

**Church History I**  
**4HT 502**  
**Spring, 2012**

Dr. Daniel J. Steere

**Course Description:** Church History I presents a survey of the history of the church from the time of the Apostles to the eve of the Reformation. The course is designed to provide the student with a broad understanding of the theological controversies and resolutions that defined much of the history of the Early Church. It also introduces the major individuals involved and discusses the political and institutional trends within both the Church and the culture during this timeframe. Although the broad spectrum of church traditions will be addressed, the primary focus of this course will be the history of the Western (or Catholic) Church. Upon completing this course, students should have a basic knowledge of the key ecclesiastical issues and major personalities of the first 1500 years of the Church.

**Course Dates:** Feb. 24-25; March 16-17; April 13-14; May 11-12

**Required Texts:**

Bruce L. Shelley, *Church History in Plain Language*  
Hugh T. Kerr, *Readings in Christian Thought*  
Rodney Stark, *The Rise of Christianity*  
Thomas Cahill, *How the Irish Saved Civilization*  
Mark Galli and Ted Olsen, *131 Christians Everyone Should Know*

**Course Requirements:**

1. As this is a modular course, attendance at all the class meetings is of particular importance. Note that seminary policy requires students to be present for all class sessions. Both attendance and class participation will be considered in the assignment of the final grade.
2. **Three essays** of 5-7 pages each. Students will write on one topic from each of the following groups. Students may substitute a topic of their own choice for one of the essays, but the topic must be approved in advance by the instructor. In addition to the 5-7 page essay, each paper must append a thorough bibliography of both primary and secondary sources available on the topic. [A primary source is one written by the person or a participant in the event under consideration, e.g. Augustine's *City of God*. A secondary source is written by a non-participant, discussing the person or event, e.g. Cahill's discussion of Augustine in *How the Irish Saved Civilization*.] The sources consulted by the student in the writing of the essay must be marked with an asterisk (\*). NB: the discussion on "How to Write an Essay" included with this syllabus. (25% each)

Group A:

- a. The Church and persecution
- b. Development of the Church hierarchy
- c. Gnosticism and its challenge to orthodoxy
- d. Early African Christianity

Group B:

- a. The Trinitarian Controversy
- b. The Christological Controversy

Group C:

- a. Augustine on anthropology
- b. The Great Schism

- c. The origins and challenge of Islam
  - d. Monasticism and education in Europe
3. **Final Exam:** due one week after the final class meeting. The exam will consist of two essay questions designed to test the student's grasp of the flow and continuing importance of Early Church history. Students will receive the questions at the final class meeting. (20%)
  4. **Reading Report:** This report will indicate the amount of Required Reading the student has completed during the term. This will be due along with the final exam. (5%)

**Suggestions for Further Reading:**

Augustine, *Confessions*  
 Roland Bainton, *Christendom: A Short History of Christianity and its Impact on Western Civilization*  
 Louis Berkhof, *The History of Christian Doctrines*  
 Henry Bettenson, *Documents of the Christian Church*  
 Colin Brown, *Christianity and Western Thought*, Vol. 1  
 Eusebius, *The History of the Church*  
 Kenneth Scott Latourette, *A History of Christianity*. 2 vols.  
 Oskar Skarsaune, *In the Shadow of the Temple, Jewish Influences on Early Christianity*

**Reading and Assignment Schedule:**

**By Feb. 24-25**

Shelley 1-77  
 Begin Stark  
 McNeill 2-52; 93-234

**By March 16-17**

Shelley 78-131  
 Stark finished  
 Kerr 14-50  
 131 Christians: Ignatius of Antioch, Justin Martyr, Clement of Alexandria, Polycarp, Perpetua, Gregory Thaumaturgus, Antony of Egypt, Origin, Constantine, Theodosius I, Eusebius of Caesarea, Athanasius

**Group A essay due**

**By April 13-14**

Shelley 132-193  
 Begin Cahill  
 Kerr 51-77  
 131 Christians: Augustine of Hippo, Ambrose of Milan, Patrick, John Chrysostom, Jerome, Leo I, Justinian I and Theodora, Benedict of Nursia, Columbanus, Gregory the Great, Bede, Boniface, John of Damascus, Charlemagne, Cyril and Methodius

**Group B essay due**

**By May 11-12**

Shelley 194-233  
 Cahill finished  
 Kerr 80-133  
 131 Christians: Anselm, Bernard of Clairvaux, Thomas Becket, Hildegard of Bingen, Dominic, Antony of Padua, Francis of Assisi, Innocent III, Thomas Aquinas, Dante Alighieri, Geoffrey Chaucer, Catherine of Siena, John Wycliffe, John Huss, Thomas a Kempis, Joan of Arc, Erasmus.

