

there were a few thousand. At the end of 200 years there were maybe 15,000. At the end of 300 years it toppled the Roman Empire. Another century went by. People were flocking into the church, and great leaders were in the church preaching the Word of God. Some of them began to forget the ideas that had been so prominent in the church during the first 300 years that we are just occupying until the Lord comes back. Because they saw the lights going out, going out, more and more people coming and they said, We're going to have the millennium right here through our efforts. And (they said) just ahead is a glorious time of peace and universal light, and then darkness came.

I think of St. Augustine who lived c. 400 A.D. He was active for some years before that; he died in 430; St. Augustine who wrote some of the greatest Christian works that had ever been written. St. Augustine who toiled all through his life, rushing here and there speaking, arguing, debating, presenting the Lord of God, writing commentaries, writing discussions. Probably no man since the Apostle Paul up to the time of the ~~Renaissance~~ Reformers had had so great an influence on the Christian world as St. Augustine had. I think of St. Augustine's last days. I think of St. Augustine there in Hippo in Africa lying on his bed in his last months as he waited for the end of life. As he lay there he could hear the shouts of the barbarians outside the wall. As he lay there the Vandals had come across N. Africa, pillaging, burning, destroying. All but three towns in N. Africa had been taken and there in Hippo you could look out over the wall and see the fires go up as they burned home after home as destruction and desolation settled upon the world!