How the Plague Influenced Religion
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During the Middle Ages, religion, specifically Christianity, played a major role in the life of almost everyone. As the Plague hit people begin thinking that it was a sign of the Apocalypse and that the Plague was sent by God to punish humanity for its sins. This fueled the obsession with death, salvation, repentance, and judgment. The Flagellates, or Brethren of the Cross, took repentance for their sins to a new level by publically beating themselves in order to win favor with God to remove the Plague from villages.

The Plague also lead to changes within the infrastructure of the Church itself. Because the disease is easily spread through close contact with those infected, priests who took care of the sick in their congregations became ill. As the sick priests died, new priests that were young or newly widowed and less educated and spiritual were hastily ordained to fill the shortage. A different problem was experienced within the monastic orders. As the monastic leaders died of the plague, the government overtook the income of the monastery and heavily taxed it until a new leader was instated. This caused the downfall of the monastic orders in Europe.

Because religion was such a major aspect of life in the middle ages and disease was thought to be a curse from God, the plague changed people’s priorities in life to be even more pious. If such an epidemic were to occur in today’s society, it is very unlikely that it would have the same effect on a religion like Christianity as the Plague did in the Middle Ages. Today there are many more people who believe in science rather than religion and religion is not a major part of most people’s daily life.