

*ASSEMBLIES OF GOD THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY*

**HISD 551 WORLD CHRISTIAN MOVEMENT I**

Rev. George R. Carson, Ph.D.

Summer 2005

***DEGREE COMPLETION PROGRAM***

May 5, 12, 19, 26, June 2, 2005  
Thursday evenings, 6:00-10:00

DESCRIPTION

An integrated study of the advancing world Christian movement in the Middle East, Africa, Europe, and Asia to the year 1500. Key personalities, sub-movements, theological controversies, spirituality, issues of faith and reason, missions and the contextualization of the faith in various cultures, and important historical developments receive attention.

OBJECTIVES

At the end of the course, each student should be able to:

1. Describe the history of Christianity in its diverse cultural settings to 1500.
2. Discuss how important figures, movements, and issues (ecclesiastical, political, theological) shaped Christianity in the first fifteen centuries of its existence.
3. Describe the richness and diversity of the world Christian movement.
4. Fit individual events and figures into the larger story.
5. Suggest applications of patterns for personal and corporate renewal today.

TEXTBOOKS

Irvin, Dale T., and Scott W. Sunquist. *History of the World Christian Movement, Vol. 1: Earliest Christianity to 1453*. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 2001.

Olson, Roger E. *The Story of Christian Theology: Twenty Centuries of Tradition & Reform*. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1999.

Placher, William C., Ed. *Readings in the History of Christian Theology, Vol. 1: From Its Beginnings to the Eve of the Reformation*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1988.

## METHODOLOGY

Every session will be based on the completion of pre-session assignments—it is assumed that you read the material. Class activities will vary and may include a video or other activity, lecture, discussion, or small groups. Most will end with a quiz or other written response.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. **Attendance and participation in sessions:** absences should be avoided unless a personal emergency occurs. More than one will be disastrous for successful completion of the course. See the degree completion program handbook for more information.  
*Students should not plan ministry activities during the course either in the U.S. or overseas that will cause them to miss class(es).*
2. Completion of all **pre-session assignments**.
3. Successful completion of **five essays**, each one due at the beginning of a particular class session. These should not contain footnotes, endnotes, bibliography, and *few if any direct quotations*. [for any quotation, simply note the name of the speaker, title of work cited, and page numbers. See attached “Tips for Writing Better Essays”]
4. Successful completion of **five in-class responses**, each one given at the close of a session over some topic(s) presented and discussed on that particular evening. A reflective quiz contains one essay question.
5. **Cautions:**
  - A. Late work will be penalized.
  - B. Incompletes will probably never be offered to anyone. If one is given, it will only be in response to a bonafide crisis.

## GRADING

Essays	55%
Class Participation	10%
Event Lists	10%
Quizzes	25%

## COURSE OUTLINE AND ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE

CODE: I—Irvin and Sunquist; O—Olson; P—Placher

### **May 5            Into all the World; Diverse Trajectories of the Early Christian Movement (A.D. 100-200)**

*Objectives:* The assignments and classroom discussions for this unit will enable the student to:

1. Discuss key historical, theological, and liturgical developments, 100-200 AD
2. Analyze how the Christian gospel was contextualized in various environments
3. List important milestones in the advance of Christianity to the year 200.

4. Interpret the relevance of issues and developments from this period to the contemporary church context in which she or he lives.

***Pre-session requirements:***

1. Reading: I—vii-97; O—13-78; P—9-29
2. Terms to be familiar with: Apostolic Fathers, apostolic succession, bishop, cathedral, “catholic,” church fathers, contextualization, deacon, heresy, monasticism, patristics, presbyter, Silk Road, tradition. In addition to the textbooks, students may wish to consult dictionaries and encyclopedias of church history and/or theology in the reference section of the AGTS library to locate definitions of these terms and the ones listed below. Reference sources include: *Blackwell Dictionary of Eastern Christianity*, *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement*, *Encyclopedia of Catholicism*, *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, *New International Dictionary of the Christian Church*, *Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, *Westminster Dictionary of Church History*, etc.
3. Event list (one page): significant events from A.D. 70-200. List at least ten of the most significant events in this historic period: include a sentence or two with each event, explaining its importance.
4. Essay (five pages double-spaced and carefully proofread; title page unnecessary); topic: Discuss how Irvin and Sunquist illustrate the thesis of their book in the assigned reading (pp. vii-97) for May 5.

