

ASSEMBLIES OF GOD THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

HIS 551 WORLD CHRISTIAN MOVEMENT I

Gary B. McGee

Fall 2003

COURSE SYLLABUS

COURSE 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

1. To introduce the student to the history of Christianity in its diverse cultural settings to 1500.
2. To introduce the student to key figures, movements, and theological issues (e.g., church/state, christological controversies, faith and reason, missions) during the period under study.
3. To help the student gain an appreciation for the richness and diversity of the world Christian movement.
4. To enable students to relate their own stories to the larger story.
5. To discern 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.

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

Lectures, discussions, debates, creative projects, video presentations

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Attendance and participation in class sessions. Absences should be taken only as needed and must not exceed the number permitted in the seminary catalog if credit is to be given. *Students should not plan ministry activities during the semester either in the U.S. or overseas that will cause them to miss more classes than allowed by the seminary policy.*
2. Completion of all assigned reading.
3. Successful completion of two unit examinations. NOTE: Students with a reading (e.g., dyslexia) or writing challenge may ask the instructor for extended time to finish the examination.
4. Successful completion of six unannounced quizzes over the assigned readings (each quiz contains one essay question).
5. Preparation of a “creative project” (e.g., debate, group class presentation, research paper, etc.). Project must be approved by the instructor.

Debates

Arius vs. Antony of the Desert

(Jesus as the Son of God)

Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite vs. Julian of Norwich

(the nature of prayer and understanding of God)

Radbertus vs. Ratramnus

(on the body and blood of Christ in the Eucharist)

Abelard vs. Bernard of Clairvaux

(faith and reason in relation to Christian theology)

6. Cautions:
 - A. Late work will be penalized.
 - B. Incompletes will be given only in the event of extreme circumstances.

GRADING

Mid-term examination	25%
Final examination	25%
Quizzes	20%
Creative project	30%

COURSE OUTLINE, READING, AND EXAMINATION SCHEDULE

Key: I—Irvin; O—Olson; P—Placher

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| Sep | 3 | Introduction to the course
Character of Latin, Greek, and Non-Chalcedonian Churches |
| Sep | 5 | Into all the world
I-Part I |
| Sep | 10 | Diverse trajectories of the early Christian movement
I-Part II |
| Sep | 12 | Changing church order
I-Part III |
| Sep | 17 | The opening act: conflicting Christian visions in the second century
O-Part I |
| Sep | 19 | Irenaeus and the tradition
P-Chapter 1 |
| Sep | 24 | Early Christian worship |
| Sep | 26 | Montanist movement |
| Oct | 1 | 3 rd -Century tensions and transformations
O-Part II; P-Chapter 2 |
| Oct | 3 | A great crisis rocks the church: the controversy about the Trinity
O-Part III |
| Oct | 8 | <u>Debate</u> : Arius vs. Antony of the Desert
P-Chapter 3 |
| Oct | 10 | The age of the imperial church
I-Part IV, chapter 14 |
| Oct | 15 | Mid-term examination |
| Oct | 17 | Nestorian controversy; <u>film</u> : "Nestorians and Syrians, Primitive Christian Churches" |
| Oct | 22 | Syrian Christianity and Ephrem the Syrian
I-Part IV, chapters 15-21 |

- Oct 24 Another crisis shakes the church: the conflict over the person of Christ
O-Part IV
- Oct 29 Augustine
O-Part V, chapter 17; P-Chapter 5
- Oct 31 Rise of monasticism
Film: “Where God Walked on Earth: The Monastery of Mt. Sinai”
- Nov 5 Debate: Pseudo-Dionysius vs. Julian of Norwich
- Nov 7 The Western Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox churches
O-Part V, chapters 18-20; P-Chapter 4
- Nov 12 Theology in art; the Iconoclastic Controversy
Film: “Holy Image/Holy Space”
- Nov 14 Debate: Radbertus vs. Ratramnus
P-Chapter 6
- Nov 19 Debate: Abelard vs. Bernard
- Nov 21 Scholasticism
O-Part VI
- Nov 26 The coming of the friars
P-Chapter 7
- Dec 3 New challenges, new beginnings; Islam
I-Part V; P-Chapter 8
- Dec 5 Christianity extends to central Asia and China
- Dec 10 New political horizons
I-Part VI
- Dec 12 **Final (unit) examination (8-10 a.m.)**

RESOURCES

Suggested sources for primary and secondary materials will be discussed in class.

Prepared by Gary B. McGee, August 18, 2003.