**Group C essay due**

**May 18 (postmarked)**

**Final Exam and Reading Report due.**

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RTS Extension Policy:

All assignments and exams are to be completed by the deadlines announced in this syllabus or in class.

Extensions for assignments and exams due within the normal duration of the course must be approved beforehand by the Professor. Extensions of two weeks or less beyond the date of the last deadline for the course must be approved beforehand by the Professor. A grade penalty may be assessed.

Extensions of greater than two weeks but not more than six weeks beyond the last deadline for the course may be granted in extenuating circumstances (i.e. illness, family emergency). For an extension of more than two weeks the student must request an Extension Request Form from the Student Services Office. The request must be approved by the Professor and the Academic Dean. A grade penalty may be assessed. (RTS Catalog p. 42 and RTS Atlanta Student Handbook p. 14)

Any incompletes not cleared six weeks after the last published due date for course work will be converted to a failing grade. Professors may have the failing grade changed to a passing grade by request. (RTS Catalog p. 42)

## Some Thoughts on Research and Writing:

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- I. One of the goals of this course is to encourage you to research and write. You will learn more through this process than you will by simply taking notes in class.
- II. You are studying at the Masters level in an institution that places a high value on academic excellence.
  - a. Much of this emphasis on academics is, quite frankly, the outflow of the Reformed tradition.
  - b. The ability to clearly, succinctly, and accurately express thoughts in written form is an essential element of graduate-level education.
    - i. You may have wonderful ideas, but to be appreciated they must be expressed effectively.
    - ii. The worth of your ideas can actually be denigrated by the form in which they are presented.
  - c. Academic writing, and the disciplined thinking that such writing requires, are skills that you should master while you are at RTS.
    - i. You will each leave here as religious opinion leaders with the potential to impact the thinking of others. In addition to being well-prepared with a Biblical worldview, people in such a position also need to be clear thinkers and skilled writers.
    - ii. Effective writing is a skill that also will assist you in sermon preparation and/or teaching.
    - iii. It is possible that God may lead you to do further graduate level work.
      1. Your ability – or lack of it – in this area will reflect directly upon the education you received at RTS.
      2. A lack of skill in this area will seriously hinder you in further study, since the higher you climb in academia the more writing you will be expected to do.
  - d. Perhaps you don't particularly enjoy academic writing. You may even fear it.
    - i. What follows are some suggestions that should make writing less stressful.
    - ii. We will begin with some thoughts about the vital processes of research and documentation– skills that parallel and support the skill of academic writing.

### III. RESEARCH

- a. How do you find a topic?
  - i. This is the most important, and sometimes the most difficult, part of the entire writing process.
  - ii. Perhaps the best method for finding a topic is to listen as the class proceeds and make a note of subjects or people that interest you.
  - iii. You may also find topics in your readings, by comparing what you learn with what you have always thought, or by scrutinizing the careers and/or writings of significant individuals.
  - iv. Once you have a potential topic in mind, begin by searching for usable sources on that topic.
- b. How do you find sources?
  - i. The variety and availability of sources will determine whether or not you will be able to produce an acceptable paper.
    1. Original research requires access to primary sources.