**May 12 The Great Church Takes Shape (200-300)**

*Objectives:* The assignments and classroom discussions for this unit will enable the student to:

1. Discuss key historical, theological, and liturgical developments from A.D. 200 to 300.
2. Analyze how the Christian gospel was contextualized in various environments.
3. List important milestones in the advance of Christianity to the year 300.
4. Interpret the relevance of issues and developments from this period to the contemporary church context in which he or she lives.

***Pre-session requirements:***

1. Reading: I—99-153; O—79-135; P—30-47
2. Terms: apologists, asceticism, canon, gnosticism, Great Church, “martyr,” New Prophecy, non-canonical, School of Alexandria, School of Antioch
3. Event List (one page): AD 200-300. List at least eight events, include a sentence or two for each that explains their connection to another event.
4. Essay: Discuss the means by which early Christians defended the faith. Do they have relevance for the church today?

**May 19 The Age of the Imperial Church (300-600)**

*Objectives:* The assignments and classroom discussions for this unit will enable the student to:

1. Discuss key historical, theological, and missiological developments from A.D. 300 to 600.
2. Analyze how the Christian gospel was contextualized in varied environments

3. Chart important milestones in the advance of Christianity to the year 600
4. Interpret the relevance of issues and developments from this period to the contemporary church context in which she or he lives.

***Pre-session requirements:***

1. Reading: I—155-255; O—137-249; P—48-75
2. Terms: anchorite, Ante-Nicene, Cappadocians, cenobitic monasticism, chalcedonian churches, Christotokos, Coptic, Donatists, ecumenical councils, episcopacy, homoousios, homoiousios, hypostasis (hypostasis), Melkites, Monophysite, Nestorian, New Rome, Non-Chalcedonian churches; primacy (of the Bishop of Rome), Oriental Orthodox, ousia, prosopon, Theotokos, traditores
3. Time chart (one page): 300-600
4. Essay: Why did so many variations of Christian doctrine develop during this period? Who determined what teachings were heretical? Were they infallible in their pronouncements?

**May 26      New Challenges, New Beginnings (600-1000)**

*Objectives:* The assignments and classroom discussions for this unit will enable the student to:

1. Discuss key historical, theological, liturgical, and missiological developments from A.D. 600 to 1000.
2. Analyze how the Gospel was contextualized in differing environments
3. List significant milestones in the advance of Christianity to the year 1000.
4. Interpret the relevance of issues and developments from this period to the contemporary church context in which he or she lives.

***Pre-session requirements:***

1. Reading: I—257-381; O—251-310; P—76-121
2. Terms: Christendom, Cyrillic script, East Syrian churches, Ecumenical Patriarch, Filioque, House of Islam, icon, iconoclasm, iconodules, Islam, Maronites, melet, Meroë, monothelite, paganus, patriarchates, peregrini, Qur'an, relic, reliquary, Sufism, West Syrian churches
3. Time chart (one page): 600-1000
4. Essay: How does the incarnation of Christ relate to the use of Christian art in the churches? Evaluate how this aided in the contextualization of Christianity before 1500.

**June 2      New Political Horizons  
(1000-1453)**

*Objectives:* The assignments and classroom discussions for this unit will enable the student to:

1. Discuss key historical, theological, liturgical, and missiological developments from A.D. 1000 to 1453.
2. Analyze how the Christian gospel was contextualized in varied environments
3. List important milestones in the advance of Christianity to the year 1453.
4. Interpret the relevance of issues and developments from this period to the contemporary church context in which she or he lives.

***Pre-session requirements:***

1. Reading: I—383-506; O—311-367; P—122-196
2. Terms: apophasis, Byzantium, cardinal, conciliarism (conciliar movement), consubstantiation, crusade, dialects, ecclesiastical jurisdiction, excommunication, friars, hesychasm, indulgence, interdict, investiture, jihad, Mendicants, Nominalism, Ockham’s razor, scholasticism, Theosis, transubstantiation
3. Event List (one page): 1000-1453—five events with descriptions of the events in four or more sentences each.
4. Essay: Compare Christianity as it had developed within “Christendom” to the Christian forms that developed outside of Christendom by 1500.

**RESOURCES**

1. Recommended reading lists at the end of each unit in Irvin and Sunquist provide excellent up-to-date bibliographies.
2. Suggested sources for primary and secondary materials will also be mentioned in class.

