

THE EARLY REFORMATION

EARLY CHURCH HISTORY – FALL 2023

THE BLACK DEATH

- 1347-1351
- Transmitted through infected flea bites
- Killed millions of people
- The Black Death led to a serious decline in religious faith and practice among Europeans.

JOHN WYCLIFFE

- English Reformer, 1330-1384
- Wycliffe was critical of several Roman Catholic practices and corruption.
- Wycliffe was the first person to translate the Bible into modern English.
- He was also the first to condemn the sale of indulgences.
- Wycliffe was excommunicated. After his death, he was declared a heretic. His body was exhumed by order of the pope and burned.
- This backfired, causing many in England to view Wycliffe as a martyr and made his ideas more popular.

JAN HUS

- Czech Reformer, 1369-1415
- Heavily influenced by Wycliffe
- Hus was burned at the stake following the same council that condemned Wycliffe.
- This initiated the Hussite Wars, lasting over two decades.
- The Hussites were eventually granted religious freedom.

THE OTHER GREAT SCHISM

- 1378-1417
- Two popes – one in Rome, the other in Avignon, France
- The two popes excommunicated each other.
- Council of Constance deposed both popes and elected Martin V
- The damage was already done.

THE PRINTING PRESS

- 1440, invented by Johannes Gutenberg
- Surge in literacy and education
- Knowledge and ideas spread more rapidly.

THE FALL OF CONSTANTINOPLE

- 1453 to the Ottomans
- Marks the end of the Byzantine Empire and the official end of the Middle Ages
- It is estimated that as many as half the residents of the city converted to Islam in the first 100 years.