2. Secondary sources can be used to gain a wider understanding of the topic or to support an interpretation, but they lack the authority and originality of primary sources.
  3. If you can't find enough sources, choose another topic.
  4. If you find too many sources, narrow your topic.
- ii. Use the bibliographies of your textbooks; look at the suggestions for further reading; read the footnotes and follow the links to the sources.
  - iii. Google the topic! Google has an option called Google Scholar that will return good sources (often secondary sources) on a surprising variety of topics.
    1. One warning, however, when using the internet for research: make certain that the sources you cite are solid. Just because someone said something on a blog or on a website does not make the statement legitimate. Check their sources!
    2. **Wikipedia is NOT an acceptable source!**
  - iv. Make use of the libraries here in Atlanta. You have some of the best theological libraries in the world available to you right here:
    1. Pitts Library at Emory
      - a. [pitts.emory.edu](http://pitts.emory.edu)
      - b. go to the website and run a search for "Calvin on faith"
    2. Columbia Theological Seminary Library
      - a. [www.ctsnet.edu/Library.aspx](http://www.ctsnet.edu/Library.aspx)
      - b. Run the same search here.
    3. The general libraries at Georgia State University and at Emory University (Woodruff Library) will surprise you with the amount of theological material in their stacks. [Woodruff Library has the full series of the early English books – every book published in England from the 15th to early 18<sup>th</sup> century – on microfilm. This is an absolute treasure trove for anyone who wants to study the English Reformation or the Puritans. Both Pitts Library and Columbia seminary library have rare book holdings – original copies of books published in the 15th and 16th century.]
    4. As an RTS student, you have open access to these libraries and, with Columbia seminary, you can even check out books.
    5. Of course, you still have to go the library and look at the books in order to know which ones will be useful for your research. You may be able to find a few usable sources on Google books, but generally the Internet is not a very good resource for primary research material in history.
- c. How do you find information about and/or narrow a topic?
    - i. Use the index in the back of the books.
    - ii. Start with secondary sources, see what primary materials they cite, and then go find those primary materials. Make use of the research and searching that others have already done.
    - iii. Skim sections. You don't have to read entire books: the index will tell you the pages you need to read.
  - d. How many sources should you use?
    - i. A rule of thumb is that you should have at least one source per page (preferably more than that) for any serious academic writing.
    - ii. Those sources can be either primary or secondary sources.

1. A primary source is one written by the person or a participant in the event under consideration, e.g. Augustine's *City of God*. A secondary source is written by a non-participant, discussing the person or event, e.g. Cahill's discussion of Augustine in *How the Irish Saved Civilization*.
2. Secondary sources inevitably place another interpreter between you and the event.
3. If you have a choice, ALWAYS go with (and cite) primary sources. DON'T allow others to do your thinking for you.

#### IV. DOCUMENTATION

- a. The goal of documentation is to be able to find the quote or the idea easily.
  - i. This will help you later, if you want to expand on your research to write a larger paper.
  - ii. This is also for my use as the professor: I need to have the option to check your sources. (And I do check them!)
    1. This promotes accountability.
    2. It also minimizes plagiarism.
- b. **Wikipedia is NOT an acceptable source!**
- c. General thoughts on footnotes:
  - i. Short quotes can be included in the body of your paper.
  - ii. Longer quotes (more than 6 lines) need to be formatted as block quotes: indented on both sides and single spaced.
  - iii. **Footnote everything that is not original with you:**
    1. Actual words taken from the source – more than 5 words in a row.
    2. Thoughts or ideas taken from a source (i.e. that did not originate with you). Ideas are intellectual property – particularly when they are found in a copyrighted book – and when you use them without attribution you're actually stealing.
    3. Failure to do these things is plagiarism – theft of intellectual property.
  - iv. This does not mean that you have to place a footnote after every sentence. You can use summary footnotes at the end of the paragraph.
  - v. Footnotes can also be used to make comments, either on the sources or on your writing, which you choose not to include in the actual body of the paper.
- d. There are number of different sources that are available that will give you the actual formatting that you need to use for footnotes and for bibliography: Turabian, MLS, Chicago Manual of Style, APA, etc. Google to find a style sheet; choose one and use it consistently.

#### V. EXPRESSION

- a. Remember that you are writing for the purpose of effective communication. Consequently, you want your words to be clear, your logic understandable and your argument compelling.
- b. Some things to avoid in your writing:
  - i. The passive voice.
    1. Many academics make this mistake because it gives the illusion of objectivity by holding information at arm's-length.
    2. However, the passive voice generally makes for boring reading. The active voice is much more attractive to the reader, results in much cleaner sentences, and gives the impression that you are engaged with the material rather than being a mere observer.

