

**History of Christianity I:
Engaging Early and Medieval Church History (HT 502)
Reformed Theological Seminary, Orlando**

Early and Medieval Church History
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DESCRIPTION

The course is an overview of early and medieval church history up to the eve of the Protestant Reformation. The course will be a sketch of the important people, movements, events and ideas that have shaped the church during this period, as well as some of the contributions Christianity has made to the world. It defines the early Christian movement in relation to the life of Jesus, Judaism, Greek and European culture and thought. Christianity's influence and mission are then traced through the age of the martyrs, the imperial age, and the Middle Ages up to the 15th century.

PASSION

The course is taught with a passionate belief that all the other institutions of this world will wither away (Microsoft, Enron, AT&T, Disney, and even the US Government), but the church will not because Jesus has been building his church across cultures and centuries. Even though it sometimes appears immensely weak, or becomes considerably wayward, Jesus himself has promised to keep building it and said that the gates of hell will not prevail against it! His Spirit has been at work for 2000 years in this building project. It was at work in the early and medieval church as well. There is much to learn about what He's been doing. A good grasp of the past will help us as we build the church for His glory in this generation.

PURPOSES OF THIS COURSE

It is hoped that this course will help prepare you for a more effective leadership role in building the twenty-first century church. It is also hoped that this course will help you see your ministry in its larger context. With this in mind, I want to help you:

- gain an appreciation for the many people and movements which have gone before you
- better understand those influences that have shaped you
- know what Christians have believed through the centuries
- see the good & the bad of the church's story
- realize the interplay between people and culture
- learn lessons that will enable you to effectively minister in the 21st century
- help you think through some of the issues that Christians have wrestled with in the past
- impart to you a sense of the wonder of God's grace and the greatness of the gospel.

REQUIREMENTS FOR THIS COURSE

Summary

- Read the assigned readings
- Attend lectures
- Either do the paper and a disputation (a limited number of disputation slots will be available)
- Take mid term and final exam
- Think! Think about how we can learn from the past to be more effective today.

READING REQUIREMENTS

Required

Shelley, Bruce L., *Church History in Plain Language*, 2rd Ed., Dallas, Texas: Word Publishing, 1995. Provides a broad overview of the history of the Christian church. It covers a great deal of history in a readable and concise manner.

Sixty Primary Source Documents, taken from *120 Primary Source Documents Every Evangelical Student of Church History Should Know*, Unpublished. Compiled by Donald W. Sweeting (230 pages). I have compiled a series of primary source readings from our period—some creedal, some ecclesiastical, some cultural and some formational in order to have first hand interaction with the people and events of this period. These will be uploaded so you can have easy access to them.

How Christianity Changed the World, Alvin J. Schmidt, Grand Raids: Zondervan, 2004. This book is a great reference book that covers the cultural influence of Christianity through the centuries. While it overviews the entire period, you will be reading a third of it, or about (100 pages). While chapters cover the whole of church history, many of them have a good amount of material on our period. Choose the chapters that interest you to assess the impact of Christ on culture.

One Hundred and Thirty One Christians Everyone Should Know, Christian History Magazine, Nashville, Holman, 2000 (half the book, approx. 165 pages)—entries for the following: Ignatius of Antioch, Justin Martyr, Clement of Alexandria, Polycarp, Perpetua, Gregory Thaumaturgus, Antony of Egypt, Origin, Constantine, Theodosius I, Eusebius of Caesarea, Athanasius, 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, 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)

Choose one of the following:

Stark, Rodney, *The Rise of Christianity: How the Obscure, Marginal Jesus Movement Became the Dominant Religious Force in the Western World in a Few Centuries*, San Francisco: Harper, 1996. (pages 215) This is a fascinating account of the rise of the

church. While you will not always agree with everything he says, and while Stark's sociological approach has its limits, there is a lot of fascinating material that will be of use in ministry. Stark is very readable.

