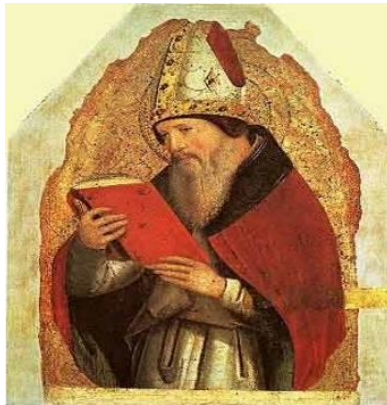


Progressing together



EGLI 206

History of the Church



Saint Augustine

Original pre-test edition

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Objectives:

The student will understand the development of the Church, from the Early Church to present day.

The student will see how the Church was persecuted and in minority, virtually from its very beginning.

The student will study the sufferings of the Church during the course of its history.

The student will understand how the Church expanded through testimony rendered to Jesus Christ, and will be encouraged to partake in it.

The student will study the missionary movement, and its contribution to the expansion of the Church throughout the world.

The student must also understand that the Church is not merely western, and realize that we are part of the universal Church.

The student will be capable of explaining the difference between the Catholic Church and the Protestant/Evangelical Churches.

The student will know the foundation and distinctions of the various denominations, particularly the Reformation and the Pentecostal movements.

The student will be capable of explaining the differences between political powers (Constantine, crusades, inquisition, etc.) and the universal and true Church.

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Syllabus for CHUR206 - Church History

Certificate Level

Course objective

To help elders, cell groups leaders and church planting pastors in newly responsive areas of the Arab World to connect the history of the church in their community with the history of the universal Christian community.

Course description

This course traces the history and worldwide development of the Christian Church in all of its major branches from the death and resurrection of Christ through the year AD 2000. The outline includes (1) the early expansion from the first to fourth centuries, (2) the origins of the main divisions of the church on doctrinal issues, (3) church growth and development in different areas of the world and (4) the major missionary movements of Christian History.

Course Learning Outcomes

Content: By the end of the course, the student will be able:

- To identify five stages in the development of the Church, from the Early Church to present day.
- To describe the expansion of the church across the stages of Christian History, and to recognize the role of Christian witness and mission as integral part of that expansion
- To give examples of the missionary movement, and its contribution to the expansion of the Church throughout the world.
- To trace the history of the origins of various denominational traditions, particularly Catholic, Reformed, and Charismatic, and to identify key theological distinctions between those traditions
- To understand the nature of the universal church and the local church, and to outline three models by which these two relate
- To describe the important doctrinal differences between the Catholic Church and the Protestant and Evangelical Churches.
- To compare the foundation and distinctions of various denominations, particularly the Reformation and the Pentecostal movements.
- To identify five heretical traditions and five modern sects and will be able to indicate where their beliefs differ from evangelical theology
- To describe the history of their own congregation within the development of the church within their country and region.

Character: By the end of the course, the student will be able to:

- To recount three examples of the church's endurance in the face of suffering across the centuries, to show how we model that endurance in the face of modern challenges.
- To show ways in which they might be a part of the future expansion of the church in their community through witness and through church planting

- The next step is to show how assignments complete these objectives.

Course requirements

Certificate Level

- To demonstrate knowledge of course material through
 - answering questions at the end of each section
 - completion of the final exam
- To attend 18 of 20 instructor-led sessions (27 contact hours minimum)
- To participate in discussions by listening, contributing as appropriate, and responding when asked a specific question
- To draft a time-line of fifty key events and people in Christian Church History
- To complete a character sketch of a historical figure deemed a role model by the student, explaining why the student feels that individual to be a model for Christian life and conduct

Evaluation methodology and scale

- Student performance and mastery will be assessed according to the following scale:
 - 40% on completion of reading, of questions, and of assignments
 - 10% on student participation and attitude in discussions
 - 10% on attendance (percentage equals number of classes attended, divided by number of classes held, times ten)
 - 40% on the final written, or oral, exam.
- The evaluation scale is as follows
 - passing grade – 70-79%
 - good grade – 80-89%
 - excellent grade – 90% and above

Credits earnable

- 2 credits towards a Certificate in Christian Studies

Prerequisites

Basic Christian Doctrine (Progressing Together - DOCT201, or equivalent)

Textbook and related materials

- Required - Progressing Together Manual for Church History – EGLI206
- Additional readings may be required at the instructor's discretion
- Recommended a Bible atlas including maps of geographical expansion of the Church across history

Course methodology

The student will work inductively, reading texts, answering questions concerning knowledge, application and analysis, and drawing conclusions which will be applicable to local context. After answering the questions in each lesson, students will gather to

discuss answers and practical application. When possible, the course leader will give additional talks to reinforce what the students are learning through the lessons.

Course schedule

To be announced.

Policies

- Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated, because it is deemed contrary to Christian teaching and academic integrity.
- Absences in excess of 3 class hours will lead to a reduced grade; no student missing more than 6 class hours will receive credit for the course. Students who show little or no interest in completing course work will first be warned, then asked to leave the course if they do not change their conduct.

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VOL 2 XIXe et XXe siècle: L'Evangélisation du Monde.

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Significant Dates, Names and Events in the History of Christianity

Date AD	Emperors, kings, popes and rulers	Important Christians	Important events
14-37	Tiberius Caesar		Ministry of Christ (26-30)
30		Peter, James and John	Death and resurrection of Christ
35		Stephan (first martyr)	Paul's conversion
35?		12 apostles (esp. Peter)	Cornelius and Gentiles accepted
41	Claudius Caesar	Paul, Barnabas	Paul's 1 st missionary journey
68	Nero (suicide)	Luke, Priscilla and Aquila, Timothy, Titus	Paul martyred, 1 st major persecution of Christians
70	Vespasian	Apostle John	Destruction of Jerusalem
90's	Domitian	Clement of Rome	Canon closed with Revelation
117-138	Hadrian	Ignatius	Persecution of church
115-155	Antonius Pius	Polycarp, Justin Martyr	Marcion heresy emerges
155-220	Marcus Aurelius	Tertullian, Irenaeus	Theology and apologetics
200-258	Emperor Decius	Cyprian, Origen	Arguments over the "lapsed"
313	Emperor Constantine	Bishop Miltiades, St Martin, Gregory	Christianity officially recognized France and Armenia evangelized
325	Emperor Constantine	Alexander, Arius	Council of Nicea
430	Emperor Theodosius	Augustine (354-430)	Vandals invade North Africa
451	Marcian (396-457)	Pope Leo I (sovereign)	Council of Chalcedon
451	Marcian	St. Patrick, Nestorius	Schism with Coptic Church
496	King Clovis	Queen Clothilda	Franks Christianized
553	Pope Vigilius	Columba	II Council of Constantinople
597	Pope Gregory I	St. Augustine (Britain)	England evangelized
632	Pope Honorius	Alopen (missionary)	Death of Mohammed
711	Tarik ibn Ziyad	John of Damascus	Moors invade Europe
732	Charles Martel	Boniface	Martel stops Muslims armies
787	Charlemagne	Alcuin of York	II Council of Nicea (iconoclasts)
863	Pope Nicholas I	Cyril and Methodius	Moravia evangelized
955	Emperor Otto		Conversion of Olga of Russia
1054	Emperor Henry III	Hugh (abbot of Cluny)	Schism with Orthodox Church
1095	Pope Urban VI	Anselm	Beginning of Crusades
1200	Pope Innocent III	Peter Waldo	North African church disappears
1226	King Louis IX	St. Francis of Assisi	Muslims hold Jerusalem
1270	Richard of Cornwall	Thomas Aquinas	Last Crusade to Middle East
1349	Emperor Charles IV	William Occam	Bubonic plague in Europe
1380	Emperor Wenceslas	John Wycliffe, Jan Hus	Translation of Bible into English
1450	Emperor Frederick III	Johann Gutenberg	Invention of printing press
1517	Pope Leo X	Martin Luther	Luther's 95 theses
1545	Emperor Charles V	John Calvin, Cranmer	Council of Trent
1598	King Henry IV (Fr.)	Arminius, Blaise Pascal	Edict of Nantes until 1685
1643-1715	Louis XIV (Fr)	Claude Brousson	Persecution of Protestants in Fr.
1646	Emp. Ferdinand III	John Elliot, Cromwell	Mission to American Indians

1646	King Charles I (Br.)	George Fox	Westminster Confession
1726-1760	Emperor Charles VI	George Whitefield	First Great Awakening-America
1787	King George III (Br.)	John Wesley	Second Great Awakening begins
1789	Louis XVI	Pastor Rabaut	French Revolution
1793	President Washington	Wilberforce, W. Carey	Carey sails to India (missionary)
1804	Napoleon 1st	Samuel Mills	Catholicism affirmed in France
1848	Napoleon III	Past. Adolph Monod, G. Muller, J. Darby	Free Churches founded in Europe and A.E.F.
1890's	Kaiser Wilhelm II	Dwight Moody	Rebirth of North African church
1905	President Emile Loubet	Alexander, B. Sunday	Welsh revival (UK), Separation of church and state
1910	Pope Pius X	Jonathan Goforth	World Missionary Conference
1915	Tsar Nicholas II	Scofield, Schweitzer	Armenians massacred in Turkey
1948	Winston Churchill	John Stott, Carmichael	World Council of Churches
1950	Pope Pius XII	Billy Graham	"Assumption of Mary" doctrine
1960	Charles de Gaulle	Loren Cunningham	Charismatic Movement begins
1962	Kennedy, Castro	C.S. Lewis, Schaeffer	Vatican Council II begins, End of the war in Algeria
1974	Anwar Sadat, Mao	Bill Bright, Wimber	Lausanne Conference on Evan.
1989	Gorbachev	Bill McCartney	Evangelization to the EST
1990's	S. Hussein, Mandela	R. Warren, Yonggi Cho	Revival in Kabyle region
2001		You and me	PALM is organized

Lesson 1: Early Church

Acts of the Apostles

Introduction

Luke, the author of the book of Acts, clearly arranged his history following the progression of the Christian faith from its starting point in Jerusalem and traced it “unto the ends of the earth”. In this book we find a wealth of help and information concerning not only the growth of the church from its humble beginning of 120 people gathered in a single room, but also a treasure trove of spiritual and theological truths, not to mention our first and best example of how the church grows and organizes itself.

