

ASSEMBLIES OF GOD THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
Degree Completion Program
Springfield, Missouri

HISD 601 CHRISTIANITY TO THE REFORMATION
May 10, 17, 24, 31 June 7
Thursday evenings, 6:00-10:00
(3 Credits)

Rev. George R. Carson, Ph.D.
gcarson@cbcag.edu

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COURSE SYLLABUS

DESCRIPTION

A study of how Christians from the ninth century to the early modern period perceived the mission of God in the world, involving the expansion and changing cultural contexts of Christianity from Christendom in the West to Africa, Russia, and Asia; the Protestant and Catholic Reformations; and finally to the extension of Christianity in other parts of the world. Key personalities, theological and missiological developments, schools of biblical interpretation, liturgies, and renewal movements receive attention. The course ends with a discussion of contemporary relevance and applications.

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 Reformation times.
2. Discuss how important figures, movements, and issues (ecclesiastical, political, theological) shaped Christianity in those centuries of its existence.
3. Describe the richness and diversity of the world Christian movement.
4. Examine the reasoning behind the Crusades and their effects.
5. Fit individual events and figures into the larger story.
6. Trace the history of theological and renewal movements and their challenges.
7. Suggest applications of patterns for personal and corporate renewal today.
8. Discuss the impact of past Christians' lives for us today.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

Coakley, John W. and Andrea Sterk, eds. *Readings in World Christian History, Vol. 1: Earliest Christianity to 1453*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2004.

Gonzalez, Justo L. *The Story of Christianity, Vol. 2: The Reformation to the Present Day*. San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1984

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

Placher, Wm C., Ed. *Readings in the History of Christian Theology, Vol. 2: From the Reformation to the Present*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1988.

Riddell, Peter G., and Peter Cotterell. *Islam in Context: Past, Present and Future*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 2003.

METHODOLOGY

Every session will be based on the completion of pre-session assignments—it is assumed that you have read and thought about the assigned material. Class activities will vary; they may include a quiz, video, lecture, discussion, and/or small groups. Each evening will end with a [required] 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. Each time you miss, you will not have the opportunity to take part in items such as class participation, quizzes and reflective essays. There will no make-up of these items. Reminder if absent: unless you have e-mailed your assignment to the professor on time, you will be penalized on your pre-session essay for each day you are late. Students should not plan ministry activities during the course either in the U.S. or overseas that 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. They are to be responses to the readings you have done in your required books.

These should not contain footnotes, endnotes, bibliography, and *few if any direct quotations*. If you quote, simply note the name of the writer, title of work, and pages. If you must directly address the ideas of one of the authors of textbooks, use his or her name (since we know the textbooks you are using). But do this rarely: we want your thoughts in these essays.

Each essay must be five—six pages (not four and a half), double-spaced and carefully proofread. Be scholarly and avoid grammatical and spelling mistakes. Put your name at the top of each page. Bring a hard copy into class. You may e-mail a copy to the professor on the day of class if you think you are going to be late or absent (still bring a hard copy)

4. Completion of five in-class written responses, given at the close of each session over some topic(s) presented on that particular evening. At least one essay question will be provided.

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 crisis. The administration must also be made aware of such an emergency.

6. Grading percents:

- Pre-session Essays 50%
- Class Participation 15%
- Average of quizzes and short assignments 10%
- Reflective Essays (on what was done in class-time) 25%

COURSE OUTLINE AND ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE

CODE: *C—Coakley and Sterk text; I—Irvin and Sunquist text; G—Gonzalez book; O—Olson text; P1—Placher, Volume 1; P2—Placher, Volume 2.; R—Riddell and Cotterell text.*

MAY 10 Moving into the High Middle Ages

Objectives:

The assignments and classroom activities for this unit will enable the student to:

1. Discuss key historical and theological developments that began with 800 AD
2. Analyze how Christianity sought to assess Mary and spiritual renewal
3. List important 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 she or he lives.

Pre-session requirements (before May 10):

1. Read: C: 253-255, 297-302, 339-359, 397-402
I: 383-394, 406-439
O: 304-330
P1: 126-128, 150-153, 175-180
2. Event list (one page): determine the MOST significant five events from A.D. 800-1000. Include a sentence or two with each event, explaining its importance.
3. Essay. (Note the instructions on essays in the Requirements section above). Choose ONE of the following questions for your essay work: (a) Discuss how the Church (as a whole and individuals) sought new ways to become renewed spiritually in the climate of the times, (b) Discuss the main points of Anselm's theology. (c) Present an overview of the ways the Church interacted with political powers in those times.

