

2HT504 - HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY II

Professor: Dr. Ryan Reeves

Office Hours: After class (or by appointment)

Class Day: Monday, 1pm to 4pm

Textbooks: Students will be required to read the following books:

Justo Gonzalez, *The Story of Christianity volume II: Reformation to Present Day*, Harper One (ISBN: 978-0060633165)

Bruce Gordon, *Calvin*, Yale (ISBN: 978-0300120769)

Philip Benedict, *Christ's Church Purely Reformed: a social history of Calvinism* Yale (ISBN: 978-0300105070)

Mark Noll, *The Rise of Evangelicalism: The Age of Edwards, Whitefield and the Wesleys*, IVP Academic (ISBN: 978-0830838912)

Objectives: This is a survey course to introduce the student to the history of the Christian church in the early modern and modern periods (1500-present). The course objective is to acquaint the student with the historical and theological development of key figures, movements, and doctrines. Special emphasis will be on reading the primary sources.

Course Requirements:

- Exams: There will be a mid-term exam **the week of March 14th**. The exam will be take-home and proctored by your spouse, roommate, or family member.¹ (30% of your grade)
- There will be a final exam at the end of semester during Exam Period (**May 16-19**) (30% of your grade)
- Paper: The paper is worth 30% of your final grade. It will be 14+ pages (see below for details)
- Reading: The reading report will make up 10% of your final grade and will be **reported at the end of your paper**. A simple “I have read everything required in this course” with your signature will suffice.

Paper

GOAL: The goal of this paper is for students to immerse themselves in the writings of one theologian or major church figure from the lectures. The essay assignment that goes along with this reading is a reflective, critical examination of the spiritual and theological substance of your reading. To be clear: I want you to graze through the writings of just one of these great Christian thinkers: I do not want this to be superficial reading assignment or an exercise in abstract thinking.

Your assignment is to engage with one figure – perhaps a reformer you always wanted to learn more about – and really pour over his devotional, biblical, and theological works. Take notes on things that inspire you, ponder things that challenge you, and question things that trouble you. Christian pastors and missionaries have read these works for centuries as part of their

¹ If you live alone, arrangements can be made to have it proctored on campus. You must raise this issue as early as possible, however, so we can accommodate you.

devotional and spiritual diet. If I can get you hooked on just one, I will have done my job!

METHOD:

Throughout the semester, choose one figure (e.g. Jonathan Edwards). Use the resources in the library to find modern translations of his works. You may choose his sermons or several of his theological texts. You may also choose to read portions of each of these areas. I am always available to discuss this with students (particularly if you are uncertain who to read).

You should be sure to begin with some biographical work on your source. The assigned texts for this course have short biographies of every major figure, but you may also consult other reference works that sketch historical biographies.

It is preferred that you read these works regularly throughout the semester rather than in one or several sittings. By the end of the semester, you must have read an equivalent of 325 pages in a modern edition—this amounts to 25 pages of reading a week.

ESSAY:

The essay will be graded 1/3 for your writing style/execution and 2/3 on the substance of your reflections. Students are to be reflective, engaging their readings in the light of scripture and the modern world.

Due date: Papers are due May 13th by 11am. Since I live in Jacksonville, you may submit these papers via email to: reeves@gordonconwell.edu

The penalty for late papers is **one letter grade per day** that it is late, if you have not received permission from the professor to submit it late. Given that this paper is cumulative for the entire semester, permission for late papers will be given for only serious issues. Common colds and fatigue, I'm afraid, will not suffice!