Obviously, after the original apostles had all gone to be with the Lord, the canon of inspired scripture was complete and therefore our knowledge of Christian history after that point must depend on the often fallible historical accounts of both Christian and non-Christian authors. Hundreds of scholars have poured over thousands of historical accounts and attempted to discover the exact chain of events which make up the history of Christianity worldwide. Thankfully, we can benefit from their labors without having to know several ancient and modern languages or spending thousands of hours reading.

In this course, our goal is to introduce the student to the most outstanding aspects of church history worldwide, while attempting to gain insight into the spiritual mistakes and victories of our brothers and sisters in the faith. This will help us, by the guidance and empowering of the Holy Spirit, to live out our faith in Christ the Savior in a way pleasing unto the Lord.

A. Jerusalem

Read the following verses in Acts 1:1-7:1 and 7:51-60.

1. Fill-in the blanks in the following verse (Acts 1:8): “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and you will be my _____ in _____, and in all _____ and _____, and to the _____ of the earth.”

The first step in this progression outwards is the apostles’ testimony in Jerusalem.

2. In order to fulfil this task, what did Jesus tell them to wait for in Jerusalem?(vv. 1:4-8)

3. Once the Holy Spirit descended on the group present in the upper room at the Mount of Olives, how many peoples are mentioned by name who were hearing “the wonders of God” in their native languages? (vv. 2:5-11)

4. How did Peter answer those who wanted to know how to be saved? (vv. 2:37-41)

5. What were the principle activities of those who accepted Christ on the day of Pentecost? (vv. 2:42 and 47)

- a.
- b.
- c.
- d.
- e.

6. In what two places did they meet together for fellowship and worship? (v. 2:46)
7. What do you think the purpose of sharing everything they owned was? (vv. 2:44-45)
8. Should or could we continue this practice today in our churches? In what way?
9. What was the cause of the first persecution of the apostles? (vv. 4:1-12)
10. What was the most surprising thing about these two simple fishermen and why? (v. 4:13)
11. Why didn't Peter and John obey the local religious authorities? (vv. 4:19-22)
12. Why was Ananias and Sapphira's sin so serious? (vv. 5:3-4, 11)
13. What provoked the second persecution of the apostles? (vv. 5:17-18)
14. Compare Acts 4:21-22 with 5:40 and with 7:57-60. What pattern do we see here in the level of persecution aimed at the followers of Christ?

Text	Persecutors	Action taken
4:21-22		
5:40		
7:57-60		

15. Compare Acts 4:23-31 with 5:41-42 and with 8:1-4. What responses do we observe on the part of the believers?

Text	Who is persecuted?	Action taken by the believers in response
4:23-31		
5:41-42		
8:1-4		

16. Discuss the situation of believers in your country. Are they being persecuted in some way? Is there something from the experience of the early church which your local church should put into action? Please explain:

B. Judea and Samaria

Read Acts 8:1-12:25

At times, we Christians are inclined to see severe persecution as a personal disaster and as a victory for our enemies. However, God sees beyond the individual suffering and looks ahead to the growth which almost inevitably results from times of persecution. Due to the attacks of Saul and others on the church in Jerusalem, the believers spread out to other regions nearby, including Judea and Samaria.

At this point, we begin to see a new development in the composition of the church. As you may recall, many of the followers of the Lord in Judea were proselytes, that is, converts to Judaism from the pagan religions around the Mediterranean Sea. They, along with the Samaritans who were Israelites racially mixed with other nations, were looked down upon by the pure blooded Jews who lived in the region. However, the gospel message, which is “the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes,” was on the verge of bursting out of the ethnic moulds into which it had been poured!

1. What events commonly accompanied the introduction of the gospel into new regions? (vv. 8:5-8)

2. How did Peter react to Simon the magician's suggestion to turn the power and action of the Holy Spirit into a money making venture? (vv. 8:18-24)
3. What indication do we have that the Lord was extremely interested in saving the black, God-fearing Ethiopian? (vv. 8:26-29)
4. Why was Ananias reluctant to go to Straight Street in Damascus and pray for Saul? (vv. 9:10-14)
5. What specific tasks had God given Saul to carry out in his name? (vv. 9:15-16)
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
 - d.
6. How did Barnabas play an important role in the life of Saul, later named Paul? (vv. 9:26-30)
7. What essential lesson did God want to teach Peter before he would be ready to go to Cornelius' house and preach the gospel to him? (vv. 10:9-20, 28)
8. What event convinced Peter that these Gentiles had indeed been saved and could be baptised as followers of the Lord Jesus? (vv. 10:44-48)
9. What conclusion did the "apostles and the brothers throughout Judea" come to after hearing Peter's account of Cornelius' conversion? (vv. 11:15-18)

10. When many Greeks began to believe in Antioch (southern Turkey), what methods did Barnabas employ in encouraging the Gentile church to grow? (vv. 11:19-26)

11. In Acts 12, two of the apostles are taken prisoner by the evil king Herod. James is executed and Peter is miraculously rescued. What possible explanation can be given as to why God allowed one saint to suffer and die, while allowing another one to walk away free, praising the Lord for deliverance?

12. What lessons can be learned from the event recounted at the end of chapter 12 (verses 18-24)?

C. “The Ends of the Earth”

Read Acts 13:1-15:41.

Now that Gentiles had also been accepted into the fold of faith in Christ, the church at Antioch had quickly grown in number and spiritual depth. They now counted on a solid group of teachers and leaders. Inevitably, a vibrant, growing church will experience another stage of development: the sending of missionaries to unreached areas. Most of the rest of the book of Acts deals with this stage of missionary outreach, especially that of Paul and his companions.

Although this study only covers through the end of chapter 20, we encourage you to read and study the rest of the book at another time.

1. In what circumstances did the Holy Spirit call out Barnabas and Saul for missionary service? (vv. 13:1-4)

2. What type of opposition did they meet when they began preaching in Paphos? (vv. 13:6-10) Bar Jesus meant “son of the saviour.”

3. Compare 13:13 with 15:36-41. Then read 2 Timothy 4:11, written late in Paul’s ministry. What lessons can be learned about missionaries who abandon their colleagues on the field?

4. Why did Paul and Barnabas stop preaching to the Jews and turn their attention to the Gentiles at Pisidian Antioch? (vv. 13:44-48)

5. Review the account of what happened in Lystra in Acts 14:8-15. Comment on the importance of learning the language of the people you are ministering to.

6. On their return visit to the towns they had evangelised, what were Paul and Barnabas careful to say and do among these young Christians? (vv. 14:21-23)

Verse	What they said	What they did
14:22		
14:23	Ex. They prayed aloud for them. They committed them to the Lord.	

After many Gentiles had come to Christ, a theological controversy arose concerning whether or not the Gentile converts should be required to keep the Jewish law. Those who argued for one side or the other fiercely debated the issue. It is extremely interesting to note how this first major doctrinal battle was resolved.

7. Since the two parties could not agree, how did they decide to settle the issue? (v. 15:2)

8. Who were present at this first major church counsel? (v. 15:6, 12)

9. Organise these steps in the order of their occurrence in the text (vv. 6-23):

Order	Steps in the process:
	They sent a letter to the Gentile believers with details of the decision.
	Peter addressed the assembly, speaking of his experience with Cornelius.
	They chose some men to go with Paul and Barnabas to Antioch.
	James spoke to the assembly, quoting a relevant passage from Scripture.
1st	They discussed the question among them at length, hearing both sides.
	They listened to Paul and Barnabas tell about the signs and wonders.

10. Who was an integral part of their decision making process? (v. 15:28)

11. How was this decision significant for the inclusion of non-Jews into the church?

Read Acts 16:1-20:38.

12. Why didn't Paul and his companions pass quickly through the Phrygian and Galatian region and avoid Bithynia? (16:6-8)

13. What prompted Paul to cross over Macedonia to begin a ministry there? (16:9-12)

14. What do you think Paul's purpose was in demanding his legal rights be respected by the people in authority? (16:35-40)

15. What is the result when people examine the claims of Christ seriously from the Word of God itself? (17:10-12)

16. Read Paul's message to the Athenians in Acts 17:16-34. What elements did Paul use from the listeners' own knowledge and experience to present Christ to them? (See especially v. 23, 28 and 29.)

17. How did Paul and those who joined him from Rome support themselves in Corinth? (18:1-4)

18. How were Aquila and Priscilla able to maximise Apollos' already powerful ministry? (18:24-28)

19. What action did Paul take in Ephesus concerning those who had heard the message of salvation but had become hardened against it? (19:8-10)

20. Reread Acts 20:17-38. When Paul met with the Ephesian elders on his way to Jerusalem, what was his only command to them and why? (20:28-31)

21. Read these verses and discuss what was the favourite and most effective method of evangelism and teaching used in the early church: 2:46, 5:42, 9:11, 10:22, 10:32, 12:12, 16:15, 16:32, 16:40, 18:17, 20:20, 21:8, 21:16, 28:30.

⚔ The remainder of the Book of Acts deals with Paul's imprisonment and witness before kings and queens, just as the Lord had told him (9:15). The events of chapters 21-28 of Acts took place between about A.D. 57 to 62, after which it seems that Paul was released from prison. Indications from his letters lead many to believe that he then made a fourth missionary journey. Finally, he was thrown into prison for a second time, during Nero's reign, and beheaded around A.D. 68.

At this point, we are obliged to turn to other sources in order to trace the growth and expansion of the church throughout the Middle East, across North Africa, into Europe, and eastward into Asia. All of this expansion took place peacefully until a political element was introduced with the conversion of the Emperor Constantine to Christianity in A.D. 313.

Jesus never taught military action or persecution of others as a means of spreading the gospel. As we shall see in later lessons, though, his example and teaching of love and self-sacrifice have not always been practiced by everyone bearing the name "Christian".

