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CH 501 Church History I

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CH 501

CHURCH HISTORY I

June, 2001

J. Steven O'Malley, Instructor

Credit: Three Semester Hours

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This syllabus may be amended prior to the beginning of class.

Note: The development of this extended learning syllabus is intended for distribution to members of the course and others by my permission. Permission to copy, whole or in part, must be requested from the professor.

Welcome to our class! I am delighted to be joining with you in a new learning venture. Church History 501 is now being offered in an expanded format as a three-hour course. Let me take a moment to introduce myself to you and to begin laying some plans for our work together. Instructing students in church history is for me to join with you in exploring and sharing in the odyssey of a remarkable company of women and men; it is to communicate the heritage of the living message of the Body of Christ to its reigning Lord. It is to acknowledge our dependence upon that mighty cloud of witnesses (Hebrews 12:1) who have given testimony by word, deed, and life to His claim upon this universe. It is to recognize that we are not alone in ministry; instead, it is to discover that there are vital resources from the past that might empower and guide each of us who seeks to become a partaker in that vital company of the committed - - a vehicle through which God has incredibly transformed this planet over the past two millenia. It is a company filled with its share of failures as well as achievements in faith, and our awareness of both can hopefully enhance our capacity to live out our ministry with discernment and greater faithfulness to the Lord of the Church.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is an introduction to the development of Christianity from the Apostolic Period to the Reformation. Emphasis is placed upon the central historical figures, movements and theological issues, with attention given to their importance for Christian ministry today. Major primary texts and interpretive studies will be read.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

1. To understand and appreciate the Christian tradition so the student recognizes that our generation lives on the growing edge of a vast Christian heritage.
2. To acquire basic factual knowledge of the persons, places, dates, events, and movements that shaped the history of the Christian Church.
3. To comprehend the issues that motivated the Church to develop its beliefs, practices, and structures and to grasp why, from time to time, the Church modified them.
4. To understand the evolution of Christian doctrine and to learn to discern between form and content.
5. To appreciate the importance of primary sources and the nature and effects of historical interpretation.
6. To view the present in the light of the prior beliefs and actions of the Christian community.
7. To evaluate one's Christian vocation in the light of the Christian tradition.
8. To gain insight into the nature of Christian ministry.

COURSE GOALS:

During this summer semester, our specific course goals are to (1) identify the major historical figures and movements which have contributed significantly to the formation of the doctrinal and institutional expressions of Early and Medieval Christianity; (2) explain the significant issues involved in clarifying the Person and work of Jesus Christ in the first five centuries after Christ, which took shape in the context of the quest to define orthodoxy over against heresy; (3) recognize and evaluate the major issues involved in the effort of the Christian Church to relate to the social and political structures of the ancient and medieval worlds; (4) explore and assess the different concepts of soteriology that emerged in the East and the West in this period; (5) examine the developing views of authority (both institutional and doctrinal) that were formulated to provide grounding for the several theological and ethical systems that predominated in early and medieval Christianity; (6) gain an introduction to non-Western expressions of Christian culture, in their historical development; and (7) to write about your understanding of these issues with increased precision and insight.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS AND REQUIREMENTS

We will have two comprehensive essay exams based on lectures and readings, one at mid-term and one at the end of the semester. These will consist of short answer questions (ca. 50 word response each, with correct grammar), and a longer essay on the final. Each exam will deal with the content of Gonzalez (volume one) and one question from the Irvin/Sunquist volume, with supplemental

reference to the lectures and the readings from the primary texts (Bettenson and Kerr).

Grading: Points will be assigned for the completion of the above course requirements as follows:

Class attendance and participation	20
Mid-Term Exam	80
Final Exam	100
Total	200

Upon completion of all requirements, grades will be determined in the following manner:

180-200	A	(90 - 100%)
160-179	B	(80 - 90%)
140-159	C	(70 - 80%)
120-139	D	(60 - 70%)
below 119	F	

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

Bettenson, Henry. Documents of the Christian Church. (Oxford paperback). This is a record of crucial letters and texts of official church proclamations that shaped the direction of church leadership in the history of the church.

