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

Early and Medieval Church History                                             Phone: 407-366-9493
Dr. Don Sweeting                                                              Office Hours: By Appointment
Teaching Assistant: Greg Salazar- historyta@rts.edu

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

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.


Choose one of the following:
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


*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.


*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

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<td>Mid Term</td>
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<td>Final Exam</td>
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<td>Paper or Disputation</td>
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<td>Completing the Readings</td>
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<td>Intro: Weighed in the Balance</td>
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<td>The Early Church: Beginnings - Jesus and the Apostles</td>
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<td>The Early Church: The Mother Church in Jerusalem</td>
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<td>The Early Church: Antioch and Beyond - The Spread of Christianity</td>
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<td>9/13</td>
<td>The Early Church: Encountering the Greco-Roman World</td>
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<td>The Early Church: Early Persecution and the Apologists</td>
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<td>9/20</td>
<td>The Early Church: The Early Fathers and Heretical Challenges</td>
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<td>The Early Church: Rule of Faith, Church Structure, and the Canon</td>
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<td>9/27</td>
<td>The Early Church: Constantine - The Emperor Who Converts</td>
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<td>The Early Church: Mega Councils - Nicaea</td>
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<td>The Early Church: Mega Councils - Chalcedon</td>
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<td>10/11</td>
<td>READING WEEK</td>
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<td>10/18</td>
<td>The Early Church: Later Fathers of the East and West</td>
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<td>The Medieval Church: The Eternal City in Free Fall and the City of God</td>
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<td>10/25</td>
<td>The Medieval Church: Augustine - The First Medieval Theological Battles Over Grace</td>
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<td>The Medieval Church: The Monastic Movement - Anthony and His Followers</td>
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<td>The Medieval Church: Medieval Missions - Patrick and Company</td>
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<td>The Medieval Church: Perils of the Empowered Church</td>
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<td>The Medieval Church - The Claims of Papacy</td>
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<td>The Medieval Church: The Music/Art Connection</td>
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<td>The Medieval Church: Meanwhile Back East - Byzantium</td>
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<td>The Medieval Church: The Rise and Clash With Islam</td>
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<td>11/22</td>
<td>The Medieval Church: Schism and Crusade</td>
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<td>The Medieval Church: Spiritual Awakening and</td>
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Everyday Faith in the High Middle Ages

The Medieval Church: Scholasticism and the

11/29

The Medieval Church: The Crisis of the Late
Middle Ages

The Medieval Church: Renaissance and Pre-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
Polycarp, d. 155/160
Justin Martyr, d. 165
Perpetua, d. 203
Clement of Alexandria, d. 215
Origin, d. 254
Gregory Thaumaturgus, d. 260

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