OR

Cahill, Thomas, *How the Irish Saved Civilization: The Untold Story of Ireland's Heroic Role from the Fall of Rome to the Rise of Medieval Europe*, New York: Anchor Books Doubleday, 1995. (pages 218) Unlike Stark, this very readable study focuses on the early Medieval period and shows the positive side of the monastic movement in the wake of the chaos of a collapsed Roman empire. Even if you are not Irish, you will come away with an appreciation for some of the heritage of Celtic Christianity.

You will be asked to give the percentage that you read of the assigned reading at the end of the semester.

Recommended but not required

Confessions, Augustine, Middlesex, England: Penguin, 1976 (or any recent edition)

The History of the Church, Eusebius, Penguin, 1989. Eusebius is known as the first church historian and covers the first four centuries of the early church.

The Christological Controversy, Sources of Early Christian Thought, Fortress, 1980.

This book covers the Arian controversy in greater depth.

Theological Anthropology. Sources of Early Christian Thought, Fortress Press, 1981.

This study covers the Pelagian controversy in greater depth.

A Further Recommendation

If you are completely unfamiliar with church history, and you want to get a sense of what it is all about it may help to watch before classes begin, the first half of the six part DVD overview of the history of the Christian church called *History of Christianity*, by Timothy George. A copy will be on reserve in the library.

LECTURES

Don't miss them. Not only is the content of the lectures valuable, but your absence steals from your classmates' learning experience. If they didn't want others' participation in classroom interaction, they would have taken this class virtually. It is a selfish choice to skip lecture. Please consider your fellow students as well as your own preparation for ministry.

Additionally, from time to time helpful pieces of information (e.g. Mid Term and Final Exam study guides) will be handed out in hardcopy format during class. If you are not present then you will not receive the information.

DISPUTATIONS

If you do a disputation, it will substitute for the paper.

In Medieval Scholasticism, theologians often engaged in disputations—debates on key issues. We will have several abbreviated disputations with students taking opposite sides and arguing their best case. The point will be to get inside the heads of those who debated and to help think through the particular issue for ourselves. Space will be limited for only ten participants, so decide on this option early.

- Structure: 10/10/5/5/10 Response 40 total minutes
 Ten-minute presentation by first presenter
 Ten-minute presentation by second presenter
 Five-minute response by first presenter
 Five-minute response by second presenter
 Ten-minute response by instructor
- Rules: Argue a position: concisely taking their viewpoint
 Concise is important: you will be helping class members know the basic outlines and passion of the position.
 One page handout for the class summarizing your brief
 Ten-minute presentation of key points to persuade
 Listen to the other side
 Respond to key arguments persuasively
 Know the other side and be ready to respond to it. This is a disputation and thus requires some collegial disputing with your partner.
 Create a one-page handout for class with name on top
- Topic: Here are the possible topics.
- | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Who is Jesus? | Arius vs. Athanasius |
| Monasticism? | Positive or Negative |
| Who can pastor? | Donatists vs. Constantine |
| How are we saved? | Pelagius vs. Augustine |
| The place of Images? | Icons vs. Iconoclasts |
| Why did Christ die? | Anselm vs. Abelard |
| Or, another pertinent topic | |

PAPER

If you do a disputation, it will substitute for this paper.

Thematic Essay 12-15 pages (3600 – 4500 words)

Take one of the following themes and do a short paper tracing it through the entire time period covered by this course. End by discussing the relevance of the theme for the church today.

Possible Topics

Christian Spirituality, Church and State, The flawed people of God, Persecution and the cost of discipleship, Evangelism and social responsibility, Great leadership, Preaching, Philosophy and Christianity, The authority and power of the Bible, Prayer, The missionary impulse of Christianity, Truth claims in a pluralistic world, Christian worship, Jews and Christians, The pursuit of holiness, Longing for the return of Christ, Christ and culture, the structure of the church, The role of tradition in the church, Grace/salvation debates, etc. Requests to do a more traditional research paper instead of a thematic paper will be considered, but must be approved.

Decision

Please be prepared to declare your intent for papers by the second week of class.

Length

Stick to the limits of the paper. Remember 12 pages of quality is more important than 15 pages of fluff.

Grading

In grading papers I look for papers that are the prescribed length and properly formatted. I look at clarity of thought and expression. For the thematic paper, I look for an adequate tracing out of the theme through the Early and Medieval period, as well as some discussion of the relevance of this theme to us today.

