

Syllabus for CH501 Church History I

Front Range Bible Institute

(Fall 2019)

Professor Jason Parker

Course Description

The course “Early Church History” is a study of how Christ has built his church from the time of the apostles to just prior to the Reformation. The course will have classroom lectures and discussions, so students are encouraged to participate by asking and answering questions and taking notes.

The course will include outside reading, quizzes and exams based on reading and classroom discussions, and a book report on one original source.

Course Objectives:

- To give the student a working knowledge of the major events, people, theologies, worship, and practices of the ancient and medieval church
- To equip the student to grasp the historical development of fundamental Christian doctrines
- To alert students to particular strengths and weaknesses of the church through the centuries
- To sharpen the student’s ability to utilize Scripture truthfully by observing the way early and medieval Christians applied the Bible to their context
- To give the student a broader understanding of himself by entering into the lives of those who have come before him in the church
- To inspire the student to faith working through love by observing God’s providence
- To deepen the student’s appreciation for how God is glorified as Christ builds his church throughout history

Required Course Materials

- Reading materials
 - *Church History Volume One: From Christ to the Pre-Reformation*, 2nd edition, by Everett Ferguson, Zondervan (528 pages)
 - The student will choose one original source to read from the list of primary sources below.
 - Master’s level students will also choose additional reading from the bibliography below.
- Computer
 - All work submitted electronically should be in Microsoft Word documents (.doc).

Course Requirements

- Attendance at all classes
 - Take notes and participate in class discussion.
 - If you know in advance that you will miss a class, please notify the professor ahead of time to obtain an excused absence.

- Reading – **Due November 12**
 - The student will record the books read and how many pages were read in each book. This record will be submitted to the professor by November 12.
 - Certificate level – 500 pages from textbook
 - B.B.S. – at least 600 pages from textbook and original source
 - M.B.S. – at least 900 pages from textbook, original source, and recommended resources in the bibliography below
 - M.Div. – at least 900 pages from textbook, original source, and recommended resources in the bibliography below
- Quizzes/Examinations
 - All students will take periodic quizzes over the material covered in class. These will be unannounced and at the discretion of the professor.
 - There will one mid-term exam and one final exam.
- Book Report on one original source – **Due November 12**
 - All students will write a book report on one original source from the list of primary sources below. In order to understand history, you must learn to read well!
 - The professor must approve the book.
 - Report length requirements
 - Certificate level – 2-5 pages (double spaced)
 - B.B.S. – 5-10 pages (double spaced)
 - M.B.S. – 10-20 pages (double spaced)
 - M.Div. – 10-20 pages (double spaced)
 - The report must follow the basic outline given by Mortimer Adler and Charles Van Doren in *How to Read a Book*:
 - What is the book about as a whole?
 - What is being said in detail, and how?
 - Is the book true, in whole or part?
 - What of it?

Course Grading Criteria and Grading Scale

- Grading Criteria
 - 20% Attendance and participation
 - 30% Reading
 - 30% Quizzes/Examinations
 - 20% Book Report
- Grading Scale – see FRBI catalogue
- Late work and make-up work
 - Reading reports and book reports submitted after November 12 will automatically receive a one letter grade reduction, until November 19. Any work not submitted by the conclusion of the class will not be accepted, unless specific arrangements have been approved by the professor because of exceptional circumstances. Plan now to submit your work on time!