MAY 17 Scholasticism and The Crusades

Objectives: Assignments and classroom activities will enable students to:

1. Discuss key historical, theological, and liturgical developments beginning in 1000 AD.
2. Analyze how Christianity became more complex in this period.
3. List important milestones, good and bad, in the advance of Christianity.

4. Interpret the relevance of issues and developments from this era to contemporary times.

Pre-session requirements (before May 17):

1. Read: C: 243-251, 319-338, 359-362
I: 305-322, 395-405
R: 95-106

2. Crusade Chart. Make a comparative table or a chart listing at least five of the crusades. Include at least four traits that can be referenced with one another showing similarities or differences.
3. Essay: Choose ONE of the following options as a question to answer: (a) Compare and contrast the figures of Francis of Assisi and Thomas Aquinas. Include thoughts of why we need the heart of both kinds of Christians. (b) Discuss scholastic thought as exemplified in Aquinas, especially his proofs for the existence of God. (c) Discuss why many European medieval people felt that the crusades were really an important cause to fight.

MAY 24 The Coming of the Reformation by Renaissance and Lutheranism

Objectives: The assignments and classroom events should enable the student to:

1. Discuss key historical, theological, and missional events in the period.
2. Analyze how the simple Christian gospel was recovered
3. Connect the developments of Renaissance issues and attitudes to Reformation issues
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 (before May 24):

1. Read: G: 6-45
I: 440-504
O: 369-396
P2: 11-18, 23-26, 193-196
R: 107-110
2. One page: produce concise definitions/explanations of these terms: *sola scriptura*, “theology of glory,” anabaptism, transubstantiation, consubstantiation, pacifism.
3. Essay: Choose one of these to discuss: (a) What figures in Luther’s story caused him (by support or challenge) to become what he was? (b) What did the Renaissance do for the Christian Church? (c) Discuss the ideas and aid that Erasmus contributed to the times.

MAY 31 The Reformation becomes more than Luther

Objectives: Assignments and class activities for this unit will enable students to:

1. Discuss key historical, theological, liturgical, and mission events in this era.
2. Analyze why and how various splits and independent movements changed the Reformation.
3. List significant milestones in the advance of Christianity for those years.
4. Interpret the relevance of issues and developments from this period to today.

Pre-session requirements (Before May 31):

1. Read: G: 46-52, 61-69, 86-109, 172-184
O: 397-413

P2: 19-23, 34-37, 58-69

R: 107-110

2. Make a table or chart in some form: several major similarities and differences between the branches of churches arising out of Reformation times. At least note five areas.
3. Choose one of these for your essay: (a) excepting the predestination perspective of his doctrine, how can Christians benefit from John Calvin's ideas? (b) Compare and contrast John Calvin with Martin Luther, (c) How different or similar was Thomas Aquinas' ideas to two of the Reformers' theologies?

JUNE 7 The Last and the Legacy of the Reformation

Objectives: Assignments and class activities for the unit will enable students to:

1. Discuss key highlights of the events of English and Italian responses to Reformationism.
2. Analyze how the Christian gospel was contextualized.
3. Interpret the relevance of developments from this period to the contemporary church.

Pre-session requirements (before June 7):

1. Read: G: 53-60, 70-85, 110-125, 132-163

O: 414-472

P2: 26-34, 38-47, 69-81

2. One Page: present thoughts on how the whole story of the Christian Church in this period (800 AD to Reformation era) can be useful to preachers and people today. State at least five areas the class can discuss. Formally state your topic with at least three explanatory sentences each.
3. For the essay, choose one of the following: (a) Why was the Catholic Reformation {especially as embodied in the Council of Trent} such a mixed reaction to the Reformation movements? (b) Why did some of the later reformist churches become entangled with political or military matters? (c) Discuss how some of the various problems and mis-directions of some of the reformists could have been avoided. Be specific.

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.
3. Suggestions on theological/historical terms: students may wish to consult dictionaries and encyclopedias of church history and theology in the reference section of the AGTS library to locate definitions of terms utilized in the textbooks.

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.*

SUGGESTIONS WHEN READING

1. Highlight passages or sentences key to understanding the passages you have read (topical sentence especially) Return to these later to review the thought of the author(s).
2. Making notes in margins may help you recall personal comments for a later essay.

TIPS FOR WRITING BETTER ESSAYS by Dr. Gary McGee

Note: these are great suggestions from Dr. McGee: read them, follow them, and be blessed!

“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.

“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 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; or (2) use large or very small fonts.
16. *Gender inclusive language* should always be used except when referring to the members of the Trinity.

SPECIFIC DATA

Prepared by George Carson, March 2007.