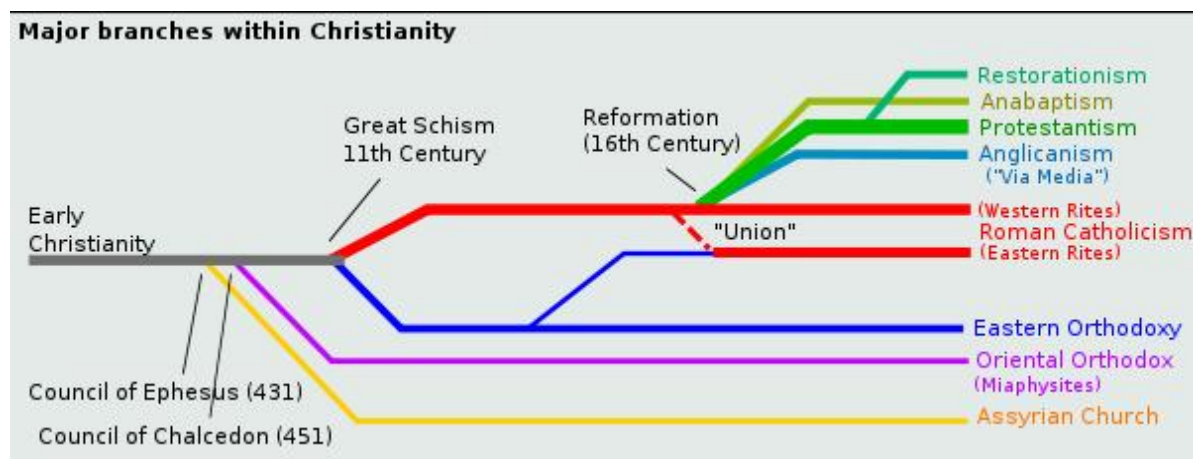


## Phenomenons of the medieval world

### 1. Church

**Christian Church** and *church* (Greek *kyriakon*), "thing belonging to the Lord"; also *ekklesia* (Latinized as *ecclesia*, "assembly") are used to describe both a Christian **association of people** and a **place of worship**. In the **New Testament** the term *ecclesia* (church or assembly) is used for local communities and in a universal sense to mean **all believers**.

Of course, the term **all believers** has changed its content across centuries. At the beginning it referred to a belief in God, later on, in *Jesus*. So all Christians were meant to be a part of the **Universal Church**. Together with **schism**, or the split/division amongst Christians (the major one, also called *The great schism*, occurred in 1054 AD, dividing Christian Church into **Catholic** and **Orthodox** one), the Universal Church is gone. However both of them saw themselves **unique**, the word *catholic* means *universal*, *orthodox* means the *straight*, or *right* one, the opposite side blaming for **heresies** (not to believe straight, with some doubts or disagreement with the original **dogma**), the number of heretics have been arising. The heretics were fought with more or less success (see the table below)



### Origins

The early Church originated in **Roman Judea** in the first century AD, founded on the teachings of **Jesus of Nazareth** who is believed by Christians to be the **Son of God** and **Christ the Messiah**. It is usually thought of as beginning with Jesus' Apostles. According to scripture Jesus commanded them to spread his teachings to all the world.

The Church gradually spread through the Roman Empire and outside it, gaining major establishments **in cities such as Jerusalem, Antioch, and Edessa**. It also became a widely **persecuted religion**. It was condemned by the **Jewish** authorities as a heresy. The Roman authorities persecuted it because, like Judaism, its **monotheistic** teachings were fundamentally foreign to the polytheistic traditions of the ancient world and a challenge to the imperial cult. Other teachings of Christianity, such as the call to *chastity and the prohibition on homosexual practice*, also made it unpopular. Despite this the Church grew rapidly until finally legalized and then promoted by Emperors Galerius and Constantine in the fourth century (313 AD Edict of Milan, issued by Constantine, stopped persecution of Christians).

The Church within the Roman Empire was organized under metropolitan sees, with five rising to particular prominence. Of these five, one was in the **West (Rome)** and the rest in the **East (Constantinople, Jerusalem, Antioch, and Alexandria)**.

Once the Western Empire fell to **Germanic incursions** in the 5th century, the (Roman) Church became for centuries the **primary link to Roman civilization** for medieval Western Europe and an important channel of influence in the West for the Eastern Roman, or **Byzantine**, emperors.