Lesson 2: Expansion of the Church from 64 to 325 AD

A. Fierce and Ruthless Persecutions

“One must also point out that the expansion of Christianity throughout the whole Roman Empire was facilitated in an extraordinary manner, because it happened at precisely the opportune time. Believers esteem that the hour had been chosen and prepared by God, who is the “master of history” (See J.A. Blanc. *Le Maître de l'Histoire*. Ed. “Le Phare.” Flavion. pp. 60-62 and 251-254). Among the elements favorable to the expansion of Christianity, one can point out in particular the unity of the Roman Empire, which was at its climax under Emperor Augustus at the time of Christ’s birth; the development of culture, of writing and communication mediums. Also, one can mention the political, moral and spiritual decadence under Augustus’ successors, which gave people the desire to uphold a firm, pure faith, lived out in authentic fellowship.

“In the same way the situation in Palestine... where Christ is born, and where is his expected return and reign; it is no accident this country is situated precisely at the crossroads of continents and peoples, just as Christ’s birth under the reign of Augustus eased the expansion of the Early Church in a providential manner.

“The disciples had no reason to expect better treatment than their master. Accused without reason of being enemies of the human race, they were first persecuted by the Jews after Stephen’s martyr (Acts 8:1), and then by the Romans for over two centuries (from the year 64 to the year 313). Indeed, they refused to participate in public celebrations made in honor of the gods, to swear before judges, to worship the emperor’s genius and the genius of the army symbolized by banners, to offer incense to god Augustus and to deity Rome. It is because they disobeyed such Roman laws that they were hounded out by even the most gracious of Roman emperors.

The persecutions

“There were ten different persecution times, which alternated with long periods of relative peace. The most violent persecutions were the last ones. We separate these into three eras: “a. – In the first century, the first persecution took place in Rome under the reign of Nero in 64. The Christians were accused of setting the city ablaze. Many of them were thrown to the circus lions, and many others served as living torches to light up Nero’s gardens.

“b. – In the second era, Trajan (53 to 117) was the first emperor to take generalized and legal action against the Christians (Trajan was emperor from 98 to 117). He outlawed their assemblies under penalty of death; these were viewed as secret and dangerous societies. But the Christians weren’t individually sought out or troubled. It is at this time that Pliny the Young, governor of Bithynia, wrote a well-known letter to the emperor in this regard. These generalized persecutions were sustained under the reign of Marcus Aurelius and of Septimius Severus. At that time, Bishop Pothinius of Lyon died, as well as Blandina’s young slave in Gaul, Justin Martyr and Bishop Polycarp in Rome, as well as two women famous for their faith and courage in Carthage, Perpetua and Felicity. The Christians were not called victims, but martyrs (witnesses). Their torment was a public testimony given to Christ. They compared themselves to athletes, struggling to win the prize or crown. There were times when thousands of Christians went to turn themselves in, demanding their own

condemnation. The Church then worried about such zeal and forbade the faithful from seeking martyrdom.” (Jordan, 23-25)

Among those mentioned above who died as martyrs was the bishop Polycarp. “Born in a Christian home, Polycarp (69-155) appears to have been a disciple of the apostle John and to have met other eyewitnesses of Jesus as well. He served the church as bishop of Smyrna. On a trip to Rome, Polycarp met Marcion (75-155), whom he referred to as “firstborn of Satan.” At the end of his life when the civil authorities demanded that he deny his faith, Polycarp’s response was, ‘I have served Christ 85 years. How can I blaspheme my King? I am a Christian.’ At his martyrdom he reportedly was miraculously untouched by the flames, so he was killed with a dagger and his body burned. His followers collected his bones as relics.” (Rusten, 104)

“Like the Jews, Christians buried their dead instead of burning them according to the pagan customs. In big cities where land was very expensive, they had to dig deep galleries in the ground and rooms to build underground cemeteries which were called catacombs. The most famous of these were the Roman ones, where Christians from the second century would sometimes hide to celebrate their worship service.

“c. – The third era saw amplified violent persecutions. All Christians were hunted, and their buildings and sacred books were destroyed. At that time the bishop of Carthage, Cyprian, and Origen, a theologian, both died. Emperor Diocletian (245 à 313), the most cruel of all emperors, imagined all sorts of tortures against the Christians. “But the blood of the martyrs became a seed of Christians” (Tertullian) and their steadfastness overcame the cruelty of their tormentors. This last and terrible persecution was short winded. It ended in 313 with the ascension of Constantine.” (Jordan, 25-26)

1. Read 1 Peter 1:3-9, 4:1-2 and 4:12-19. In light of these passages, discuss why you think God allows Christians to suffer persecution at the hands of unbelievers.

2. What Roman laws did the Christians break which brought about persecution against them?

3. Should the Christians have obeyed these laws to avoid persecution? Answer why or why not, using biblical texts to support your answers when possible.

4. Are there any laws in your country which you as a Christian cannot obey? Please explain.

B. The Church Fathers

After the deaths of Paul and the original 12 apostles, numerous prominent leaders, often referred to as “the early church fathers,” arose to fill the need for leadership in the church. We may safely assume that there were in fact hundreds, probably even thousands, of faithful men who served as elders and bishops for the next three hundred years until Christianity finally became the state religion. However, we only know the names of those who left writings of one kind or another, or those who are referred to in the writings of others. Many of these men died as martyrs for the faith which transformed their lives and became the centre of their existence. Here we will mention the most famous of these early church fathers and their significance. Most of the dates given for their lives are approximations.

Clement of Rome (A.D. 30-100): Clement is considered by Roman Catholics to be the fourth pope. He may be the person referred to by Paul in Philippians 4:3. He wrote a letter in which he discusses apostolic succession. He died a martyr under Emperor Domitian.

Ignatius (died 117): He wrote several letters to different churches on his way from Antioch in Syria to martyrdom under Emperor Trajan. Among the things he wrote, he speaks of his joy in being able to die for Christ. Ignatius seems to be the first church leader to make a distinction between elders and bishops. He also wrote against the Gnostic heresy. The Gnostics believed that all matter, including our bodies, is evil. Only the spiritual is good. Our human spirits must be liberated from our bodies through secret knowledge (“gnosis” in Greek) so that we can attain salvation. Jesus appeared, not in a real body, to give us the secret information we needed. The idea (called “docetism”) that Jesus’ body only appeared to be real undercuts the whole concept of resurrection from the dead which lies at the heart of our faith. For this reason, and several others, Gnosticism was rejected as a dangerous heresy.

Hermas (second century): His writing, *The Shepherd of Hermas*, was very well known and circulated among the Christians of his day and discusses forgiveness of sins after baptism. He wrote visions and parables and is thought to have been a Jewish slave, the brother of a bishop in Rome.

Barnabas of Alexandria (from late first to second century): Most likely of Jewish heritage, he was familiar with the allegorical methods of Philo and wrote a well known epistle.

Papias (60-130): We have information through Papias which clarifies a couple of questions concerning the gospels. He knew the apostle John personally and besides reporting that the Gospel of Matthew was written originally in Aramaic and not Greek, he also claimed that Mark got the information for his gospel based on the apostle Peter’s teachings.

Polycarp (69-155): Polycarp, who ministered in Smyrna (Turkey), also knew the apostle John personally. He is the one who collected and preserved the letters written by Ignatius before his martyrdom. He authored an *Epistle to the Philippians* and opposed the false teachings of Marcion who claimed that Jehovah was an evil god who is not God the Father of Jesus Christ. Marcion rejected all of the Old Testament and most of the New because the teachings didn’t correspond to his own. He taught that God the Father intended that all created beings

remain spiritual only, but that the evil Jehovah created a physical world and trapped human spirits in physical bodies. Many apologists, like Polycarp, responded to Marcion's unfounded and unbiblical speculations. Polycarp died a martyr under Antoninus Pius (138-161).

Irenaeus (second century): He studied under Polycarp in Smyrna, but later went to Lyon, Gaul (France), perhaps as a missionary. He served as bishop there until he is thought to have suffered martyrdom. Only two of his writings remain: *Against Heresies*, which is a refutation of Gnosticism, and *On the Unity of God and the Origin of Evil*. The latter work presents God as our loving shepherd and expounds on the purpose of creation, reason and result of the fall into sin, and the restoration of humankind through Christ.

Clement (150-215): Clement, born in Athens of pagan parents, became a believer while still young and later served Christ in Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem. Converted as an adult, he had been trained in philosophy and saw his primary role as that of demonstrating the reasonableness of the Christian faith and its links with Platonic philosophy. Three of his important writings are *Exhortation to the Greeks*, *The Pedagogue*, and *Stromata*. He emphasized the concept of "logos" in his writings and interpreted Scripture allegorically. He is the author of the oldest known Christian hymn, "Shepherd of Tender Youth."

Tertullian (155-220): This son of a Roman army officer was trained in law and converted to Christ around the age of 40. He spent most of his life in Carthage (Tunisia) where he was born. He was the first major theologian or apologist to write in Latin and, although he joined the marginalized Montanist sect around A.D. 207, his writings laid the groundwork for a proper understanding of the Trinity and Christology. Among his most famous teachings were that the Trinity is "of one substance and three persons" and that Christ was "one person", but "two substances", human and divine.

Hippolytus (170-236): Although trained by Irenaeus, he employed the allegorical method of interpreting Scripture. During his time as bishop in Rome, rivalry arose between him and another bishop over whether Christians who sin should be allowed back into the church. Later on, he was exiled to Sardinia where he died. He authored several commentaries, of which none remain, as well as a work entitled *Philosophumena*.

Julius Africanus (160-240): He studied under Origen and ministered in Palestine. His historical text, *Chronography*, begins with creation and goes up to the year A.D. 221.

Origen (185-254): Origen was one of the most influential teachers of the second century. His parents were both believers and Origen wanted to go and die with his father, Leonidas, when he was martyred in A.D. 202, except that his mother hid his clothing from him! Origen became catechist in place of Clement in Alexandria (Egypt) while in his late teens. He was such an excellent teacher that he opened his own school of Christian philosophy after several years as a catechist. At about age 50, he was forced to move from Alexandria to Caesarea by bishop Demetrius. His literary productions include the first critical text of Scripture: the six-column, Hebrew and Greek *Hexapla*, including annotations about the variants in reading from one text to the other. He also wrote the extensive, theological treatise, *De Principiis*. Although Origen believed and taught the basic doctrines of the Christian faith, his philosophy relied heavily on Platonism and he engaged in wild speculation

on certain biblical subjects. He died in Tyre after being tortured severely by the Romans and then released.