Formatting

Use any standard formatting (e.g. Chicago Manual of Style, Turabian, SBL, etc.) just be consistent.

Proof read

Get someone to proof read your paper to cut down on the number of careless mistakes.

EXAMS

There will be a mid term and a final that will cover the readings and the lectures.

Mid Term	On the first half of the course
Final	Concentrating (but not exclusively) on the second half of the course

VISITS

You are encouraged to visit a house of worship from some of the different traditions covered in this course during the semester—especially a Greek Orthodox Church, a synagogue, and or a Catholic church.

SOCIAL MEDIA AND CLASS ETIQUETTE

During class lectures cell phones will be off (unless it is on for urgent reasons). There will be no texting. Computers will be allowed provided their use in the classroom is solely for classroom use. Laptop screens will be focused on class notes only. The classroom is an internet-free zone.

GRADES

Mid Term	100 points
Final Exam	100 points
Paper or Disputation	100 points
<u>Completing the Readings</u>	<u>100 points</u>
Total Possible:	400 points

GENERAL COURSE SCHEDULE AND ASSIGNMENTS

Date	Topic	Due Dates
8/30	Intro: A Preface to Church History Intro: Weighed in the Balance	NOTE: A Reading Schedule is posted below
9/6	The Early Church: Beginnings - Jesus and the Apostles The Early Church: The Mother Church in Jerusalem	
9/13	The Early Church: Antioch and Beyond - The Spread of Christianity The Early Church: Encountering the Greco- Roman World	
9/20	The Early Church: Early Persecution and the Apologists The Early Church: The Early Fathers and Heretical Challenges	
9/27	The Early Church: Rule of Faith, Church Structure, and the Canon The Early Church: Constantine - The Emperor Who Converts	
10/4	The Early Church: Mega Councils - Nicaea The Early Church: Mega Councils - Chalcedon	Disputation #1
10/11	READING WEEK The Early Church: Later Fathers of the East and	
10/18	West The Early Church: Pastoral Life and Practice of the Early Church	Disputation #2
10/25	The Medieval Church: The Eternal City in Free Fall and the City of God The Medieval Church: Augustine - The First Medieval Theological Battles Over Grace	Mid Term Exams Due In Class
11/1	The Medieval Church: The Monastic Movement - Anthony and His Followers The Medieval Church: Medieval Missions - Patrick and Company	Disputation #3
11/8	The Medieval Church: Perils of the Empowered Church - The Claims of Papacy The Medieval Church: The Music/Art Connection	
11/15	The Medieval Church: Meanwhile Back East - Byzantium The Medieval Church: The Rise and Clash With Islam	Disputation #4
11/22	The Medieval Church: Schism and Crusade The Medieval Church: Spiritual Awakening and	Disputation #5

Everyday Faith in the High Middle Ages

11/29 The Medieval Church: Scholasticism and the
Medieval Synthesis
The Medieval Church: The Crisis of the Late
Middle Ages
The Medieval Church: Renaissance and Pre-
Reform Reform

Papers and Final Exams will be due in hardcopy format in Cristi Mansfield's Office by the Paper Deadline, December 7th.

Reading Schedule

These readings do not track exactly with the lectures, but it is close.

A statement of the percentage of the readings read will be due with the Paper and Final Exam, December 7th.

By September 27, 2011

Shelley **The Age of Jesus and the Apostles 6BC-70AD (pp. 3-23)**
 The Age of Catholic Christianity 70–312AD (pp. 25-87)

