

FAITH AND WORK THROUGH THE AGES

MODERN-DAY PEOPLE SOMETIMES RESTRICT THE MEANING OF “FAITH AND WORK” TO WORKPLACE EVANGELISM OR THE HOBBY LOBBY DECISION BY THE SUPREME COURT. BUT CHRISTIANS HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN CULTURE FOR A LONG TIME, CREATING HOSPITALS, UNIVERSITIES, WORKS OF ART, AND POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC SYSTEMS THAT HAVE SHAPED THE WORLD. THIS TIMELINE HIGHLIGHTS THE RICH HERITAGE OF THE BODY OF CHRIST – WORKING – THROUGH THE AGES.



A.D. 370

Basil, the bishop of Caesarea, establishes the first public hospital to care for the poor, the infirm, and the traveler. It lays the foundation for hospitals to serve the indigent ill throughout Western history and launches the discipline of public health.



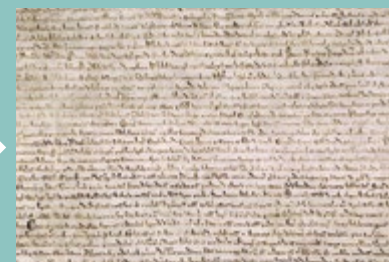
1088

The first university is born in Bologna, Italy, out of the monastic tradition teaching canon and civil law. Universities teaching principally law, medicine, and theology – such as the University of Paris (1150) and the University of Oxford (1167) – proliferate throughout Europe.



1100-1200s

Early capitalism develops principally in Christian Italian city-states as sophisticated management, free markets, free labor, a cash economy, credit, private firms, and secure property rights develop. Christian virtues of work, frugality, honesty, and equality lead to unprecedented wealth production.



1215

The Archbishop of Canterbury drafts the Magna Carta and King John of England agrees to it. This leads to English common law and the limiting of the power of kings – and ultimately the birth of universal human rights in the modern world.



1500s

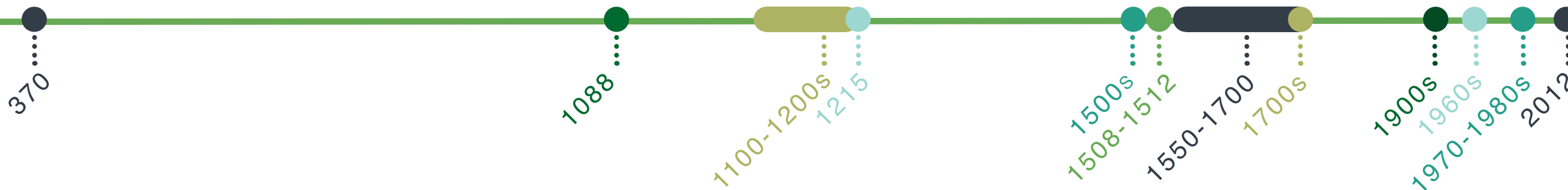
Reformers Martin Luther and John Calvin recover the doctrine of vocation, teaching that through the “priesthood of all believers,” secular work – not only the work of priests or monks – is how God provides for the needs of the world.



1508-1512

Michelangelo paints the Sistine Chapel ceiling, including nine scenes from the book of Genesis. The artistic imagination, from classical music to Renaissance and Gothic art, flourishes throughout the Middle Ages under the patronage of the Church.

A.D. 1



1550-1700

The Scientific Revolution is inaugurated by key discoveries of Christians such as Isaac Newton, Francis Bacon, and Galileo Galilei, who wrote: “God is known by nature in his works, and by doctrine in his revealed word.”



1700s

The Enlightenment, an intellectual movement in Europe that stressed reason, individual autonomy, and scientific inquiry, begins to separate the realms of church and state, public and private, fact and value, faith and work.



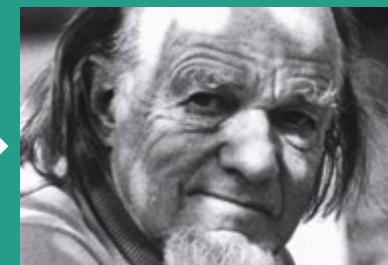
MID 1900s

Christian intellectuals in England such as Dorothy Sayers, J.R.R. Tolkien, and C.S. Lewis leverage their literary abilities to compose novels, fantasies, essays, plays, and philosophical treatises on Christianity in the modern world. Sayers publishes *Creed or Chaos* in 1954.



1960s

Baptist preacher Martin Luther King Jr. leads the Civil Rights Movement, applying Jesus’ ethic of loving one’s enemy to racism, segregation, and inequality in American public life. “Letter from a Birmingham Jail” is published in 1963.



1970-1980s

Apologist Francis Schaeffer inspires Christians to engage the “secular realm” of science, politics, and economics by developing a Christian worldview. The contemporary faith-at-work movement emerges from a coalition of business professionals seeking to live out their callings in the marketplace.



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Denver Institute for Faith & Work is founded as an expression of the Christian church’s historic commitment to living out Christian faith in all arenas of life.