

# The impact of christianity on the english language



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The Impact of Christianity on the English Language In the year AD 597, the Christian missionaries led by Augustine landed in Kent and started a systematic attempt to convert England to Christianity. The impact of the new faith on the English language was mainly lexical.

During the following 500 years, a large number of Latin words made their way into English. From the very beginning, words having to do with religion such as abbot, mass and priest were borrowed. Since the Anglo-Saxons were pagans and their ideals contrasted the teachings of the Christian faith, they lacked words to express the new conceptions. However, in some other cases, they preferred to stick to their own words and adapted them to express the new meanings.

For example, rather than adopting the Latin word deus, they kept their equivalent God, evangelium was rendered godspell, and prophet was wise one. Many of these words were translations of the Latin equivalents such as Holy Ghost, which was used instead of Spiritus Sanctus, and Doomsday used instead of Judgment Day. Borrowings from Latin also included domestic words such as words referring to foods (beet, lentil), clothing (sock, cap), and names of trees, plants and herbs (pine, lily and marshmallow. ) Last but not least, the predominance of the church in the dissemination of learning translated into the adoption of words related to education.

For instance, school, master and grammatical were borrowed at this time. To sum up, the Christianizing of England resulted in the adoption of about 450 words related to the different fields in which the church exerted a significant influence.