Gonzalez, Justo. The Story of Christianity. Vol. I. (Abingdon paper ed.) A concise but insightful analysis of the history of early Christianity, through the Middle Ages, that weaves a narrative that is often compelling for the reader.

Irvin, Dale, and Sunquist, Scott, eds., History of the World Christian Movement (Earliest Christianity to 1453), (unpublished manuscript, used with authors' permission). (abbreviated HWCM)

Kerr, Hugh T., ed. Readings in Christian Thought. (Abingdon paper ed.). A concise collection of selected texts illustrating style and message of major writers in the history of Christian thought (through the modern era).

(note: the first and fourth texts will be used through the second semester).

Collateral texts:

J. S. O'Malley, Pilgrimage of Faith; The Legacy of the Otterbeins (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow, 1973)

J.S. O'Malley, *Early German-American Evangelicalism* (Lanham, NJ: Scarecrow/University Press of America, 1995)

Randy McNally *Historical Atlas of the World* (paperback ed.)

Recognizing that this course is primarily an introduction to the history of Christianity, we are also provided with an attached bibliography of primary and secondary works that will enable us to begin an ongoing reading program in the literature of the history of the church (ATS library call numbers are included). I would also encourage you to begin building a good library with tools that will be useful to you on a long-term basis. Be sure to allocate enough time and resources to acquire the tools you need. In addition, we are provided with a bibliography of primary and secondary works, that will enable us to undertake an ongoing reading program in the history of Christianity, that will hopefully extend beyond this course.

READING AND LECTURE SCHEDULE

You are strongly encouraged to start early and keep up with our reading schedule (and even get ahead!). Another reading tip that will be important in our learning is to read an assignment early in the week in which it is to be discussed, and before viewing the videotape for that week. Then, after the videotape and our discussion, reread the same material (an in-depth reading!) before proceeding to the next assignment.

Module One. 6/12

The Fullness of Time: The First Hundred Years

Gonzalez, Chs. 2 - 5;

HWCM, Part I

Module Two 6/13

The Age of Martyrs and Apologists

Gonzalez, Chs. 6 - 7; Kerr, I (=Section numbers); Bettenson, I, 1, 1-6
(=Part One,
Section One, pages 1 - 6. HWCM, part II.

Module Three 6/15

Heresy and the Formation of Orthodoxy

Gonzalez, Chs. 8 - 9, Kerr, 3 - 5; Bettenson,
I, 3, 4 (29 - 33, 35 - 38). HWCM, Part III.

Module Four 6/19

Pastoral Care, Worship, and Church Life in the Apostolic Church

Gonzalez, Chs. 10 - 14, Bettenson, I, 1, 7- 23. HWCM, Part IV, Ch. 14 and 15.

Module Five 6/20

The Responses to Constantine, Arius, and the Age of Nicea

Gonzalez, Chs. 17 - 21; Kerr, 8 (creeds 1, 2, & 4); Bettenson, I, 4, 33 - 35, 39 - 44, HWCM, Part IV, Ch. 16

Module Six 6/21

Exam One (90 minutes allowed)

Augustine and the End of an Era

Gonzalez, Chs. 22- 25; Kerr 6; Bettenson, I, 6; HWCM, Part IV, Chs. 18-19;

Module Seven 6/22

Theology East and West: Chalcedon and Charlemagne

Gonzalez, Chs. 26 - 28 (excluding ; Kerr, 8 (third creed); Bettenson, I, 5; HWCM, Part IV, Chs. 15, 20, and 21.

Module Eight 6/26

Roman Catholic Ascendancy, Conflicts in the East, and Scholasticism

Gonzalez, Chs 29 - 31; Kerr, 9, 10, 12, 14; Bettenson, II, 2; HWCM, Part V, Chs. 22 - 25, Part VI, Chs. 30 - 31.

Module Nine 6/27

Decline and its Cohorts: Pre-Reformers and Mystics

Gonzalez, Chs 32 - 33; Kerr, 11, 13; HWCM, Part V, Ch. 28 (pp. 319-325), Ch. 29.

Module Ten 6/28

Nominalism, Humanism, and Non-European Christian Expansion, East and West.

Gonzalez, 34-36 Kerr, 16 - 19; HWCM, Part VI, Ch. 34 - 36, and 38.

Final Exam: 6/29