131 CHRISTIANS

Ignatius of Antioch, d. 98/117

Clement of Alexandria, d. 215

Polycarp, d. 155/160

Origin, d. 254

Justin Martyr, d. 165

Gregory Thaumaturgus, d. 260

Perpetua, d. 203

120 Primary Source Documents

Excerpt from Eusebius and Josephus on the Roman Siege of Jerusalem

Excerpt from Clement on the Martyrdom of Peter and Paul, 96

References to Christianity in Classical Authors

Tacitus, Suetonius, Pliny the Younger

The Didache, an early Christian teaching manual, possibly late 1st century

Epistle to Diognetus, c. 130, anonymous letter describing early Christians

The Martyrdom of Polycarp, 156

The Martyrdom of Perpetua, c. 203

Tertullian vs. Clement of Alexandria on Greek Philosophy

Irenaeus vs. Valentinian, Gnostic vs. Orthodox. c190s

The Conversion of Constantine, 312

Ten Imperial decrees from Constantine and Theodosius

Including The Edict of Toleration (311), The Edict of Milan (313)

By October 25th for Mid term

Shelley, The Age of Christian Roman Empire 312-590AD (pp. 89-160)

131 CHRISTIANS

Constantine, d. 337

Eusebius of Caesarea, d. 340

Antony of Egypt, d. 356

Athanasius, d.373

Theodosius I, d. 395

Ambrose of Milan, d. 397

John Chrysostom, d. 407

Jerome, d.420

Augustine of Hippo, d. 430

Patrick, d.461

Leo I, d. 461

Benedict of Nursia, d.547

Justinian I d. 565 and Theodora,

120 Primary Source Documents

Six Early Christian Creeds including,

 The Old Roman Creed

 The Nicene Creed (325 and 381)

 The Apostle's Creed

Three early testimonies on the Gospels,

Athanasius on the Incarnation

The Athanasian Creed, early 5th c

Leo's Tome, 449

Leo on Papal Primacy, 445

The Definition of Chalcedon, 451

Early Christian hymns

 The Gloria Patri

 Lord Jesus Think on Me

Christian Classic Selection

 The Confessions, Augustine c410

Christian Classic Selection

 The City of God, Augustine c410

Early Christian hymns

 The Original St. Patrick's Breastplate

 Christ Beside Me

 Be Thou My Vision

The Rule of S. Benedict 525

Canons of the Council of Orange, 529

The Anathemas of the Second Council of Constantinople, 553

From Gregory the Great on Pastoral Care, 590

From Gregory the Great on Mission to England, 598

The Rise of Christianity, Stark

OR

Cities of God, Stark

OR

How Christianity Saved Civilization, Cahill

By November 29th for final

Shelley, The Christian Middle Ages 590-1517AD (pp. 161-233)

131 CHRISTIANS

Gregory the Great, d. 604

Columbanus, d. 613

Bede, d. 735

John of Damascus, d. 749

Boniface, d. 754

Charlemagne, d. 814

Cyril and Methodius, d. 885

Bernard of Clairvaux, d. 1153

Thomas Becket, d. 1170

Hildegard of Bingen, d. 1179

Innocent III, d. 1216

Dominic, d. 1221

Francis of Assisi, d. 1226

Antony of Padua, d. 1231

Thomas Aquinas, d. 1274

Dante Alighieri, d. 1321

Catherine of Siena, d. 1380

John Wycliffe, d. 1384

Geoffrey Chaucer, d. 1400

Joan of Arc, d. 1431

John Huss, d. 1431

Thomas a Kempis, d. 1471

Erasmus, d. 1536

120 Primary Source Documents

Hymns from the Medieval Church

The Day of Resurrection

Come Holy Spirit

O Come, O Come Emmanuel

Excerpt from St. Anselm, Why Did God Become Man? 1099

On the Breach Between East and West 1054

Pope Urban II Calls for a Crusade, 1095

The Jesus Prayer, 11th c

Excerpt from Bernard of Clairvaux, On Loving God 1126

Excerpt from Hildegard of Bingen, 1151

Hymns from the Medieval Church

All Creatures of Our God and King

Of the Father's Love Begotten

Jesus, Thou Joy of Loving Hearts

Christianity and Islam in Conflict, 1200s

Justification of the Inquisition, 1200s

Innocent III on the Empire and the Papacy, 1198

The Papal Bull Unam Sanctum, 1302

The Rule of St. Francis, 1223

Christian Classic Selection

The Imitation of Christ, Thomas a Kempis, 1418

Excerpt from In Praise of Folly, Erasmus 1509

How Christianity Changed the World, Schmidt