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Christian History Made Easy (Rose Bible Basics)

18. What You Should Know About Christian History, 1294–1517

A quick-reference list of the key councils, people, and terms from the late medieval church through the eve of the Reformation. It covers the struggle over who holds authority in the church and the stirrings of reform and the Renaissance.

Key takeaways

- Three big councils (Vienne, Constance, Florence) wrestled with reform, healing the Great Schism, and whether a council or the pope holds final authority.
- Conciliarism—the view that a church council outranks even the pope—rose at Constance but was reversed at Florence; Florence also fixed the seven sacraments.
- Reformers and mystics (Hus, Eckhart, Savonarola, Julian of Norwich) pushed against the church; several were burned or hanged as heretics.
- The Ottoman conquest of Constantinople (1453) sent Eastern scholars into Europe, helping spark Renaissance Humanism; Erasmus later compiled the Greek New Testament.