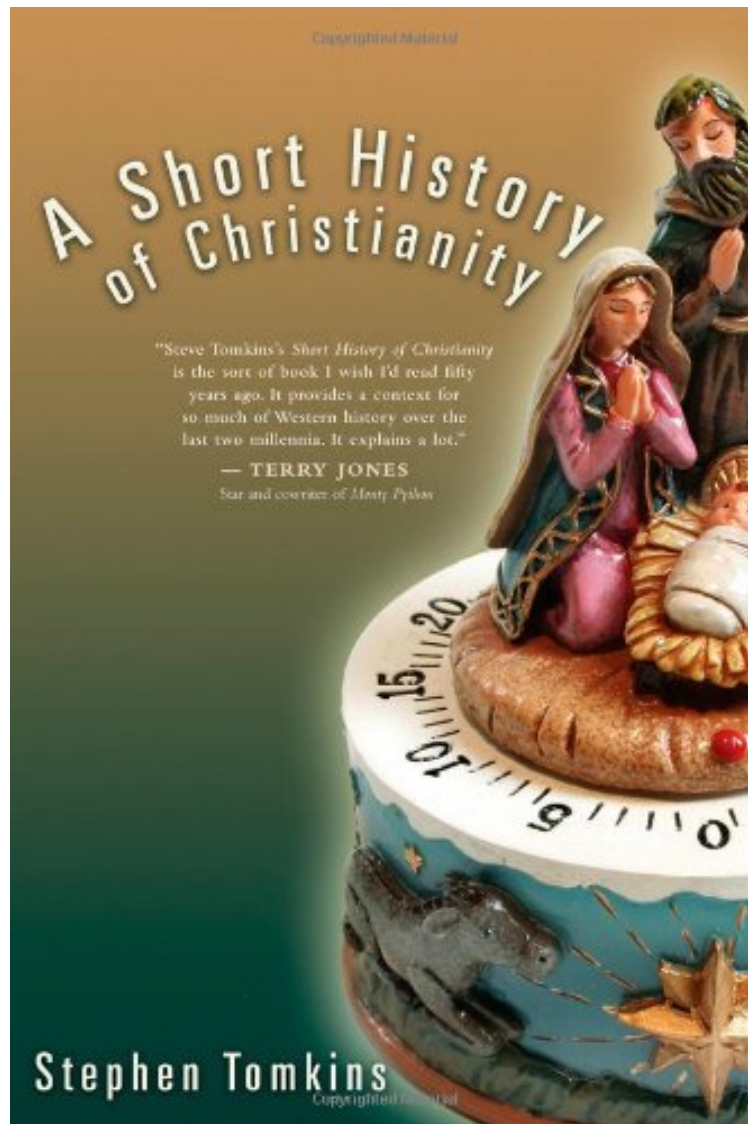


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## A Short History of Christianity

Stephen Tomkins

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**Stephen Tomkins : A Short History of Christianity** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised A Short History of Christianity:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. This is a must-read for anyone wishing to understand the modern world By Nicholas C. Rossis Surprisingly enough, this has turned out to be one of the most leafed-through books in my library. I love Tomkins' balanced writing. He manages to discuss a highly sensitive and often dreary subject matter in a light, highly accessible tone, without sacrificing either clarity or honesty. As someone who finds Dawkins' single-sided polemic just as tiresome as the official Church's often iodine version of history, I welcome a book that describes how

Christianity has shaped the modern world for better and for worse. For anyone wishing to understand our world, this is a must-read. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Personal Awareness By F.B. Parkhurst If you want to or need to deepen your understanding of Christianity this is a great book. The vast majority of "Christians" I know and this would have included myself, by birth, don't have any depth of understanding what the history of Christianity is. I read this book to broaden my perspective of spirituality, specifically Christianity, and I was successful. At first I was appalled at how bloody and lacking in spirituality that history was. As I have digested the book more, I developed a deeper and more profound understanding of Christ teachings. It has made me more comfortable with my personal relationship with the New Testament. It has allowed me to see through a lot of the interpretations, in effect giving me a bath to cleanse me of a number of Christian myths. This is helping me to deepen my spirituality. The book is very easy to read and will definitely broaden your world view. I have wanted to do this for a long long time and I thank Mr. Tomkins for his work. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Christian History in a nutshell By Caroline Mr. Tomkins relays a wide range of history in mostly readable prose. His dry wit sparkles throughout. Since he covers the progress of Christianity throughout the whole world, taking in missional movements, I found it quite illuminating. I met a number of personalities that have positively advanced the course of true Christianity, which I had previously not known. I hope to follow up on their individual bios.

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.

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. Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. 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 Worshipped 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.