

1 **The Church in the High Middle Ages**

2 **As the Middle Ages progressed, the church grew in wealth and power.**

- The church owned large tracts of land throughout Europe.
- The church exercised enormous political power.
 - Church leaders such as bishops often served as political leaders of their territories.
 - A large part of Italy was ruled directly by the pope.
 - In conflicts with kings and nobles, the church often used methods such as the threat of excommunication.
- From the pope all the way down to simple priests and monks, many church officials became more interested in wealth and power than in their religious duties.

3 **Reform**

- A reform movement began in monasteries around 900 and spread throughout the church; reform was a common theme for several centuries.
- Many called for the church to forsake its wealth and focus on spiritual matters.
 - The monastic vow of poverty was emphasized.
 - Simony, the sale of church offices, was criticized.
- All priests became required to practice celibacy, largely to prevent the priesthood from being passed from father to son.

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- The exercise of political power by the church was not seriously questioned; the church was simply called to use its power for spiritual purposes rather than for the pursuit of wealth.
- Some reform groups, most notably the Waldensians, advocated a more complete return to biblical Christianity, and were rejected and persecuted by the church and governments.

5 **The Crusades**

- The Crusades began in 1095. There were many Crusades over the course of the next few centuries.
- The Crusades were attempts to further the interests of the church through warfare.
- Originally, the intent of the Crusades was to reclaim the Holy Land, especially Jerusalem, from the Muslims who controlled it.
 - The First Crusade defeated the Muslims.
 - Muslims recaptured Jerusalem in 1187, and the rest of the Crusades were essentially failures.
- Other Crusades sought to stamp out heresy or paganism.