Cyprian (200-258): Cyprian had been trained in rhetoric and was influenced profoundly by Tertullian, as he was also from Carthage (Tunisia). He became a follower of Christ around A.D. 245 and bishop of Carthage only a few years later. At this time, Emperor Decius began to fiercely persecute the church. A problem arose about what to do with those who compromised or denied their faith during persecution and Cyprian was in favour of restoring some and not others, depending on how much they had compromised. These discussions led to divisions among the bishops and the church in general. Cyprian made very strong statements concerning the authority of the episcopacy. He said, for example, that “outside the church there is no salvation.” His primary writings were *Unity of the Church* and *De Lapsis*. He was martyred during the reign of Valerian.

Gregory Thaumaturgos (213-270): Origen was instrumental in his conversion and discipling. He was nick-named “the wonder worker” and served first in Palestine and later in Asia Minor. He was bishop of Neo-Caesarea and is known for writing a *Declaration of Faith* and a *Eulogy on Origen*.

Before continuing to the next section, we should mention an early Christian document which was used extensively in the early church, although we are not sure exactly who wrote it or when. Known as the *Didache*, or *The Teaching of the Twelve*, this document contained a Jewish catechetical section, followed by teaching on baptism, on fasting and prayer, the Lord's supper, receiving travellers, and on bishops and deacons. It was compiled no later than A.D. 100.

1. Why was Gnosticism considered to be a heresy by most Christians?
2. Why did several of the early church fathers oppose Marcion's teachings?
3. Jesus said, "Whoever denies me before men, I will deny him before my Father who is in heaven" (Mt. 10:33). Because of the implications of this statement, a sharp controversy arose among the early Christians about what to do with those who deny their faith under pressure. What do you feel should be done when this happens? Explain why you feel this way.

4. Fill in the following chart with the missing information:

	Author's name	Where he lived	What he wrote	Type of material
1	Origen			Theological treatise
2			"Shepherd of Tender Youth"	
3		Smyrna (Turkey)	<i>Epistle to the Philippians</i>	
4	Clement	Rome		
5		Palestine		Historical text

FOR FURTHER STUDY:

What are the dangers of the kind of Biblical interpretation which sees symbolism and allegories throughout Scripture, as Clement of Alexandria often practiced?

C. Christian Apologists (defenders of the faith)

During the first three centuries, the doctrines of the church become defined and formalized primarily out of the need to combat heresies and respond to the objections of the pagans against the Christian faith. The writings of the apologists reveal the types of arguments which were used against the Christians, as well as the kinds of doctrines which were competing for acceptance among the believers at that time. Tertullian and Origen were also among the church fathers but are mentioned again below in connection with their defense of the faith.

Quadratus (early second century): He was bishop of Athens. He addressed an *Apology* to Emperor Hadrian (A.D. 117-138) in which he contrasts Christianity with Jewish and pagan worship.

Aristides (early second century): Also from Athens, he wrote an *Apology* to Hadrian as well. His work reveals Pauline influence.

Justin Martyr (100-165): Several apologies were written by him, including *First Apology*, *Second Apology*, *Dialogue with Trypho the Jew*, *Against Heresies*, and *Against Marcion*. Justin was an itinerant lay teacher trained in philosophy. He is known for personally opposing the heretical Marcion and for developing the idea of "logos" to defend Christianity before the Greek speaking elite. Unlike some apologists who attempt to distance Christian belief from pagan philosophy, Justin argued that all truth comes ultimately from Jesus who is the background "logos" or "reason" behind reality. The ancient Greek philosophers, such as Socrates and Plato, who believed in a supreme being and in life beyond physical death, were drawing limited truth from the "logos," which later became incarnate in Christ. Justin died beheaded in Rome under Marcus Aurelius' reign (161-180).

Tatian (110-172): This disciple of Justin Martyr produced the first harmony of the Gospels, the *Diatessaron*. In his *Address to the Greeks*, he attempted to demonstrate the superiority of Christianity over other religions. Christians were rejected by the Greek speaking elite as uncultured barbarians. Taking the word “barbarian”, which is applied to anyone who doesn’t speak Greek, Tatian builds his arguments. For example, Greek speakers cannot even agree on how it is properly spoken. What’s more, they borrowed all of their learning from the barbarians: astronomy from the Babylonians, geometry from the Egyptians, writing from the Phoenicians, philosophy and religion from Moses, who predates Plato and Homer by many centuries. He goes on to point out that the supposed gods behave much worse than the average barbarian and that the statues of some were even carved using prostitutes as models! Unfortunately, Tatian was led astray by Gnosticism in later life.

Athenagoras (second century): Being from Athens, he had strong leanings for Platonism. He wrote his *Plea for the Christians* and *On the Resurrection of the Dead* in classical style.

Theophilus (died 181): As bishop of Antioch, he energetically resisted the pagan philosophers. His main work is entitled *Three Books to Autolycus* and covers the subjects of the doctrine of God, Christian life and the interpretation of Scripture.

Hegesippus (second century): This converted Jew wrote a history of the Christian church, called *Memorials*, in order to demonstrate the church’s purity and apostolic origin. He tended to blame the Jews as authors of all heresies.

Origen (185-254): One of the most persuasive opponents of the Christians was an intellectual named Celsus. His refutation of Christianity, *The True Word*, written sometime in the late second century, claimed that Christians were ignorant brutes of the lower classes who ensnared the simple minded and passed their teachings off as great wisdom. Origen, being a scholar in Greek philosophy, wrote a reply, called *Against Celsus*, which vindicated the Christian teachings as not based in foolishness, but fully capable of responding to the pagan philosophies.

Tertullian (155-220): As explained in the previous section, Tertullian had been trained in law and was skilled in rhetoric. Much of his writing was devoted to apologetics, such as *Against Marcion* and *Against Praxeus*. His work, *Prescription against the Heretics*, points out that, according to the accepted laws of ownership, the heretics have no right to handle the Christian Scriptures in their arguments because they belong exclusively to the apostolic church. As he proceeds with his defence with arguments from logic, his powerful rhetoric sometimes lapses into sarcasm as when he tells Marcion that, while the apostolic church’s God has created everything that exists, Marcion’s God hasn’t even made a single vegetable! Unfortunately, during the Protestant Reformation the Catholic Church latched onto Tertullian’s argument of ownership and turned a deaf ear to the call to return to pre-Constantinian orthodoxy (orthodoxy means “right opinion”).

1. How did the Greek speaking intellectuals tend to view Christians and their faith?

2. What were some of the answers given to respond to these mistaken opinions?

3. Some of the apologists (defenders of the faith) liked to use examples from Greek philosophy. Do you think Christians should use examples from Islam or other religions to defend their faith today? Why or why not?

4. Read 1 Peter 3:14-17. List seven things Peter says concerning how you are to “make your defence to anyone who demands from you an accounting of the hope that is in you.”

- | | |
|----|----|
| A. | E. |
| B. | F. |
| C. | G. |
| D. | |

5. Of these apologists mentioned above, which three do you think were the most influential? Tell why you think so.

- A.
- B.
- C.

D. The Conversion of Constantine

Constantine rose to power in 312. Being the son of a Christian mother, Helen, Constantine readily tolerated the new religion. On the eve of the battle of Milvio where his enemy Maxentius was killed, according to Eusebius’ story, the emperor saw a shining cross in the sky holding this inscription: “In hoc signo vinces” (By this symbol you will conquer). Once he had obtained the victory Constantine accepted the Christian religion, carried a cross on his helmet and used the *labarum* as his army’s banner (a monogram of Christ bordered by a crown). Through the Edict of Milan in 313, he declared Christianity official state religion, to the same effect of the other pagan cults...

“Constantine returned to the churches the goods that had been confiscated during the persecutions, and decreed Sunday a holiday, a mandatory day of rest; this was for the Christians who already celebrated it in memory of Christ’s resurrection as well as for the worshippers of the god Sun, who worshipped him on the same day. In this manner, he avoided any conflict between Christianity and fading paganism.

“Constantine’s sons, Constantine II, Constant and Constance, who had been raised in the Christian faith, reigned over the Empire which was divided between them after their father’s death. But their politics were not permeated with the same tolerance which had been established in the Edict of Milan. It was influenced by the fanaticism of some Christians of their entourage. The Edict of Milan was no longer honored. Persecutions no longer took place against Christians, but against pagans. This is how the official Christian religion became

intolerant and exclusive, which is in blatant contradiction with Christ's teachings." (Jordan and Kreitmann, pages 33-36)

1. Read Luke 9:51-56 and John 18:33-38. How did Jesus view the use of power and violence to establish his kingdom and fight his enemies?

2. Several western countries practice the "separation of religion and state." In a country which is so-called "Christian", should the authorities impose the Christian faith and laws? Why, or why not?

3. Read Romans 13:1-8 and 1 Peter 2:13-25. If the rulers or bureaucrats of a country are Christians, are they allowed, or do they have the obligation to use force to govern the country? Why, or why not?

4. According to the same passages, what are the obligations of a Christian towards the state regardless of whether the government is a Christian one or not?

5. The Roman Catholic Church is the result of this "marriage" between church and state. What were its negative consequences on the development of true faith in Jesus Christ?

a. Concerning the purity of the clergy's motives and its power in society:

b. Concerning the purity of worship and of the worship service:

c. Concerning tolerance towards other religions and opinions different from that of the official church:

Lesson 3: The Great Schisms in the Church Throughout its History

A. The Original Organization of the Church

“The first Christian communities were most often established among the neglected people of this world: the poor, laborers and slaves who lived in the Greek-speaking cities. These communities were called churches, and its members were called brothers following baptism. “The service was celebrated in a simple manner. A frugal meal was eaten in common: it was called “the agape”. They sang hymns, prayed and listened to Christian teaching. The Lord’s Supper concluded everything.

“The meetings generally took place in one of the brothers’ houses. In like manner, the church could establish itself with a lot of flexibility and discretion throughout every region of the Roman Empire.

