

“Rome Reborn”: Charlemagne and the Holy Roman Empire

Medieval Church History – Session Nine

“I urge that petitions, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for everyone, for kings and all those who are in authority, so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity. This is good, and it pleases God our Savior, who wants everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.”

—1 Timothy 2:1-3 NKJV

I. Introduction

A. Location: Western Europe (Modern-Day France and Germany)

B. Date: ca. AD 700-950

II. The Carolingian Dynasty

A. What is a “dynasty”?

B. The Franks and the Frankish Kingdoms

C. Rulers

1. Charles (Lat. *Carolus*) Martel (AD 688-741)

a. The Last Merovingian Prince

b. Reigned as Prince of the Franks, AD 718-741

c. Driving back the Ummayyad Muslims at the Battle of Tours (October 10, 732)

2. Pepin “the Short//the Young/the Great” (AD 714-768)

a. Father of Charles the Great

b. Reigned as King of the Franks, AD 751-768

c. The “Donation of Pepin” (AD 754)

3. Charles the Great (AD 741-814) – Charlemagne (Lat. *Carolus Magnus*)

a. Reigned as King of the Franks AD 768-800

b. Reigned as Carolingian Emperor AD 800-814

c. Legacy

i. Geopolitics

ii. Education

iii. Religion

d. Evaluation

III. The Holy Roman Empire

A. The Breaking Up of the Carolingian Empire

B. Otto I and the Holy Roman Empire

C. Effects of the Holy Roman Empire on Europe

1. Unification of Culture and Religion
2. Rising Tensions between Church and State
3. The Establishment of “Christendom”

IV. Christendom: Good or Bad?

Recommended Resources

Cairns, Earle E. *Christianity through the Centuries*. 3rd ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1996; pp. 176-190.

Gamble, Richard. *The Whole Counsel of God*. 3 vols. The Whole Counsel of God. Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing, 2009–2021; vol. 2, pp. 512-520.¹

Letham, Robert. *Systematic Theology*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2019; pp. 588-594.²

Murray, John. “The Christian World Order.” In *The Claims of Truth*, 356–66. Collected Writings of John Murray 1. Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1976.

Shelley, Bruce L. *Church History in Plain Language*. 4th ed. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, Inc., 2013; pp. 172-182.

¹This is Dr. Gamble’s exposition of Christ’s “mediatorial kingship” over the civil magistrate.

²This is Dr. Letham’s critique of the more radical expressions of the so-called “Two-Kingdom” theology.