Christianity Timeline

- Covenant with Abraham (4,000 BCE)
- Jesus is Born (Anno Domini- in the Year of Our Lord)
- Jesus begins ministry (30 AD)
- Jesus crucified (33 AD)
- 66 AD Revolt Against Rome- Diaspora
- Constantine adopts Christianity as official state religion (4\textsuperscript{th} Century)
- The Great Schism (11\textsuperscript{th} century)
- Beginning of Reformation- October of 1517
  - Luther posts his 95 theses to the Whittenberg Church door
Primary Beliefs Across Denominations

*Immense Diversity in Christian Beliefs (as in all faiths)*

- **The Trinity** - This is the belief that God is a single eternal being who exists as three distinct, eternal, and indivisible persons: Father, Son (Jesus), and Holy Spirit (or Holy Ghost).

- **The Messiah** - Most Christians see Jesus Christ as the Messiah who was promised in the Old Testament Bible prophecy.

- **Jesus Christ as God** - This is the belief that Jesus is both fully God (divine) and fully human: two natures in one person. As a human, Jesus is believed to have possessed the qualities of mortality; significantly, he had the ability to die. Being divine, he possessed the ability to take up his own life again.
• **Crucifixion and Resurrection** - This is the belief that Jesus died on the Cross, rose from the dead, and ascended into Heaven after appearing to his disciples, most notably to the Apostles.

• **Salvation through Jesus Christ** - This is the belief that salvation from sin and is available through Jesus Christ.

• **The Second Coming** - This is the belief in the "General Resurrection", in which all people who have ever lived will rise from the dead at the end of time, to be judged by Christ on his return.

• **The Afterlife**
  - Heaven
  - Hell
  - Purgatory (temporary state of affairs).
Increasingly, the church had become involved in worldly politics.

- Popes competed with Italian princes for political power.
- They plotted against powerful monarchs who sought to control papal lands.
- They lived lavish lifestyles and hired artists to beautify churches.
Background to the Reformation

To finance their lifestyles, church officials charged fees for services such as baptisms and marriages.

- An indulgence lessened the time one spent in purgatory before going to heaven.
- In the Middle Ages, they were often granted for doing good deeds.
- Many Christians, including Erasmus, objected to their sale.

Some clergy also sold indulgences. Only the rich could afford to buy them.
Christian humanists called for a less worldly church, one based more on Bible study.

As early as the 1300s, John Wycliff had begun protests against the Church in England.

Jan Hus led a similar protest, for which he was executed, in what is today the Czech Republic.
Angered by the sale of indulgences in Wittenberg, Germany, Luther drew up his 95 Theses.

- He argued that indulgences had no place in the Bible, and Christians could only be saved by faith.

- Rather than recant, Luther rejected the authority of Rome.

The German monk and professor, Martin Luther, sparked a revolt in 1517.
Overnight, copies of Luther’s 95 Theses spread and sparked debate across Europe.

In 1521 Pope Leo X excommunicated Luther.

The Holy Roman emperor, Charles V, declared Luther an outlaw and ordered his books to be burned.

But many agreed with Luther and became his followers.
Martin Luther’s Teachings

• Salvation through faith alone (not good deeds).
• Bible sole source of religious truth.
• All have equal access to God.
• Priests are not special or higher.
• He then modified church teachings, abolished rituals, permitted clergy to marry and emphasized sermons.
The Protestant Reformation

- The printing press quickly spread Luther’s writings throughout Germany and Scandinavia.
- His followers took on the name “Protestants because they were in protest against papal authority.”
Spread of Luther's Ideas

• Widespread support based on:
  – An answer to church corruption
  – Way to get rid of church / HR Empire influence.
  – National German Loyalty.
  – Method of getting church lands & money.
  – The Peasant's Revolt for economic / social reform.
Some German princes saw Lutheranism as a chance to throw off the rule of both the Church and the Holy Roman emperor.

| Some saw an opportunity to seize Church property in their territories. | Others embraced the new church out of nationalistic loyalty. | Many were tired of paying to support clergy in Italy. |
In 1524 a peasants’ revolt erupted across Germany.

The people demanded an end to serfdom.

Luther denounced the violence, favoring respect for political authority.

With his support, the nobles suppressed the uprising. Thousands died as a result.
Charles V tried to force the German princes to return to the Catholic Church.

In 1555, after several brief wars, Charles and the princes signed the Treaty of Augsburg.

Each prince chose a religion for his realm—either Catholic or Lutheran.

In the north most chose Lutheranism; in the south most chose Catholicism.
Calvin accepted most Lutheran beliefs but added his own belief in **predestination**.

| He preached that God had long ago determined who was, and was not, going to gain eternal salvation. | There were two kinds of people, saints and sinners. | Only the saved could live a truly Christian life. |

Calvinists attempted to live saintly lives to demonstrate that they were among those God had selected.
By the late 1500s, Calvinism had spread throughout northern Europe.

- In Germany, Lutherans and Catholics fought Calvinists.
- In France, Calvinists battled Catholics.
- In Scotland, John Knox, a Calvinist preacher, helped overthrow a Catholic queen.

Challenges to the Catholic Church set off a series of religious wars.

To escape persecution in England, groups of Calvinists sailed for America in the early 1600s.