“Each local church was led by a council of elders chosen among the gathering of the faithful. The elders were invested in their responsibility through the laying on of hands by the apostle or missionary who had founded the church. Following this, the elders already in place imposed their hands on the elders who were newly elected by the assembly of the faithful. Among the elders and members of the church, the Holy Spirit stirred up different ministries of which the list is given in the Bible: pastors, teachers, evangelists, prophets, deacons; as well as various gifts: faith, healing, tongues, interpretation, etc...

“No hierarchical organization united the churches amongst each other. And yet they were affiliated in a brotherly manner, in solidarity and especially in maintaining common faithfulness to the apostolic teachings. The example of the church of Antioch is referred to, which came to the aid of the churches of Judea. The Bible also mentions the gathering of a Synod, an Assembly of church delegates, to determine an important question. Its conclusion was then transmitted to the various churches in the form of a recommendation (Acts 11:29 and 15:1-31).

The Singular Role of the Apostles

“In the book of Acts, one may observe that Peter the apostle is placed at the same level as the other apostles. The decisions were not made by him alone, but by the gathering of apostles, elders and the brothers. This is what we read in the 15th chapter of this book. In his epistle, Peter places himself on par with the elders in a very simple manner (1 Peter 5:1).

“So what was the central role of the group of twelve apostles Christ brought together? The Bible emphasizes that they were given a crucial mission in all of Church history: to be present at the first outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and to initiate missionary work among the Jews, Samaritans and pagans by faithfully transmitting the teachings of Christ to the new disciples. This teaching was promptly written down under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit in the books which are contained in the New Testament, the second part of the Bible. This list was approved by unanimous consent throughout the different churches. The writing of the New Testament was completed at the time of the apostles’ death. Since then, each consecutive Christian generation receives the apostolic teachings via the Bible, which is according to the will of the Lord the highest authority in matters regarding their faith and conduct. The Bible is also called the Word of God. It is the: written word, alone worthy of making known the Word made flesh, Jesus Christ. The unity of the Church rests on its

faithfulness to the Word of God. It is a spiritual unity, not an administrative or hierarchal one.” (Jordan and Kreitmann, pages 16-18)

1. Read Philippians 1:1. What two positions of leadership are made mention of in this greeting to the church at Philippi?

2. Read the description of an elder in Titus 1:5-9. What is the synonym which Paul uses for elder in this passage? (v. 7)

3. How does the apostle Peter describe himself in 1 Peter 1:1 and 5:1-3 and 2 Peter 1:1?

4. Who are the younger men instructed to submit to in 1 Peter 5:5?

5. What attitude does Peter recommend to both elders and followers in 1 Peter 5:5-7?

⚡ As the text quoted above from Jordan and Kreitmann points out, church organization in the first century was quite simple. Churches were led by elders appointed by the founder of the church (Acts 14:21-23). These in turn appointed deacons, that is, people to serve specific functions, such as distribution of food to widows (e.g., Acts 6:1-7). These elders and deacons were not expected to fill all the roles of ministry in the church. Rather, those who had special gifting from the Holy Spirit put these gifts at the disposal of the congregation as a whole for the sake of the common good, equipping and edification (Romans 12:6-8, 1 Corinthians 12:4-7, Ephesians 4:11-13). Thus, some taught, others prophesied, others acted as pastors, etc., but all were coordinated by the elders of the local congregation.

Today we see many types of church organization being practiced by this or that denomination. This stems from a natural desire of people who agree on something to want to gather around a central leadership, to work together, and to prevent its membership from drifting into beliefs which it sees as erroneous. This is not necessarily a negative factor, but it becomes such when churches refuse to cooperate with other denominations because, although they probably agree on all primary points, *they disagree about secondary* points of doctrine. Even worse, sometimes members of one denomination accuse other Christians of being non-believers or “second class” believers because the doctrine doesn’t match their own. This is destructive, divisive, and a weakness which our enemy loves to use against us (Galatians 5:14-15, 26).

B. The Roman Catholic Church

"Once it had been made the state religion, exclusive and mandatory, official Christianity separated itself more and more from what characterized the Early Church. It is necessary to clearly present the main lines of this shift.

The Characteristics of Official Christianity

1) Former pagans converted by force all entered the churches without meeting the spiritual standards which characterize true Christians. Therefore, the churches became 'mass oriented,' gathering the whole population together regardless of each individual's convictions; whereas the true Church normally includes only 'professing' Christians; Christians who have been interiorly regenerated by the Holy Spirit. Doctrine and piety were severely altered, and the power residing in Christianity for the regeneration of individuals and society was considerably weakened by it.

2) This design could have, to some extent, facilitated the expansion of Christianity with the conversion of the state head drawing that of all his subjects. This was the case of the Franks for example, when Clovis converted in 496. On the other hand, this way of propagating official Christianity also led to scandalous consequences: a totalitarian concept of society, forced conversions and massacres: the Saxons under Charlemagne in 797, Albigensians in the 12th century, etc...

3) Different theological conceptions could no longer express themselves freely, nor could they confront each other backed up only by the power of God's Word. The state authority intervened and imposed the views it deemed best. Official Christianity was heavily influenced by political changes from then on.

4) Church structures had a tendency to imitate the hierarchical and authoritative organization of the State without taking into account the ecclesiastical rules of organization provided in the New Testament... These tendencies quickly appeared after the signing of the Edict of Milan. Already in 325, the first official council held in Nicaea was presided by Emperor Constantine himself...

"During the barbarian invasions, the Western Roman Empire, already Christianized in part, collapsed like a house of cards; but Christianity persisted. Just like the empire, of which some nostalgia remained, this religious society established a hierarchy of bishops and priests, who, invested with civil authority, often competed in riches and luxury. First, a distinction between the elder (or presbyteros) and the people (laicos) settled in. The elders became priests, necessary mediators between God and men just like in pagan antiquity. This led to there being the clergy (set apart) on one side, including all the priests, and the people on the other, also known as the faithful.

"Above the priests, a bishop, or an episcopos (overseer), was established in the cities, with the responsibility of governing the faithful in a territory called a diocese; the bishop living in the capital took the name of metropolitan and later that of archiepiscopos (archbishop). Finally the Roman bishop, progressively dominating all the others, claimed to be the representative or vicar of Jesus Christ on earth. He took on the name of 'pope' (father). Throughout the middle Ages, the papacy led an extended struggle to impose official Catholicism on Western Europe. It is also through its prompting (Urban II) that the eight Crusades occurred (1095-1270) in order to rip the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, which had been built by Constantine, from the hands of the infidels.

Only the Council determined what Christians were supposed to believe and do. Whoever acknowledged the Council was orthodox (a true believer); everyone else was labeled a heretic (of foreign opinion) and rejected from the church (excommunicated).

The Churches Start to Become Landowners

“Basilicas and cathedrals were built for the worship service in different styles of architecture: Byzantine style, Roman, and finally the Gothic or Ogive style starting in the 12th century. These buildings competed in beauty with the sumptuous temples of pagan antiquity. Beautiful churches and cathedrals covered Europe in the middle Ages, and they still fill us with admiration today. They express the glory of a so called ‘Christian’ period, entirely characterized, one must admit, in a totalitarian manner over all aspects of thought and action, by the power of the official church and her hierarchy, orders and popes. As we admire these magnificent buildings and their biblical sculptures, one may question whether their glory is too human, and whether it truly corresponds to the will of Christ, the head of the Church. Did he not emphasize that evangelical worship was to be carried out in a simple manner, ‘in spirit and in truth,’ in a temple made not of human hands but formed by the bodies of the believers faithful to God’s Word –those same ones who were occasionally tortured by the Inquisition in the shadow of the cathedrals? Would the society of that time, Christian in appearance but torn by internal wars, rivalries and famines, have better reflected God’s will had it allowed the salt and light of the Gospel to spread; if its efforts had been concentrated towards the achievement of a fraternal, free, fair and prosperous society through the love of God and of one’s neighbor?

“On a theological level, the Middle Ages experienced the peak of scholasticism which endeavored to explain every dogma, establishing itself upon reason, and to gather it into a harmonious system. To do so, scholasticism leaned heavily on philosophical ideas borrowed from the Greek philosopher Aristotle. The key master of scholasticism was Thomas Aquinas (1227-1274), nicknamed ‘the angelic doctor’. His main work is *The Sum of all theology*. The scholastic theology was officially adopted in the XVI century by the Council of Trent (1545). His main detractors were the English Franciscans Duns Scotus (1266-1308) and William of Ockham (1270-1349). The former claimed faith cannot be demonstrated, but that it must rest solely on the authority of Holy Scripture...

“The Roman Catholic Church had become a society divided between clergy and people, the latter subject to the priests who in turn were subject to the pope, the ultimate authority who was later to be declared infallible.

“This hierarchal structure was inspired by the pagan cult organizations of ancient Rome. It was opposed to the fraternal, universal priesthood taught in the Bible, as well as to the structure provided in the New Testament of the early church.

“Little by little, images and statues representing Christ, the Virgin (name attributed to Mary, Jesus’ mother), and the saints were introduced into the churches. It did not take long for the people still influenced by paganism to start revering these images by bowing down before them, and addressing them prayers as they had formerly done with idols. The traffic of relics became a real industry. Miraculous powers were attributed to them. This led to all sorts of abuses and was the origin of the nastiest superstitions. Later on God was thought to be too harsh, and the Virgin and Saints were interplaced as intercessors between Him and man.

(Note from the author of this lesson: For centuries the people no longer had access to the Bible.)

“In the same way, the priests’ ministry hindered believers from directly addressing Christ. Pilgrimages were created. Holy Communion was transformed into a mass and became the essential part of the worship service: the cup was no longer shared among the believers, and the bread, called Sacramental Bread, became an object of adoration before which people prostrated themselves for they believed Christ was materially present in it. The spiritual aspects of Christ’s words and presence were also neglected. From then on mass was increasingly considered to be the daily renewal of Christ’s expiatory sacrifice for the salvation of men, whereas the biblical doctrine emphasizes how the sacrifice Christ accomplished on the cross is a unique and perfect occurrence. (Hebrews 9:12, 25-28; 10:12-14)

Low masses were created, and five sacraments were progressively added to the two initial of baptism and communion: confirmation, penitence, anointing of the sick, marriage, and ordination.

