Church History

Problems with the Papacy

1. The Babylonian Captivity - 1309-1376
   1. The thirteenth century was an era of power and prestige for the papacy
   2. In the year 1294 Boniface VIII was elected pope
      1. Arrogant and power-hungry
         1. His papal crown contained 48 rubies, 72 sapphires, 45 emeralds, and 66 large pearls
         2. Issued the *Unam Sanctum* which said, “It is altogether necessary for every human being to be subject to the Roman pontiff.”
      2. Under his rule the papacy began to decline, losing both power and prestige
         1. Abused the use of indulgences to raise money
         2. Clash with Philip the Fair of France left him defeated and humiliated
   3. Soon after Boniface’s rule, Clement V, a Frenchman was elected pope – 1305
      1. Loyal to French king
      2. Made his residence in Avignon, a city bordering France
   4. Successive popes lived in Avignon for approximately the next seventy years. This period of time which the pope resided in Avignon is known as the Babylonian Captivity. (Other Europeans began to see the pope as a French entity.)
   5. In 1377, Pope Gregory XI returns to Rome
2. The Great Papal Schism - 1378-1417
   1. When Gregory XI died shortly after arriving in Rome, the cardinals elected an Italian pope (Urban VI)
   2. Not too long later the cardinals decide that they don’t like this pope, reject him, and choose another pope, who moves to the headquarters in Avignon. (Clement VII)
   3. Now there are two men claiming to be pope - this means big problems
   4. At one point, there were three men claiming to be pope (Alexander V)
   5. Eventually all three stepped down and recognized another man who was appointed by a council (Benedict XIII)
3. Results—The Impact on the Papacy
   1. Loss of spiritual power: many Catholics began to doubt that the pope was the perfect representative of Christ and the supreme authority in the church
   2. Loss of political power: secular authorities never bowed to the papacy again