Father, “Not my will, but yours be done.”
  - ✦ Points made:
    - Christ grew as a man while never losing all that he always was as God.
    - Christ gained human attributes without losing any divine attributes.
    - Christ submitted his will to God as a man, while never ceasing to be God himself.

# Celtics vs. Catholics in Britain

## ● Britain in the Seventh Century

- Sixth century concluded with Archbishopric of Canterbury and missionary work of Columba in Scotland.
- Conversion of Northumbria bridged the two and established episcopalian rule.
- Monks from Iona founded monastery at Lindisfarne (the Holy Island) in 635 under Aidan.
- Christianity spread throughout northern England.
- The Venerable Bede born in 672 in Northumbria.





# Celtics vs. Catholics in Britain



- **Synod of Whitby (664)**
  - Called by King Oswy of Northumbria to bring Celtic and Latin Christianity together.
  - Debated church calendar and papal authority.
  - King Oswy won over to papal side, marking the waning of Celtic Christianity as Celts retreated to Scotland and Ireland. English church conformed to Rome.
    - ✦ “I dare not longer contradict the decrees of him who keeps the doors of the Kingdom of Heaven, lest he should refuse me admission.” Oswyn
  - Under Theodore of Tarsus as Archbishop of Canterbury, a “national” church became the dominant social institution. Canterbury became the chief center of arts & humanities.
  - During the 7<sup>th</sup> century, British Christianity moves from Clonard (f. 520) to Iona (f. 563), to Lindisfarne (f. 635), to Canterbury (f. 597). In this way, Britain comes under the pope and joins Europe.

# British Missions to Europe



- **British Missions to Europe**
  - Importance on monasteries during the “Dark Ages”
    - ✦ Economically self-sufficient centers of learning and evangelism
    - ✦ Preserved the Word of God
    - ✦ Maintained papal authority through monastic societies
  - *Columbanus (543-615)*
    - ✦ From a base in Ireland (Bangor), he evangelized Italy, Switzerland, & France.
    - ✦ Challenged the pope on the date of Easter (leading to conflict between Celts and Catholics).
    - ✦ His practice was to offer his services to the local authorities, establish a monastic base in their midst, and spread his influence over time.

# British Missions to Europe



- *Willibrord* (658-739).
  - ✦ Northumbrian missionary, “apostle to the Frisians”
  - ✦ Studied in monastery, traveled to Frisia at request of Pepin of the Franks
  - ✦ Made two major evangelizing trips through Frisia, founding monastery and cathedral at Utrecht (698).
  - ✦ More militant approach: destroyed pagan temples / sacred places and confronted pagans

Willibrord to Danish king: “The object of your worship, O King, is not a god but a devil, and he holds you ensnared in rank falsehood in order that he may deliver your soul to eternal fire. For there is no God but one, who created heaven and earth, the seas and all that is in them; and those who worship Him in true faith will possess eternal life. As His servant I call upon you this day to renounce the empty and inveterate errors to which your forebears have given their assent and to believe in the one almighty God, our Lord Jesus Christ... But if you spurn me, who set before you the way of life, be assured that with the devil whom you obey you will suffer unending punishment and the flames of hell.”