Picture 1: *The Hagia Sophia of Constantinople, once the greatest cathedral in all of Christendom*

Starting in the **7th century the Islamic Caliphates** rose and gradually began to conquer larger and larger areas of the Christian world. Excepting North Africa and most of Spain, northern and western Europe escaped largely untouched by Islamic expansion, in great part because richer Constantinople and its empire acted as a magnet for the **Muslims**. The challenge presented by the Muslims would help to solidify the religious identity of eastern Christians even as it gradually weakened the Eastern Empire. Even in the Muslim World, the Church survived (e.g., the modern Copts, Maronites, and others) albeit at times with great difficulty.

Although there had long been frictions between the **Bishop of Rome** (i.e., the Western *Pope*) and the eastern **patriarchs** within the Byzantine Empire, Rome's changing allegiance from Constantinople to the **Frankish king Charlemagne** set the Church on a course towards separation. The political and theological divisions would grow until Rome and the East **excommunicated** each other in the 11th century, ultimately leading to the division of the Church into the Western (Roman Catholic) and Eastern (Eastern Orthodox) Churches. In 1448, not long before the Byzantine Empire collapsed, the **Russian Church** gained independence from the Patriarch of Constantinople.

As a result of the redevelopment of Western Europe, and the gradual fall of the Eastern Roman Empire to the **Arabs and Turks** (helped by warfare against Eastern Christians), the final Fall of Constantinople in 1453 resulted in Eastern scholars fleeing the Moslem hordes bringing ancient manuscripts to the West, which was a factor in the beginning of the period of the **Western Renaissance** there.

## Crusades

The **Crusades** (wars in the name of **the Cross**) were a series of **religious** military campaigns waged by much of **Roman Catholic Europe**, particularly **the Franks of France** and the **Holy Roman Empire** against the **non - believers**.

The specific crusades to restore Christian control of **the Holy Land** were fought over a period of nearly 200 years, between **1095 and 1291**. Other campaigns in Spain and Eastern Europe continued into the 15th century. The Crusades were fought mainly by Roman Catholic forces (taking place after the East-West Schism and mostly before the Protestant Reformation) **against Muslims who had occupied the near east**, although campaigns were also waged against pagan Slavs, pagan Balts, Jews, Russian and Greek Orthodox Christians, Mongols, Cathars, Hussites, Waldensians, Old Prussians, and political enemies of the various popes.

The Crusades originally had **the goal of recapturing Jerusalem and the Holy Land** from Muslim rule and their campaigns were launched in response to a call from the Christian Byzantine Empire for help against the expansion **of the Muslim Seljuk Turks into Anatolia**. The term is also used to describe contemporaneous and subsequent campaigns conducted through to the 16th century in territories outside **the Levant** usually against **pagans, heretics, and peoples under the ban of excommunication for a mixture of religious, economic, and political reasons**. Rivalries among both Christian and Muslim powers led also to alliances between religious factions against their opponents, such as the Christian alliance with the **Sultanate of Rum** during the Fifth Crusade.

The Crusades had **far-reaching political, economic, and social impacts**, some of which have lasted into contemporary times. Because of internal conflicts among Christian kingdoms and political powers, some of the crusade expeditions **were diverted from their original aim**, such as the Fourth Crusade, which resulted **in the sack of Christian Constantinople** and the **partition of the Byzantine Empire between Venice and the Crusaders**. The Sixth Crusade was the first crusade to set sail without the official blessing of the Pope. The Seventh, Eighth and Ninth Crusades resulted in Mamluk and Hafsid victories, as the Ninth Crusade marked the end of the Crusades in the Middle East.

The immediate cause of the **First Crusade** was the **Byzantine emperor Alexios I's appeal to Pope Urban II for mercenaries to help him resist Muslim advances into territory** of the Byzantine Empire. In 1071, Byzantine Empire was defeated, which led to the loss of all of Asia Minor (modern Turkey) save the coastlands. Although attempts at reconciliation after the East-West Schism between the Catholic Church in western Europe and the Eastern Orthodox Church had failed, Alexius I hoped for a positive response from Urban II and got it.

In March 1095 at the **Council of Piacenza**, ambassadors sent by Byzantine Emperor Alexius I called for help with defending his empire against the Seljuk Turks. Later that year, at the **Council of Clermont, Pope Urban II called upon all Christians to join a war against the Turks, promising those who died in the endeavor would receive immediate remission of their sins**.

Jerusalem was recaptured in 1099 and Christians formed the **Kingdom of Jerusalem**, determined to survive until **Saladin**, Sultan of Egypt, conquered it back to Muslims in 1187.

