

A Chronology of Events Affecting the Church of Christ from the First Century to the Restoration

4. From the Iconoclast Movement (726) to the High Middle Ages (900)

These notes draw dates and events from timelines at the following websites: www.therestorationmovement.com, www.churchtimeline.com, and www.wikipedia.com. The interpretation of events and the application of scripture to these events, as they affect the church of Christ, which was built by the Lord (Matt 16:18), remain the responsibility of this writer.

726 The Iconoclast [one who destroys images] movement began in the Byzantine Empire and became an important difference between the Roman and Byzantine churches. The issue would also return during the Protestant Reformation.

Two Byzantine outbreaks during the 8th and 9th centuries were a dispute about the use of images. In Christianity, iconoclasm has generally been motivated by a literal interpretation of the Ten Commandments, which forbid the making and worshipping of "graven images."

Perhaps a corresponding iconoclast movement in Islam spurred on the movement.

The destruction of icons at the Kaaba by Muhammad (represented as a flaming aureole at top left, and (?) on the horse or camel at right), in *L'Histoire Merveilleuse en Vers de Mahomet*, 11th century.



[From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia, Article on Iconoclasm]

What do the scriptures teach?

Ex 20:4 teaches: "You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below."

Idolatry is not a point of dispute in the New Testament which

Miniature from the 9th-century Chludov Psalter with scene of iconoclasm.



[From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia, Article on Iconoclasm]

clearly teaches against all forms of idolatry.

Rom 1:22-23: "22 Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools 23 and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles."

1 Cor 10:14-15: "14 Therefore, my dear friends, flee from idolatry. 15 I speak to sensible people; judge for yourselves what I say."

1 Peter 4:3-4: "3 For you have spent enough time in the past doing what pagans choose to do – living in debauchery, lust, drunkenness, orgies, carousing and detestable idolatry."

The main **iconoclastic arguments** and their rebuttal follow [From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia, Article on Iconoclasm]:

"Definition: "There shall be rejected and removed and cursed one of the Christian Church every likeness which is made out of any material and colour whatever by the evil art of painters.

'If anyone ventures to represent the divine image (χαρακτήρ, *charaktēr*) of the Word after the Incarnation with material colours, let him be anathema!

'If anyone shall endeavour to represent the forms of the Saints in lifeless pictures with material colours which are of no value (for this notion is vain and introduced by the devil), and does not rather represent their virtues as living images in himself, let him be anathema!'

For iconoclasts, the only real religious image must be an exact likeness of the prototype -of the same substance- which they considered impossible, seeing wood and paint as empty of spirit and life. Thus for iconoclasts the only true (and permitted) "icon" of Jesus was the Eucharist, which was believed to be his actual body and blood.

Icon use for religious purposes was viewed as an innovation in the Church, a Satanic misleading of Christians to return to pagan practice."

The **iconodule rebuttal** to iconoclasm included [[From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia, Article on Iconoclasm]:

"Assertion that the biblical commandment forbidding images of God had been superseded by the incarnation of Jesus, who, being the second person of the Trinity, is God incarnate in visible matter. Therefore, they were not depicting the invisible God, but God as He appeared in the flesh.

Further, in their view idols depicted persons without substance or reality while icons depicted real persons. Essentially the argument was 'all religious images not of our faith are idols; all images of our faith are icons to be venerated.' This was

considered comparable to the Old Testament practice of only offering burnt sacrifices to God, and not to any other gods.

Moses had been instructed by God according to Exodus 25:18-22 to make golden statues of cherubim angels on the lid of the Ark of the Covenant, and according to Exodus 26:31 God instructed Moses to embroider the curtain which separated the Holy of Holies in the Tabernacle with cherubim.

Regarding the written tradition opposing the making and veneration of images, they asserted that icons were part of unrecorded oral tradition (*parádosis*, sanctioned in Orthodoxy as authoritative in doctrine by reference to 2 Thessalonians 2:15, Basil the Great, etc.).

Arguments were drawn from the miraculous Acheiropoietia, the supposed icon of the Virgin painted with her approval by St Luke, and other miraculous occurrences around icons, that demonstrated divine approval of Iconodule practices.

Iconodules further argued that decisions such as whether icons ought to be venerated were properly made by the church assembled in council, not imposed on the church by an emperor. Thus the argument also involved the issue of the proper relationship between church and state. Related to this was the observation that it was foolish to deny to God the same honor that was freely given to the human emperor."

726 Charles Martel halts the Muslim advance.

The Saracen Army outside Paris, 730-32 AD



Julius Schnorr von Carolsfeld (1794–1872) www.bridgemanartondemand.com/art/99619/The_Saracen_Army_outside_Paris_730-32_AD[From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia]



Charles Martel in the Battle of Tours

Charles de Steuben, *Bataille de Poitiers, en octobre 732*, oil on canvas, painted between 1834 and 1837, Musée du Château de Versailles, France. [From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia]

754 The Pope was is promised central Italy.

This marked the beginning of temporal and political power of the Pope, finally resulting in the Vatican state.

768 Charlemagne began his reign of the kingdom of the Franks.

800 Charlemagne was crowned Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire by Pope Leo III King of the Franks, he was the first Holy Roman Emperor, beginning a long relationship between the the church and France.



Charlemagne-by-Durer

Albrecht Dürer (1471-1528; Germanisches Nationalmuseum;The Yorck Project: 10.000 Meisterwerke der Malerei. DVD-ROM, 2002. ISBN 3936122202. Distributed by DIRECTMEDIA Publishing GmbH. [From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia]

840 Muslims captured most of southern Italy.