

Syllabus for Church History (CH 501/502)

Front Range Bible Institute (Winter 2015)

Professor Tim Dane

I. Course Description

CH 501/502 is a two-part course in the study of church history. The first part of the course (CH 501) will expose the student to the broad flow of church history from its beginning at Pentecost to the time just prior to the Reformation. CH 502 will pick up the study at the time of the Renaissance and Reformation and take the student up to the present era.

II. Course Objectives

- A. To have the student know the major events of church history.
- B. To have the students know and appreciate the major doctrinal issues that developed throughout church history and how these doctrines came into formal articulation over the ages.
- C. To have the student recognize the importance of protecting the Body of Christ from doctrinal deviations.
- D. To have the student recognize the importance of learning from the past—learning from the right choices of the past as well as from the mistakes of the past.

III. Required Materials

- A. **Gonzalez, Justo.** *The Story of Christianity* (two volumes or in the one-volume version. I suggest you buy the one volume Hardcover version. It costs less). San Francisco: Harper and Row. 1984. (**the volume 1 reading = appx. 420 pp.**).
- B. **Church History notes by Tim Dane** (supplied by professor).
- C. **Master's Level:** read first 344 pages from the following: Dowley, Tim, ed. *Eerdman's Handbook to The History of Christianity*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977.

IV. Course Requirements

- A. Attend all classes (or purchase a DVD copy of the class if absent)
- B. Read all assigned text books
- C. Read all class notes before the classroom discussions
- D. Participate in class discussions based upon your personal readings
- E. Participate in each online discussion question
- F. Weekly Questions:
 - i. As noted in the weekly schedule below, there is a church history question assigned for all students in weeks 2-10.
 - ii. Each student is required to reply back to the professor and to at least one other student on each question by the end of the week of each question.

- iii. The answer to the professor should be anywhere between 100-200 words and should be posted in the online threaded discussion.
- iv. The reply to a fellow student should be roughly 25-100 words. When you interact with other students, your task is to thoughtfully and critically (although always tactfully, graciously and fairly) give a response to the other student, remembering that Iron sharpens iron. This is a tool for you to help each other correct misunderstandings or perhaps learn additional truths not already known.

G. Take all quizzes

H. Complete the class project

I. **Reading requirements:**

- i. **Gonzalez, Justo.** *The Story of Christianity* (two volumes or in the one-volume version). San Francisco: Harper and Row. 1984. (**volume 1 = appx. 420 pp.**)
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- iii. **Master's Level:** read first 344 pages from the following: Dowley, Tim, ed. *Eerdman's Handbook to The History of Christianity*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977.

J. **At the end of the class, each student is required to submit a written statement telling the following: (1) that he/she completed all the required reading, (2) that he/she completed the threaded discussion requirements. This is to be turned in the last day of class.**

V. Course Grading

- A. 20% Class participation and threaded discussion participation
- B. 20% Reading
- C. 30% Exam
- D. 30% Class Project

VI. Class Project

Produce your own parallel column church history chart that will provide you with a tool for recalling major events and dates and also serve as a tool for your own teaching needs. As a minimum, the columns should include the following.

- A. Precise dates for the events (or range of years if more appropriate)
- B. Name of key events
- C. Names of major individuals
- D. Events as they directly relate to the church
- E. Events in the political and military realm
- F. Your church history notes has such a chart in the early sections that can serve as a guide

VII. Course Schedule

#	Date	Estimated Topic	For each question, do the following: 1. The initial answer which addresses the professor's question must be made first. 2. Your reply to at least one of the other students will follow your answer directly to the professor.
1	1-8	Historical backgrounds to the birth of the church Pentecost onward: Peter and Paul as seen in Acts A preliminary look at RCC claims to Petrine primacy	
2	1-15	Roman persecutions Constantine and the end of Roman persecutions	Question 1: In Acts, how does Luke trace the development of the church in relation to the Apostles Peter and Paul?
3	1-22	The Post-Constantine world The Fall of Rome	Question 2: Give a brief explanation of the persecutions that came under Nero and how these compared and contrasted with those under Domitian (and later Roman persecutions).
4	1-29	The "lapsed" and "confessors" The Apologists Early Extra-biblical attestation	Question 3: What kind of impact (good or bad) did Constantine's influence and actions have on the church?
5	2-5	Development and recognition of a canon Early Bible translations	Question 4: Describe the events surrounding the Council of Nicea. What was the doctrinal issue at stake? Who were the major figures? How did these events end up, both at the Council of Nicea and afterwards?
6	2-12 (no class, professor in Ukraine)	Doctrinal controversies, I: Legalism/Judaizing, Marcionism, Montanism, Gnosticism, Docetism, Ebionism	Question 5: What is your understanding of how a NT canon developed and was recognized by the church?

7	2-19	Doctrinal controversies, II: Monarchianism, Manicheans, Novations, Nestorianism, Eutychianism, Arianism	Question 6: How did Neo-Platonic philosophical ideas influence ideas like Gnosticism and Docetism?
8	2-26	Implications of Byzantine Empire The Cappadocians The fall of Israel Doctrinal deviations	Question 7: What is the difference between Nestorianism and Eutychianism, and which councils addressed these issues?
9	3-5	Post-Nicea: Expansion of papacy Other Ecumenical Councils Three huge voices Monasticism Expansion of the Papacy Other ecumenical councils Political developments in later Rome	Question 8: Comment on the doctrinal and practical deviations (from the 2nd century onward) involving baptism and the Lord's Supper.
10	3-12	Fall to Barbarians Fragmentation of Roman world Muslim invasions Dark Ages and further declines in the Papacy	Question 9: Tell in your own understanding the main influences (positive and negative) of Augustine.
11	3-19	Last class: Scholasticism	Question 10: Put in your words the main value of the Council of Chalcedon.

		Crusades	
		Inquisitions	
		The Remnant of Grace throughout the ages	
	3-26	Make Up Class	

VIII. Bibliography

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- Foxe, John. *Foxe's Christian Martyrs of the World*. Ohio: Barbour, 1989. (200 pp.)
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- Hall, Christopher. *Reading Scripture With The Church Fathers*. Downers Grove: IVP, 1998. (217 pp.)
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