

Text E

The Medieval Church

The Medieval Church played a far greater role in [Medieval England](#) than the Church does today. In [Medieval England](#), the Church dominated everybody's life. All Medieval people - be they village [peasants](#) or [towns](#) people - believed that God, Heaven and Hell all existed. From the very earliest of ages, the people were taught that the only way they could get to Heaven was if the Roman Catholic Church let them. Everybody would have been terrified of Hell and the people would have been told of the sheer horrors awaiting for them in Hell in the weekly services they attended.

The control the Church had over the people was total. [Peasants](#) worked for free on Church land. This proved difficult for peasants as the time they spent working on Church land, could have been better spent working on their own plots of land producing food for their families.

They paid 10% of what they earned in a year to the Church (this tax was called tithes). Tithes could be paid in either money or in goods produced by the peasant farmers. As peasants had little money, they almost always had to pay in seeds, harvested grain, animals etc. This usually caused a peasant a lot of hardship as seeds, for example, would be needed to feed a family the following year. What the Church got in tithes was kept in huge tithe barns; a lot of the stored grain would have been eaten by rats or poisoned by their urine. A failure to pay tithes, so the peasants were told by the Church, would lead to their souls going to Hell after they had died.

http://www.historylearningsite.co.uk/medieval_church.htm