“The Synod of Elvira (305) took position in favor of the celibacy of bishops, priests, and deacons. The Council of Ankara (Galatia), in 314, forbade their marriage following ordination. Under Innocent III (1198-1216), confession became mandatory, but it does not end there: purchasable with money, one could obtain partial or complete indulgence (remission) for his sins; and for deceased loved ones deliverance for their soul from purgatory. As it were, they managed to sell not only the forgiveness of the church, but also God’s forgiveness. This shameful traffic became a source of great discouragement. All through the middle Ages the people were immersed in deep ignorance. People believed in sorcerers and those accused of heresy or sorcery were burned alive.” (Jordan and Kreitmann, pages 41-42, 46-48 and 51-53)

Once the Roman Catholic Church had abandoned the Bible as the only basis for the establishment of Christian doctrine and practice, they continued to move farther and farther from the truth. Examples of this non-stop slide into heresy appear in the Catholic doctrines of Mary’s Immaculate Conception and the Assumption of Mary. In 1854, Pope Pius IX (1792-1878) declared that “from the first moment of her conception, the Blessed Virgin Mary was, by the singular grace and privilege of Almighty God, and in view of the merits of Jesus Christ, Savior of Mankind, kept free from all stain of Original Sin.” This twisted understanding of Mary’s relationship to her son Jesus served to deepen the Catholics’ Mariolatry (worship of Mary) and opened the way for the later “assumption” heresy. “For years, the Roman Catholic Church had held a tradition that when the Virgin Mary died, she was bodily raised and glorified as a prefigurement of the resurrection awaiting all Christians. On November 1, 1950, Pope Pius XII (1876-1958) declared the Assumption of Mary to be an article of faith in the Roman Catholic Church, thus driving another wedge between Roman Catholicism and Protestantism.” (Rusten, 370, 455)

1. Match the biblical texts with the doctrines and beliefs of the Roman Catholic Church which they correct in the following table (Mt. 6:6-9, 15:1-6, 19:21, 23:8-12, 28:18; Mark 2:1-12; Luke 23:39-43; John 18:36; Acts 15:10-11; Rom. 6:9-10; 1 Cor. 7:1 and 28, 9:5, 10:14-22, 11:28; 1 Tim. 3:2-3; 2 Tim. 2:24-26; Heb. 5:1-3, 7:27, 9:27; James 2:5-6; 1 Peter 2:9; 2 Peter 1:20-21):

Roman Catholic belief or practice	Corrective verse(s)
Church and politics become united whenever possible.	
Only those baptised into the Catholic Church are saved.	
The traditions of the church have the same authority as Scripture.	
Sins are forgiven by priests after confession and penitence (when demanded).	
Only those recognized by the Catholic Church as priests can give communion, preach and officiate in church.	
The pope is the supreme authority in the church and the representative of Christ on earth.	
Christians should pray to the Virgin Mary and to the saints in order to get a hearing before God.	
The Catholic Church persecuted or excommunicated anyone who didn't agree with its doctrines and leadership.	
The popes and archbishops can live in extreme luxury.	
The wine and bread are changed literally into the body and blood of Christ in communion and can thus be worshiped.	
Priests and nuns cannot get married.	
Mass is a daily renewal of the expiatory death of Christ for the atonement of sins.	
The souls of imperfect sinners must go first to purgatory after death to be cleansed of sin before going to heaven.	

2. How might the Catholic Church have avoided falling into these excesses and false doctrines?

3. Briefly compare the organisation of the Roman Catholic Church with that of the New Testament..

4. How do you think believers should react when they think the leaders of their church or denomination are moving away from Scripture in their beliefs or practices?

C. The Orthodox Church and the Copts

The term “orthodox” means literally “right opinion.” In its general meaning, it is applied to the body of accepted doctrines in Christianity. However, certain large divisions of the church have applied the name to themselves to claim that they hold to the correct teachings, for example, the Greek Orthodox Church. Until the Council of Chalcedon in 451 (discussed later in this lesson), there was a large degree of unity in the church throughout the region of the Mediterranean Sea. The major difference lay in the languages used for worship, theological writings, and doctrinal discussions. The western side of the Mediterranean used Latin (from Libya and Italy westward), while the eastern side used Greek (from Egypt and Greece eastward).

Unfortunately, due to the growing influence of politics in church affairs, introduced by Emperor Constantine in 313, tensions began to grow between the Latin church, with its archbishopric in Rome, and the Greek church, with its archbishopric centred in Constantinople. The problems were compounded by theological debates which were never resolved to the satisfaction of both groups. The Council of Chalcedon, held in 451, which sought to define the nature of Christ, drove a wedge between them which only widened with time.

The Roman Empire began to weaken after being attacked repeatedly by the Vandals (beginning 406), the Visigoths (beginning 410), the Ostrogoths (around 493), and the Muslims (after 632). By the end of the seventh century, the whole Mediterranean area was divided into three major political groups: the Franks in Western Europe, the Byzantine Empire in the northeast, and the Muslims in the east and south. The Muslim conquests further served to isolate the eastern and western churches from one another, but also served to push the Orthodox Church toward the northeast, where they effectively evangelized Moravia, Bulgaria and Russia.

After this power shift took place, another argument arose over the use of images in worship. The western church was concerned with the introduction of pagan elements into worship which focused on the images, much as had been done by the polytheists before Christianity became the official religion of the Roman Empire. The “iconoclasts” wanted to destroy and ban all use of images, while the “iconodules” saw no harm in their veneration and even worship. Eventually, the eastern churches definitively obtained the right to use images in 842, an event which many still celebrate in the “Feast of Orthodoxy.” Since then, the practice has become firmly integrated into the Roman Catholic Church as well, even to the point of idolatry in many places.

Two other events led to the final rupture between the Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox Churches. The western Christians included the word “filioque” in the Nicene Creed. The creed previously stated that the Holy Spirit proceeded “from the Father”, but with this addition it now said “from the Father and from the Son.” In 867, the patriarch of Constantinople, Photius, decreed that the entire western church was heretical for having changed the creed. As a result, the Roman Pope started promoting use of the Apostles’ Creed, which is now the dominate creed among Catholics and Protestants.

Although a political solution was achieved, the schism kept growing until Pope Leo IX sent an emissary to the patriarch in Constantinople, Michael Cerularius, because the Bulgarian archbishop, Leo of Ochrid, had accused the west of heresy. The Catholic Church had ruled that all clergy must be celibate for life and that the Lord’s Supper must be celebrated with unleavened bread. The discussions went sour and the emissary delivered an order of

excommunication to the eastern patriarch on June 16, 1054. This was the last straw for the Orthodox Church. From that time until now, the two churches have maintained separate leadership and differ substantially on many doctrinal issues. The Orthodox Churches adopted many of the changes set forth by the Protestant leaders during the Reformation, and therefore have much more in common with them than with the Catholics, although the worship is still very ritualized and formal.

The Coptic Church

The Copts are descendants of the ancient Egyptians, once ruled by the Pharaohs. Faith in Christ entered Egypt almost immediately after Pentecost (see Acts 2:5-11) and quickly took hold among the Coptic population. The Coptic Church held quite closely to the Orthodox faith for many centuries until it broke away in the year 451. The split was caused by a disagreement over the nature of Christ. Three slightly different positions were held, each with different implications:

1. Christ had a divine nature and a human nature and the two are united in one person in some inexplicable fashion (the position adopted by the majority of Christians).
2. Christ had the two natures just mentioned, but they were sharply delineated (the position followed by the Nestorian Church).
3. Christ had only one nature, while being both human and divine (the position whose followers were called “monophysites”).

A council meeting was held in Chalcedon in 451 and the majority of bishops agreed to accept the first position as the orthodox view. The other two positions were declared heretical. The Coptic Church, which held to the monophysite position, chose to break away from the rest of the church at this juncture. They have their own pope, the patriarch of Alexandria, and have survived since then as a separate branch of the Christian faith even though they have suffered many periods of persecution, especially at the hands of Muslims, who have ruled Egypt since the seventh century.

1. Read Exodus 20:4-6. Does this text mean that Christians should never take pictures or produce artwork involving the image of someone or something? Why or why not?

2. Do you think it is acceptable in the country you live in to use icons, crosses, or other Christian art in your place of worship? Explain your answer.

3. What are some of the implications of how we understand the incarnation of Christ and how important do you think they are really? (See the discussions held at the Council of Chalcedon.)

4. Read John 13:34-35 and Philippians 2:1-2. In light of the Biblical advantages and commands to maintain unity among the believers, how should we view and relate to the other major divisions in the Christian church worldwide?

D. The Protestant Church and the Evangelical Churches

“Since the 14th century, the Roman Catholic Church had entered into a period of deep and particularly serious crisis. In 1309, the headquarters of the papacy was moved from Rome to Avignon in France, under Clement V who was of French nationality. There the pontifical court had become, under Clement VI and his successors, one of the most luxurious courts of Europe. Each cardinal owned a sumptuous residence and a personal courtyard. The selling of ecclesiastical “favors” was causing gold to pour into the palaces of Avignon. This wealth and the servility of the French popes toward the kings of France contributed to ruin the papal reputation. This disrepute increased during the “great schism” and the simultaneous election of several popes in Avignon and Rome from 1378 to 1417.

“In all of Europe the high clergy, just like the pontifical court, often sought out honors and luxury. The lowly clergy was also commonly greedy, immoral, as well as poorly educated. The religion of the masses gave rising attention to the invocation of angels, saints and the Virgin, to the use of prayer beads, mortification and flagellation. A superstitious terror of hell spread everywhere. The monks and priests gave terrifying descriptions of it: ‘Demons with fangs of steel plunge the bodies of the damned alternatively in fire and icy water, or hang them by the tongue, or saw them lengthwise, or beat them flat on an anvil, or boil them, or sift them through a sieve. Sulfur is blended with the fire so as to add a foul smell to the torment of the damned. But the fire gives no light so that horrible darkness surrounds this enumerable diversity of penalties.’ (Monk Tundale) Believers no longer trusted in the unique and perfect sacrifice made for them through Jesus Christ on the cross of Golgotha to escape hell, but sought to gain divine consideration through their donations to monasteries and the performance of “meritorious” actions, purchasing indulgences, etc...