Course Schedule

Date:	Requirements and Lecture Topic:
Sept 10	Introduction to course Chap. 1: The Setting for the Story's Beginning Chap. 2: Jesus and the Beginning of the Church Chap. 3: The Subapostolic Age
Sept 17	Chap. 4: The Church and the Empire Chap. 5: Heresies and Schisms in the Second Century
Sept 24	Chap. 6: The Defense against Rival Interpretations Chap. 7: The Fathers of the Old Catholic Church and Their Problems
Oct 1	Chap. 8: Church Life in the Second and Third Centuries Chap. 9: Development of the Church during the Third Century Chap. 10: Diocletian and Constantine
Oct 8	Chap. 11: The Church in the Fourth Century: Doctrine, Organization, and Literature Chap. 12: Monasticism, Expansion, Life, and Worship Chap. 13: Christological Controversies to Chalcedon
Oct 15	Mid-term exam Chap. 14: Augustine, Pelagius, and Semipelagianism
Oct 22	Chap. 15: Transitions to the Middle Ages Chap. 16: Eastern and Western Churches in the 5 th and 6 th Centuries
Oct 29	Chap. 17: The Eastern Churches from the 7 th to the 11 th Centuries Chap. 18: The Western Church from the 7 th to the 9 th Centuries Chap. 19: Decline and Renewal of Vitality in the West
Nov 5	Chap. 20: The Papal Reform Movement and the First Crusade Chap. 21: Intellectual Revival: The Rise of Scholasticism
Nov 12	Book Reports and Reading Reports Due Chap. 22: Monastic, Literary, Political and Cultural Activities in the 12 th Century Chap. 23: The Glory of the Western Medieval Church: The 13 th Century
Nov 19	Final Examination Chap. 24: Portents of Decline

SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Sources

Athanasius. *On the Incarnation*. (highly recommended)

Augustine. *Confessions*. (highly recommended)

Bede. *The Ecclesiastical History of the English People*.

Benedict of Nursia. *The Rule of St. Benedict*.

Bettenson, Henry. *Documents of the Christian Church*. 2nd edition. New York: Oxford University Press, 1967.

Boethius. *Theological Tractates or The Consolations of Philosophy*

Dante. *The Divine Comedy*.

Denzinger, Heinrich. *Compendium of Creeds, Definitions, and Declarations on Matters of Faith and Morals*. Edited by Peter Hünerman. 43rd edition. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2012.

Eusebius. *The Church History*. (recommended)

Gregory of Nazianzus. *On God and Christ*.

Holmes, Michael W., editor. *The Apostolic Fathers: Greek Texts and English Translations*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007.

Schaff, Philip, editor. *The Creeds of Christendom*. 3 vols. Reprint of 6th edition. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1998. (recommended)

Thomas a Kempis. *The Imitation of Christ*.

Thomas Aquinas. *Summa Theologiae*. (a selection may be chosen)

Recommended Resources

Gonzales, Justo L. *The Story of Christianity, Volume 1: The Early Church to the Dawn of the Reformation*. Revised and updated edition. New York: Harper One, 2010.

Hägglund, Bengt. *History of Theology*. 4th revised edition. Translated by Gene Lund. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2007.

Haykin, Michael A. G. *Rediscovering the Church Fathers: Who They Were and How They Shaped the Church*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2011.

Kruger, Michael J. *Canon Revisited: Establishing the Origins and Authority of the New Testament Books*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012.

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

Lukacs, John. *A Student's Guide to the Study of History*. Wilmington, DE: ISI Books, 2000.

Needham, Nick. *2000 Years of Christ's Power Vol. 1: The Age of the Early Church Fathers*. Fearn, Rosshire, Scotland: Christian Focus Publications, 2016.

_____. *2000 Years of Christ's Power Vol. 2: The Middle Ages*. Fearn, Rosshire, Scotland: Christian Focus Publications, 2016.

Noll, Mark A. *Turning Points: Decisive Moments in the History of Christianity*. 3rd edition. Grand Rapids: Baker

Pelikan, Jaroslav. *The Christian Tradition, Vol. 1: The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition (100-600)*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971.

Southern, R. W. *Western Society and the Church in the Middle Ages*. New York: Penguin Books, 1970.

Spielvogel, Jackson J. *Western Civilization Volume 1: To 1715*. 3rd edition. Minneapolis: West Books, 1997.

The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church. 3rd ed. revised. Edited by F. L. Cross and E. A. Livingstone. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.

Walton, Robert C. *Chronological and Background Charts of Church History*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1986.

Wilken, Robert Louis. *The First Thousand Years: A Global History of Christianity*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012.

The student should also consult the bibliographic resources listed in the textbook.