**SUGGESTIONS WHEN READING**

1. Pay attention to the introductions to books. Here authors often state the purposes for doing the book the way he or she presents it. Authors can also insert their obvious views throughout.
2. Underline or highlight passages or sentences, especially ones that are key to understanding the passages you have read. (Paragraphs have a topical sentence that is often worthy of highlighting) Return to the highlighted areas later to review the thought of the author(s).
3. Making notes in margins may explain or recall personal comments for a later essay.

**TIPS FOR WRITING BETTER ESSAYS by Dr. Gary McGee**

**TRUISMS**

1. Reading and re-reading the instructions aid in the preparation of superior papers.
2. A good essay requires hard work. Within five minutes of reading a paper, a professor can spot poor work.
3. Writing skills improve with more writing; there are no shortcuts.

**WHAT THE PROFESSOR EXPECTS IN ESSAYS**

1. Familiarity and interaction with the required reading
2. Logical organization
3. Original analytical reflection
4. Integrity in writing
5. Consistency in following the designated style manual (Turabian)

## WHAT STUDENTS EXPECT OF PROFESSORS

1. Clear instructions about the nature of the paper
2. A clear rationale for the grade should be provided through comments written on the paper.
3. The weight of the grade based first on the content of the paper, secondly on the mechanics.

**NOTE:** This does not minimize the problem of mechanical errors, typos, etc., because they interfere with the logical argumentation of the paper. When I was in graduate school, a professor stated that he would count the number of mechanical problems and typos on a paper. If the number exceeded the number of pages, the grade would be reduced by one grade point. This represents a fair approach to grading. It has been my experience that if more than one mistake on the average appears on a page, then the paper has been poorly prepared both mechanically *and analytically*.

## GUIDELINES:

1. Before writing, prepare a detailed outline of what you intend to address; this will prevent rambling and guarantee logical development.
2. Somewhere on the first page, a clear statement of purpose needs to be given, one that explains the nature of the paper and what it intends to achieve. The conclusion should then link closely with the statement of purpose.
3. Write in good *written*, not spoken English. All sentences should be complete and coherent. Most people, especially preachers, write like they talk. (*Of course*, profs remain immune to such temptations!) This means that redundancies will inevitably appear in the text. While repetition and alliteration may be effective in the pulpit, such devices can be unnecessary and distracting in print. Avoid constant repetitions of proper names (use pronouns), expressions, etc. Also, use adjectives, adverbs, and emphasis words (such as “very”) sparingly.
4. After completing the first draft, look carefully through the paper and eliminate unnecessary sentences; continue this approach with later drafts. “What?” you ask, “more than one draft?”
5. Keep a sharp eye on paragraph development. The topic presented in the opening sentence must govern what follows. If a paragraph becomes a collection of several unrelated thoughts (e.g., the last sentence has no connection to the opening sentence), then the logical argumentation has broken down. Furthermore, make certain that the paragraph properly fits into the development of the section.
6. Following the introduction of a person’s name (e.g., Harry Jones), only use their last name and/or pronouns afterward. Do not use the person’s first name in subsequent references; this would imply that you are a personal friend of the person cited.
7. Minimize the use of verbs of being: am, is, are, were, and being. They are usually overworked. Regular active verbs make stronger sentences.
8. If in doubt about a long sentence construction, break into two or more sentences.
9. How should you refer to yourself in the paper? I suggest the *occasional* use of the pronoun “I.” Referring to yourself as “this writer” or “this author” or “he or she who scribeth this paper” appears awkward in my estimation. At the same time, avoid using the first person plural (“we,” “us,” “our”) and the second person singular and plural (“you”). Refer to others in the third person singular or plural. Consistency avoids confusion and keeps the reader on course.
10. ***Use direct quotations sparingly.*** A direct quotation should only be used when a source says something of such importance that the reader would be deprived by not being aware of it. ***The frequent use of direct quotations and especially block quotations indicates that the writer has not adequately digested the material; long or frequent quotations then serve as “stuffers” in the text.***

11. Beware of plagiarism. A safe rule of thumb is that only three to five words from a source may be used without quotation marks and a reference number. Plagiarism is the theft of resources written by other people.
12. Use headings (if necessary). Do not use “chapters.”
14. Proofread the paper carefully and by all means use a spell-check. Have someone else—“THE HONEST FRIEND”—or several people read the paper to look for typos, mechanical errors, and *especially* for clarity and logical development. Learn from their suggestions, but don’t accept them uncritically.
15. THOU SHALT NOT (1) justify the right margin; (2) use large or very small fonts.
16. *Gender inclusive language* should always be used except when referring to the members of the Trinity.