“God, who is the master of history, was causing all the spiritual, political, economic and social conditions necessary for an in depth reformation of the ecclesiastical institutions, and of medieval society as a whole, to fall into place. The capture of Constantinople by the Turkish Sultan Mahomet II in 1453, the invention of the printing press, the Renaissance, the great discoveries, everything forecasted the end of the Middle Ages and the arrival of a new age. Renowned humanists, (the name which was attributed to scholars conversant in Antiquity), such as the Dutchman Erasmus and the Frenchman Lefèvre from Etaples, revealed the Catholic church’s vices and recommended the study of the Holy Scriptures as the only way to restore true Christianity. Erasmus corrected, using the most reliable manuscripts, the Greek text of the New Testament and published it for the first time in Baie, accompanied by a Latin translation highly superior to that which had been used until then. Erasmus and Lefèvre of Etaples can be considered the main precursors to the Reformation. By making the masterpieces of antiquity available to all, they forced, so to speak, the human spirit to awaken from its routine practices and to enter into those of examination, study, and a return to origins... One incident precipitated the course of events. It had the effect of a missile, forever dispersing the darkness of the Middle Ages.

Leon X and the Sale of Indulgences (For the forgiveness of sins)

“John of Medici, son of Lorenzo the Magnificent, had ascended to the papal throne after the death of Julius II during the month of February, 1513. He was an influent and respected man but had a taste for splendor and extravagance. He was more of an artist than a pope. The exorbitant amounts required for building St. Peter’s basilica in Rome depleted his treasures. In 1517, perplexed as to how to provide for the needs of this huge enterprise, he found a way to sell the forgiveness of God throughout Europe. To this effect, he organized a huge campaign for the selling of indulgences. His messengers’ claims even went to the point of saying: ‘The moment the coin in the coffer rings, the delivered soul toward heaven springs.’ This is what the Dominican monk Tetzel proclaimed in the provinces of Germany, and his audacity grew from day to day. No one dared to lift his voice in protest towards this shameful trade, but God had prepared in secret, from within the Roman Catholic Church itself, the man who would stand up and bring believers back to faithfulness to God’s Word. Faced with the audacity of Tetzel’s claims, a protest finally emerged; its vigor measured up to the seriousness of the lie which needed to be trampled down, and that voice was that of Martin Luther.” (Jordan and Kreitmann, pages 79-80 and 82-85)

The term “Protestant Reformation” comes from the fact that many people in Europe protested against the Roman Catholic Church and wanted to reform the doctrines and practices which were wrong. In reality, the Protestant Reformation involved many prominent people in several European countries who appeared before, along with, and after Martin Luther (1483-1546). The discontent with the abuses and false doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church began to appear a full 200 years earlier. For example, John Wycliffe (1324-1384), who lived in Oxford, England, translated the New Testament into English and preached against the Catholic doctrines of transubstantiation (the idea that the bread and wine are transformed literally into flesh and blood) and salvation through doing certain good works. Although he died peacefully, his followers were severely persecuted and his body dug up in 1415 to be thrown onto the refuse heap!

In Prague, Bohemia, John Huss (1369-1415) read Wycliffe’s writings, studied the Bible, and soon began to point out the errors of the Catholic Church, especially the concept of indulgences (forgiveness for sins being sold for a price). He was excommunicated from the church by Pope John XXII. In 1414, he was given a guarantee of safe-conduct to come to the Council of Constance, but the Pope had him arrested and handed over to the Dominican priests. The priests kept him in prison for six months and then burned him at the stake in 1415.

An Italian priest, Savonarola (1452-1498), brought on a religious revival in Florence which resulted in the downfall of the powerful Medici dynasty there. However, Alexander IV Borgia had Savonarola excommunicated from the church. Later on he was tortured and burned at the stake as a heretic.

Several others will be mentioned in later lessons, but Martin Luther contributed more to the Protestant Reformation than most for several reasons: 1) His movement resulted in a clear break with the entrenched hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church, thus allowing more freedom for change and the righting of abuses. 2) He had the backing of powerful German rulers who provided for his safety. 3) Through the wide distribution of his teachings and complaints against the church, he won the support of extremely large sectors of the Germanic middle and lower classes. Some historians claim that Luther was the first person to fully exploit the recent invention of the printing press.

Martin Luther was born into a family of humble means. His father worked initially as a miner at Eisleben in Saxony, but his parents managed to send him to study law at the University of Erfurt. Mainly because of his fear of death, and partly because of his dislike for law, Martin became an Augustinian monk at the age of 22. He struggled fiercely with his own temptations and sinfulness, which caused him to fear God as if he were a hard and angry taskmaster.

In 1512 he received his doctorate in theology and began giving lectures at the University of Wittenberg. His studies in preparation for the lectures on the letter to the Romans drew his attention to the fact that “the just shall live by faith.” As he meditated on the surrounding passages in Romans, he finally came to understand that forgiveness for sin could not be earned by his own efforts, or conferred upon him by the church, but that God freely justified those who believed in Christ as Saviour. Having received the gift of salvation by faith in Christ alone, he wrote, “I felt that I had been born anew and that the gates of heaven had been opened.”

The more Luther studied, the more he realized that the Catholic Church was teaching and practicing things which were in direct contradiction with the Word of God. He began to quietly persuade others of the changes which ought to be made in the church, based on Scripture as his authority. He eventually wrote the famous “ninety-five theses” which he posted on the door of the Wittenberg Cathedral on October 31, 1517. This date is frequently cited as the beginning of the Protestant Reformation.

However, by attacking the sale of indulgences among other doctrines and abuses, he brought down the wrath of the pope, Leo X, and many other powerful clergy who depended on this income to support their sumptuous lifestyles and enormous building projects. As the impact of the “ninety-five theses” grew, income for the Catholic Church shrank.

The pope made several attempts to stop Luther and the effects of his teaching from going too far. However, Frederick the Wise, Elector of Saxony, protected Luther from being arrested or murdered by his enemies at crucial points along the way. Finally, when Luther was forced to declare that the church was wrong for condemning John Huss, the pope issued a papal bull (decree) demanding that Luther, “a wild boar” which had “entered the Lord’s vineyard”, must either reject what he had been teaching or be excommunicated from the church. Luther burned the document publicly and thus broke officially with the Roman Catholic Church.

In 1521, Luther was summoned to be tried in Worms before the Diet (legislative assembly) of the Empire where the emperor, several lords of the German Empire, and officials of the church pressured him to recant from his teachings and rebellion. Luther stood his ground and publicly declared, “My conscience is a prisoner of God’s Word. I cannot and will not recant... God help me. Amen.”

Further attempts were made to kill Luther and stop the growth of the Protestant Reformation which had begun. The Catholic kings and rulers, such as Charles V of Spain, sent armies for many years to crush and wipe out those who believed as Luther. The Germans and Dutch raised armies and fought back, eventually achieving victory in many areas of northern Europe; although southern Europe and the lands conquered by Catholic countries remained firmly under the influence and control of the church.

The churches which formed as a result of this break with the Roman Catholic Church received various names (to be discussed later on), such as the Lutheran Church, the Anglican Church, the Presbyterian Church, the Methodist Church, the Baptist Church, etc. All of these different denominations, and dozens of others, arose as a result of the Protestant

Reformation and are therefore known as Protestant churches. Unfortunately, the Catholics and non-Christians often wrongly apply this term to heretical sects, such as the Jehovah's Witnesses and the Mormons.

During the 19th century, many of the Protestant churches became highly traditional and liberal, to the point that thousands of churches gave no signs of the original spiritual life which had characterized the beginning years. Then, during the 20th century, revivals started breaking out in many of these churches. New spiritual life became evident and those who could see the difference between the dead, traditional Protestant churches and the renewed congregations began referring to the latter as evangelical churches. This practice of identifying believers and congregations which are alive and growing as "evangelical" is now common in most parts of the Protestant church as a whole.

1. Using texts from the Bible, explain why forgiveness for sins (indulgence) cannot be bought or sold with money or material goods.

2. List at least four of the social and religious elements which made the 16th century ripe for the arrival of the Protestant Reformation.

- a.
- b.
- c.
- d.

3. Biblically speaking, should Christians continue to make a distinction between "Protestants" and "evangelicals" or should all be treated the same as long as they belong to some church? Defend your answer.

4. The Catholic armies ruthlessly massacred literally thousands upon thousands of men, women and children who objected in some way to the Catholic doctrines and practices. The Protestants soon responded by sending their own armies to the battlefield against them. Do you think this military response was necessary and justified, or should they have simply died as martyrs, knowing that their eternal life was assured? Explain your answer.

Lesson 4: The Development of Protestant Denominations

A. The Major Theological Debates since the Reformation Calvinism vs. Arminianism

"The Arminian quarrel developed at the beginning of the 17th century, in Holland. Jacob Arminius (1560-1609), professor at Leiden, opposed the Calvinist doctrine of predestination. This is an old debate which had already pitted Augustine against Pelagius; one supporting the sovereignty of God in regards to election, and the other the free will of man (the freedom to choose) and man's personal responsibility. Arminius stated that Christ's redemptive work had been accomplished for all, and that the free will of man was something intended by God himself.

"His theses stirred up violent opposition in official Calvinism. The Calvinist synod of Dordrecht responded in 1618 through 'The Holy Canons of Dordrecht', which affirm the total depravity of natural man, the unconditional predestination of the elect, and expiation offered to the elect alone. The Arminians presented a 'remonstrance' (admonition) to the civil authorities to ask for freedom to spread their ideas, and were from then on called 'Remonstrants'. Several of Arminius' followers took things further than he did, questioning certain essential Christian doctrines. The debate on predestination and free will has been continued to this day. It was reopened in particular by the Catholic Church with the Jansenism dispute, where Jansen upheld Augustine's viewpoint and the Jesuits defended that of free will. Later it was also picked up by the Anglican Church under Tillotson (1630-1694), and in the Methodist movement, where Wesley adopted Arminius' viewpoint and Whitefield that of Calvin." (Jordan and Kreitmann, 171-172)

1. Make a summary of:

a. Arminius' thought:

b. Calvin's thought:

2. Read the following texts: John 3:16, Romans 9:10-16, Ephesians 1:3-6, 1 Timothy 2:1-6, 2 Peter 3:9. Which verses support Arminius' thesis, and which support that of Calvin?

a. Arminius:

b. Calvin:

Liberalism or Conservatism

"From the beginning, the Christian Church had to struggle with the infiltration of philosophical and religious doctrines which were held in high honor among the pagans. The

same struggle has continued to this day in various forms and titles. This struggle was successfully led by certain churches, while others allowed themselves to be infiltrated by the 'modern' ideologies of the time. The defenders of strict evangelical doctrine have been called orthodox (of the correct opinion) at times, and fundamentalists at others. Their opponents were first called liberals, and are today called neoliberals or modernists. One must familiarize himself with this terminology so as not to confuse the vocabulary used in the religious sector with identical vocabulary used in politics or economics: indeed, religious liberalism has nothing to do with political or economic liberalism.

