



Birmingham Theological Seminary

Early & Medieval Church History
HT 4528

Time: Monday, 7:30-9:30 p.m.
Room: M-200, Briarwood Presbyterian Church
Instructor: Dr. Edward Waldron

Course Description:

The course will survey the history of Christianity from approximately ~300 A.D. up to, but not including, the Protestant Reformation of the Sixteenth Century. We will survey the major movements, doctrines, persons, and institutions that arose within the church and affected its development during this time. Our emphasis will be the development of doctrinal understanding in the church as well as careful study of selected key individuals whose lives should inspire us to biblical faithfulness today.

Textbooks

- 1.) *The History of Christian Thought: The Fascinating Story of the Great Christian Thinkers and How They Helped Shape the World As We Know It Today* by Jonathan Hill
- 2.) *History of Christian Doctrines* by Louis Berkhof.

Course Objectives

The student who completes this course will be able to:

- ❖ Have a general knowledge of the history of the church from the end of the first century through the early sixteenth century
- ❖ Have an understanding of the major theological developments in the history of the church from the end of the first century through the early sixteenth century
- ❖ Be familiar with some of the more important theological terms and concepts and thus better equipped to understand and engage intelligently in theological discussion
- ❖ Be spiritually enriched through an encounter with the work of great Christians of the past
- ❖ Be able better to struggle with the difference between truth and error through an encounter with the thought of past generations of professing Christians.

Course Goals:

These objectives bring us to three overarching goals.

1. To become more faithful interpreters of God's Word
2. To become better servants of the Lord
3. To apply and actually, fully, and faithfully utilize the history, principles, and biographies, we learn which for the purpose of bringing the unsaved to the saving work of the Cross.

BTS Format and Style Standards

NOTE: All research papers must be formatted in accordance with Turabian Chicago standards including the title page, citations and bibliography. Font Times New Roman in #12 Font Size and double spacing is required on all papers. **Any paper not conforming to these standards will automatically be dropped one letter grade.**

Class Calendar

September 2 - Introduction to Class, Policies, Goals/Aims. Review of Sources.

September 9 - Tertullian & Justin Martyr, Iranaeus - One God, three substances, **Hill** - p. 16-38; **Berkhof** - 37-61.

September 16 - Origen, Clement of Alexandria, **Hill** - p. 39-59, Arianism, Athanasius, & The Council of Nicea, 325 — The Trinity Defended, **Hill** - pp.60-69; **Berkhof** — pp. 62-80

September 23 - Council of Constantinople, 381 - Against Nestorianism & Council of Ephesus (431), Council of Chalcedon (451). **Hill** - pp. 70-113 - **Berkhof** - 83-98, 203-206.

September 30 - Augustine. **Hill** - pp. 79-91. **Berkhof** - 92f; 134-140; 169; 206 f; 227-236; 248 f; 252.

October 7 - Cyril of Alexandria, Importance of the Byzantine Empire - **Hill** 92 - 112; **Berkhof** 105 f.

October 14 - FALL BREAK. NO CLASS, BUT READING. The Middle Ages Introduction & The Great Schism, pp. 114-144. **Berkhof** - 140–146, 165-181;

October 21 - The Church's intellectual horsepower - The Monastic Life, Mendicant Orders of the Church — Dominican, Augustinian, Franciscan **Hill** - 147-149.

October 28 - The Church Learns even more, the Uni-veritas. The Rise of the Papacy, Innocent III.

November 4 - Thomas Aquinas and *Summa Theologica* **Hill** - pp. 149-161. **Berkhof** - pp. 114 f; 177 f; 212-214.

November 11 - William of Ockham & John Duns Scotus, Bonaventure. **Hill** - 163 -169. **Berkhof** - 176 f; 179 f; 214.

November 18 - Medieval Mysticism **Hill** - 167-177

November 25 - Medieval Church Disciplines and what we see in these disciplines today - Jesuits, etc.

December 2 - Final Papers due, no exceptions. Discussion.

Grades:

- 1.) Class Discussion - 25% You will be assigned to lead a class discussion. Your grade will be based off of your ability to ask questions of your peers, elicit responses, usage in practical ministry
- 2.) Critique of Augustine or the Monastic Life - 25% - 7 page minimum, according to BTS Paper standards.
- 3.) Final Paper: 50% — 15 page minimum. Written to BTS standards.
Write a Program of how you a.) Plan to incorporate the disciplines of Medieval Christianity into your own personal ministry, b.) Plan to use this knowledge in Sermons (with practical examples marrying Scripture passages to your learning) c.) how you will incorporate this into the lives of your young people.

Other Selected Readings/Bibliography

Justo Gonzales. *The Story of Christianity: The Early Church to the Dawn of the Reformation, Volume I.*

Bruce Shelly. *Church History in Plain Language*, 4th Ed.

Everett Ferguson. *Church History: From Christ to Pre-Reformation, Volume I.*

Alister McGrath. *Historical Theology: An Introduction to the History of Christian Thought.*

William Rusch, ed. and trans. *The Trinitarian Controversy.*

Michael A. G. Haykin. *Rediscovering the Church Fathers: Who They Were and How They Shaped the Church.*

Noll, M. A. *Turning Points: Decisive Moments in the History of Christianity.*

Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine, Vol. 2: The Spirit of Eastern Christendom (600-1700).*

Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine, Vol. 3: The Growth of Medieval Theology (600-1300)*