

Church History I

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Course Description

A survey of the history of the church from the first century until the end of the thirteenth century. Special attention is given to the development of doctrine.

Course Objectives

- 1) To learn what the doctrines and practices of the New Testament church were, and to observe and critique how these developed over the centuries (BIBLE)
- 2) To be encouraged by the stories of those who preceded us in the faith and to learn what both their successes and failures have to teach us about how we can serve God and other people (MINISTRY)
- 3) To reflect on how the worldview of the cultures within which the church ministered affected developments in doctrine and practice (WORLDVIEW)

Course Evaluation

BIBLE PROJECT (20% of total grade)

- Choose a doctrine or practice of the New Testament church and trace it through the time period we are covering, comparing and contrasting the teaching of the Bible and how the church developed it (1st through 6th centuries).

MINISTRY PROJECT (20% of total grade)

- Choose a major figure from church history and research his or her life. Write up your results along with personal reflection on what you found inspirational in this figure's life, where they succeeded in following God, where they failed, and what lessons you can take for your own ministry.

WORLDVIEW PROJECT (20% of total grade)

- Consider an effort within the early or medieval church to engage with the culture around it. Was the church successful in affecting culture, or did the prevailing culture affect the church? What can you learn from this historical occurrence when it comes to engaging culture today?

QUIZZES (40% of total grade)

Required Readings

- Ferguson, Everett. *Church History, Volume 1: From Christ to Pre-Reformation: The Rise and Growth of the Church in Its Cultural, Intellectual, and Political Context*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2013.
- Selections from primary texts (available at ccl.org/fathers and elsewhere online).

Course Schedule

Week 1	9/9	The Setting for the Story's Beginning, Jesus and the Beginning of the Church	Other info
Week 2	9/16	The Subapostolic Church, The Church and the Empire	
Week 3	9/23	Heresies and Schisms in the Second Century, The Defense against Rival Interpretations	
Week 4	9/30	The Fathers of the Old Catholic Church and Their Problems, Church Life in the Second and Third Centuries	
Week 5	10/7	Development of the Church during the Third Century, Diocletian and Constantine: On the Threshold of the Fourth Century	Quiz 1 (To 325)
Week 6	10/14	The Church in the Fourth Century: Doctrine, Organization, and Literature, The Church in the Fourth and Fifth Centuries: Monasticism, Expansion, Life, and Worship	
Week 7	10/21	Christological Controversies to Chalcedon (451), Augustine, Pelagius, and Semipelagianism	
Week 8	10/28	Transitions to the Middle Ages: Germanic Migrations, Doctrinal Developments, and the Papacy	
Week 9	11/4	Eastern and Western Churches in the Fifth and Sixth Centuries (I-III)	Quiz 2 (325-590)
Week 10	11/11	Eastern and Western Churches in the Fifth and Sixth Centuries (IV-VI), The Eastern Church from the Seventh to the Eleventh Centuries, The Western Church from the Seventh to the Ninth Centuries	
Week 11	11/18	Decline and Renewal of Vitality in the West: The Ninth to Eleventh Centuries	Quiz 3 (590-1054)
Week 12	11/25	The Papal Reform and the First Crusade, Intellectual Revival: The Rise of Scholasticism	

Week 13	12/2	Monastic, Literary, Cultural, and Political Activities in the Twelfth Century, The Glory of the Medieval Church: The Thirteenth Century	
Week 14	12/9	Portents of Decline	Quiz 4 (1054-1300)
Week 15	12/16	Overflow/Class Presentations	

Assignments Description

Each of the projects involves a written and oral component.

Policies and other information

Attendance (From the GLBC Catalogue)

Students are required to attend classes regularly. One unexcused absence for every credit hour in a given course may be permitted, i.e. per one-hour class. Two percent (2%) of the course grade per academic hour for each hour of classroom instruction missed may be deducted for each unexcused absence beyond the above.

Late Work (From the GLBC Catalogue)

Assignments for the term are listed in the syllabus supplied for each course. Every assignment so listed must be completed to pass the course. Late submission of assignments need not be accepted by the instructor. Extenuating circumstances and emergencies will be taken into consideration. If a late assignment is accepted, a grade reduction of 5% per instructional day may be assessed.

Selected Bibliography

Cairns, Earle E. *Christianity through the Centuries: A History of the Christian Church*. Third ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996.

Ferguson, Everett. *Early Christians Speak*. 2 vols. Abilene, TX: ACU Press, 1999/2002.

González, Justo L. *Church History: An Essential Guide*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1996.

———. *A History of Christian Thought, Volume 1: From the Beginnings to the Council of Chalcedon*. Revised Edition. Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1987.

Heath, Gordon L. *Doing Church History: A User-friendly Introduction to Researching the History of Christianity*. Toronto: Clements, 2008.

Litfin, Bryan M. *Getting to Know the Church Fathers: An Evangelical Introduction*. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2016.

North, James B. *From Pentacost to the Present: A Short History of Christianity*. Bible Study Textbook Series. Joplin, MO: College Press, 1963.