



# A Short History of Christianity

By Stephen Tomkins

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## A Short History of Christianity By Stephen Tomkins

Worshipped by 2 billion Christians worldwide, Jesus Christ is likely the famous human being ever. Yet comprehending the vast, often fractious, 2000 year story of his followers can be a bewildering task. Stephen Tomkins leads readers on an enjoyable and enlightening journey through the key stages of Christian development, covering the people, the movements, the controversies of the ever-expanding Church.

His "Short History of Christianity" is a penetrating, energetic account sure to please a wide spectrum of those interested in the Christian story.

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## **A Short History of Christianity** By Stephen Tomkins **Bibliography**

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## Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Journalist Tomkins's breathless portrait of the development of Christianity certainly lives up to its title. Arranged chronologically in roughly 100-year increments, his survey devotes only enough space to major figures and events to introduce them before rushing off to another topic. Everyone who is anyone in Christianity is here: Jesus, Paul, Constantine, Augustine, Luther, Calvin, Jonathan Edwards, Joseph Smith and Pope Benedict XVI, among others. Tomkins hurries through the rise of Islam, the Crusades, the Reformation and Counter-Reformation, and the Great Awakenings, offering simplistic overviews of the causes and effects of each event. The narrative can be jerky, often shifting unexpectedly and inexplicably. For example, he devotes two paragraphs to 19th-century theologian Friedrich Schleiermacher and then jumps to Celtic Christianity with no warning or reason—all under the subsection that bears Schleiermacher's name. He gives Darwin a mere two paragraphs, and fails even to mention the rise of denominationalism, one of the most significant developments in the history of Protestantism. Moreover, no one reading Tomkins would ever know that women or non-European thinkers have played significant roles in Christian history. Racing through more than 2,000 years of Christian history in such cavalier fashion resembles bolting down the Sunday buffet at the local cafeteria: you can sample everything, but you're never full.

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From the Publisher

**Terry Jones** — Star and cowriter of Monty Python "The sort of book I wish I'd read fifty years ago. Stephen Tomkins provides a context for so much of Western history over the last two millennia. His book explains a lot."

**J. I. Packer** — Regent College "Learned, lively journalist Tomkins, who could not write a dull sentence if he tried, here capsules the global Christian story into a brilliant page-turner that keeps you reading for hours at a time. It is all brisk and clear, all well digested, all thoroughly serious, and all great fun."

**Christian Marketplace (UK)** "Accessible, easily dipped into chapter-by-chapter and guaranteed to give greater insight to our faith. A recommended read for all."

From the Back Cover

Worshiped by 2 billion Christians worldwide, Jesus Christ is arguably the most famous human being ever. Yet grasping the vast story of his followers over the last 2,000 years can be a dizzying, difficult task.

In "A Short History of Christianity" Stephen Tomkins takes readers on an entertaining and enlightening journey through the key stages of Christian development, covering the people, the events, the movements, and the controversies of the church. Tomkins deals with the well-known (Augustine, Martin Luther), the unique (Simeon Stylites, the people's crusade, the Muggletonians), and the recent (Karl Barth, John Paul II, the Toronto blessing). His penetrating, energetic "Short History of Christianity" is sure to delight and inform a broad range of readers.

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