3. Example:
  - a. Passive Voice: "A graphic illustration of lingering guilt and its solution is given to us in Micah 7:7 – 10."
  - b. Active Voice: "Micah 7:7 – 10 gives us a graphic illustration of lingering guilt and its solution."
- ii. Run-on sentences.
- iii. Overly complex sentences (i.e. writing like the Puritans), or stacking of modifiers.  
Example: "The purpose of this lesson is to study completely, thoroughly, accurately, and biblically those vital, insightful, great and timeless solutions made available by God to every man."
- iv. Repetition of words or phrases.
- v. Writing in the first person. (Use of "I" and "we.")
- c. Other things to be conscious of – things you cannot depend upon Microsoft Word to catch for you:
  - i. Proper capitalization.
  - ii. Verb tense agreement within a paragraph.
  - iii. Proper formatting for quotations, footnotes and bibliography.
- d. Paragraph development: every paragraph should have 3 elements:
  - i. A thesis sentence.
  - ii. Development of that thesis using restatement, citing of authority, or expansion.
  - iii. Concluding sentence, one that transitions to the following paragraph.
- e. A suggested essay format:
  - i. State your thesis in the first paragraph.
    1. The thesis is a statement of the point that you will seek to prove in your essay.
    2. State it first as a question and then turn it into a statement.
    3. For example: "What was Calvin's view on faith?" becomes, "Calvin's view of faith was essential to his theology and included the elements of..."
  - ii. In the body of the paper, develop each of the major points of your thesis statement using good paragraph development. You may want to write a paragraph for each of the main points.
    1. "Knowledge of God's benevolence"
    2. "founded on the promise given in Christ"
    3. "revealed to our minds and sealed upon our hearts"
    4. "through the Holy Spirit"
  - iii. The final paragraph restates the thesis statement and wraps up the argument of the essay.
- f. One more thought on expression: write from an outline.
  - i. Don't just start writing and try to develop the outline as you go along.
  - ii. Structure the main points in outline form; add main points of support, expansion, and authority underneath each main point.
  - iii. Only when you have these elements in place and grasp the overall flow of the paper should you begin the actual writing.

**Course Objectives Related to MDiv\* Student Learning Outcomes**

Course: History of Christianity I  
 Professor: Daniel J. Steere  
 Campus: Atlanta  
 Date: February, 2012

<b><u>MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes</u></b>		<b><u>Rubric</u></b>	<b><u>Mini-Justification</u></b>
<p><i>In order to measure the success of the MDiv curriculum, RTS has defined the following as the intended outcomes of the student learning process. Each course contributes to these overall outcomes. This rubric shows the contribution of this course to the MDiv outcomes.</i></p> <p><i>*As the MDiv is the core degree at RTS, the MDiv rubric will be used in this syllabus.</i></p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Strong</li> <li>➤ Moderate</li> <li>➤ Minimal</li> <li>➤ None</li> </ul>	
<b>Articulation (oral &amp; written)</b>	Broadly understands and articulates knowledge, both oral and written, of essential biblical, theological, historical, and cultural/global information, including details, concepts, and frameworks.	Strong	1. Student writes 3 essays on Church History topics. 2. Articulation of theological and cultural material in final exam.
<b>Scripture</b>	Significant knowledge of the original meaning of Scripture. Also, the concepts for and skill to research further into the original meaning of Scripture and to apply Scripture to a variety of modern circumstances. (Includes appropriate use of original languages and hermeneutics; and integrates theological, historical, and cultural/global perspectives.)	Strong	1. Study of history of theology: Trinity, Christology, anthropology. 2. Evaluation of the variety of theological views extant during this time period.
<b>Reformed Theology</b>	Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.	Moderate	1. Study Augustinian roots of Reformed monergism. 2. Evaluation of sacramental theology as synergistic.
<b>Sanctification</b>	Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student's sanctification.	Minimal	1. Apply implications of Trinitarian Controversy. 2. Regular prayer
<b>Desire for Worldview</b>	Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God.	Minimal	1. Church History I demonstrates the consequences of worldview and the dangers of cultural syncretism.
<b>Winsomely Reformed</b>	Embraces a winsomely Reformed ethos. (Includes an appropriate ecumenical spirit with other Christians, especially Evangelicals; a concern to present the Gospel in a God-honoring manner to non-Christians; and a truth-in-love attitude in disagreements.)	Minimal	1. Study of doctrinal development of varying Christian traditions, esp. Roman Catholic and Orthodox.
<b>Preach</b>	Ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm.	Moderate	1. Study of historical theology. 2. Readings in sermons and polemics of early Church fathers.
<b>Worship</b>	Knowledgeable of historic and modern Christian-worship forms; and ability to construct and skill to lead a worship service.	Moderate	1. Discussion of historical development of worship forms and contextualization.
<b>Shepherd</b>	Ability to shepherd the local congregation: aiding in spiritual maturity; promoting use of gifts and callings; and encouraging a concern for non-Christians, both in America and worldwide.	None	
<b>Church/World</b>	Ability to interact within a denominational context, within the broader worldwide church, and with significant public issues.	Moderate	1. Study of denominational diversity & its historical roots. 2. Caesaropapism w/ Constantine.