"The Reformation and the counter Reformation had led Christians to define their doctrine very clearly. This was the time of the composition of the great confessions of faith of the Reformation churches on one hand, and of the Council of Trent dogmas on the other, which govern the Roman Catholic Church to this day...

"Currently, modern neo-liberalism is inspired by Marxist thought presented with biblical terminology; it seeks to direct churches towards the political and social revolution of international communism.

"Orthodox theological thought was defended by such theologians as Hengstenberg, (1802-1869) a professor in Berlin who contributed to the theological renewal of the middle of the 19th century; Tholuck, (1799-1877) who had a pietistic tendency; Blumhardt, (1805-1880) who practiced demon exorcism in a remarkable manner and organized a spiritual center in Boll (Wurtemberg). In the French language, the biblical commentaries of Frederic Godet, professor in Neuchâtel, countered the Bible critics and were widely circulated.

"At the start of the 20th century, the concept of the great Swiss-German theologian Karl Barth (1885-1968) contributed in a powerful manner to the rediscovery of fundamental Bible doctrines. His main work is *Ecclesiastical Dogma* in several volumes. But the renewal of fundamentalist ideas in the 20th century was also greatly encouraged by: a) archeological discoveries and ancient biblical texts found in Qumran in 1947, which confirmed the authenticity of the biblical accounts and the good preservation of the texts; b) the new scientific discoveries which have emphasized the limited amplitude of evolution and mutations, demonstrating the impossibility of the evolutionist conceptions of Darwin and Lamarck; c) the success of great world evangelism campaigns with evangelists such as Billy Graham; d) the development of many independent churches holding a fundamental position, whereas the great historical churches, prompted by modernist tendencies, are either stagnating or receding." (Jordan and Kreitmann, 170-171, 174-175)

3. List several words which are sometimes used to describe liberal theology or theologians:

4. List several words which are sometimes used to describe conservative theology or theologians:

5. What has been the net effect of liberalism on the mainline denominational churches over the past century?

Modernism or Fundamentalism

Under the influence of the 19th century liberal European theologians who called into question the historicity of the Bible, a current of thought began to spread which hung high hopes on man's ability to solve all sorts of material, medical, social, and practical problems. The most extreme members of this movement, called "modernists," as mentioned above, saw the Bible as just another book on religion, on a par with any other "holy book." Many scholars of this current of thought tried to make Christianity relevant to the ever changing, increasingly secular audiences of the world, but in the process, they denied many of the foundational tenants of the Christian faith. For example, one of the most widely accepted ideas among the modernists was that miracles are impossible and thus any passage which speaks of some supernatural occurrence is merely a myth invented to convey a theological concept.

In reaction to this, those who held the Bible as true and historical began to call Christians back to the fundamental truths of Scripture. These groups, especially in the Americas, known as "fundamentalist," formed the Evangelical Alliance as early as 1846. In 1895, they established a list of five "fundamentals" which could not be denied without betraying the truth of God's Word. These consisted of the inerrancy of Scripture (absence of errors), Jesus' divinity, his virgin birth, his substitutionary death on the cross to pay for sin, and his resurrection and eventual second coming.

For most of the 20th century, evangelical Christians considered themselves to be fundamentalists. Eventually, though, some began to abandon the term "fundamentalist" (meaning someone who was dogmatic, intolerant, and who intentionally ignored anything which might shake his faith), preferring to call themselves "conservatives," that is, those who hold to the truth of the foundational doctrines, as expressed, say, in the Apostle's Creed, but who were willing to accept some of the liberal discoveries as not only correct, but actually supportive to a better understanding of the historicity and truth of Scripture. This new group of scholars and theologians were not afraid to ask the most difficult questions of Christianity and Scripture because they were confident that both would be vindicated and all would be the better for it in the end.

One of the positive emphases of the liberal theologians has been the "social gospel;" a real concern to improve the living conditions of the poor and underprivileged of the world. Both fundamentalists and conservatives are seeing how this should become an integral part of bringing Christ's kingdom into reality wherever the gospel is proclaimed.

6. Do you believe in the miracles mentioned in Scripture (supernatural events with no natural cause)? Why or why not?

7. What are the fundamental issues mentioned above which all evangelical Protestants agree on?

Dispensationalism versus Covenant Theology

As a result of the fundamentalist reaction, theologians of this persuasion began to analyze Scripture in new ways, developing as they did strong convictions concerning certain key themes, such as the place of Israel in history, the end times, the rapture, and so on. One of these theological schemes for categorizing and interpreting Scripture is known as “Dispensationalism.” Although John N. Darby defined and popularized certain aspects of end-time prophecy and the pre-tribulation rapture (the idea that all living believers will be taken up into heaven by Christ before the final, great tribulation period begins), it was Cyrus Scofield (1843-1921) who gave evangelicals a complete framework for understanding biblical history from creation into eternity. He divided history into seven distinct eras, or “dispensations”: 1. Pre-fall innocence, 2. Conscience following the fall of Adam into sin, 3. Human government following the time of Noah, 4. Promise following the time of Abraham, 5. Law following the time of Moses, 6. Grace following the time of Christ’s first coming, 7. Kingdom following the time of Christ’s second coming. In 1909, the first printing of his *Scofield Reference Bible* appeared and has influenced evangelical theology for generations since then to interpret Scripture through a dispensational lens.

In opposition to the dispensational scheme of history is “covenant theology.” Covenant theology divides history into the covenant of works from Adam to Christ, and the covenant of grace from Christ to the end of time. It sees the kingdom of God in operation even now and not as a future era in history. One of the most significant differences is the understanding of the people of Israel. Dispensational theology maintains that the people of Israel are still God’s chosen people and that unfulfilled Old Testament prophecies refer to the Jewish ethnic group specifically. Covenant theology, on the other hand, sees the church of Jesus Christ as the present day continuation of the “people of Israel” in a spiritual sense, with Old Testament prophecies about Israel’s triumph referring to Christians and not to the Jews.

Dispensationalism, with its strong emphasis on Israel and the Jews, has led to unquestioning support by many fundamentalist Christians for the modern state of Israel, even to the point of affecting American foreign policies in the Middle East. (For a thorough biblical examination of this question, refer to the course DOCT201, lesson 9, part A.)

8. The following verses seem to support either dispensational theology or covenant theology. Divide them up into the most appropriate categories in the chart below: John 1:16-18, Luke 22:15-20, Romans 3:21-26, Romans 5:12-13, 2 Cor. 3:4-9, Hebrews 9:13-20, Hebrews 13:20-21, Rev. 11:15-18.

“Dispensational verses”	“Covenant verses”

State Church or Free Church

Although none of the three major churches born from the Reformation (Lutheran, Reformed and Anglican) originally opted for a strict separation between the spiritual and the political, controversy over this issue erupted very early on.

It was first demonstrated in Zurich, where Zwingli the reformer took on both spiritual and political functions. In 1525, the followers of the radical Reformation (the Anabaptists) displayed their rejection of this system and of that of Luther's, and demanded total separation between the Church and State, which brought them persecution from both sides. Much later, the Swiss theologian Alexandre Vinet (1797-1847) played an important part in explaining the theological foundations for the separation between Church and State.

Luther, who probably wanted to avoid any confusion between the church and the State at first, later reconsidered his decision for practical reasons (peasant revolt). Consequently, the Lutheran church became the State religion wherever princes adopted the Reformation. These were considered the leaders of the Church, a practice which is referred to as caesaropapism (a word burrowed from the time period prior to the fall of the Roman Empire, where the Emperor was both the political leader and head of the Church). In 1555, via the "Augsbourg peace", the Emperor of the Holy Roman Germanic Empire acknowledged the freedom of princes to choose between Lutheranism and Catholicism.

As for Calvin, he did not want caesaropapism in Geneva, but a union devoid of confusion between Church and State. In his mind, the State's duty was to support and protect the Church (Reformed) against the Catholics and heretics, by the sword if necessary. However, although both institutions were officially to be independent from one another, one must admit that the Church's influence on the State was extremely weighty.

Concerning the Anglican Church, Henry VIII is the one who brought the Reformation into England. In 1534, he had himself acclaimed as leader of the Anglican Church. After a brief attempt to return to Catholicism under Mary Tudor, Elisabeth 1st had the Supremacy Act reinstituted from the very beginning of her rule in 1559, by which Anglicism would become the kingdom religion and which made monarchs the leaders of the Church, which is still the case to this day. The Puritans (dissident movement, expelled from Germany by the Lutherans) sought to purify the Anglican church of the elements it had retained from Catholicism, thus liberating it from State guardianship. The Independents (originally Baptists and Quakers) also led this struggle for separation.

The situation was different in France: the issue of separation of power was not addressed until much later, because Protestant worship was not recognized until the Edict of Nantes in 1598 (edict for religious tolerance towards the Reformed, yet remaining independent from the kingdom). A century later, in 1685, Louis XIV revoked the Edict of Nantes by the Edict of Fontainebleau. Protestant worship was no longer recognized and those who practiced it did not even have civil status. In 1787, Louis XVI promulgated an edict of tolerance and restored their civil status. In 1792 the Declaration of Human Rights included freedom of religion for all.

Finally, things took yet a different spin when in 1801 Napoleon instituted the Concordat recognizing three State religions: Catholicism, Protestantism (Calvinism and Lutheranism), and Judaism. According to the "Germinal law" of 1802, Lutherans and Reformed (Calvinists) recognized the State's right to intervene in Church affairs. At first, the Calvinists were very enthused by the idea of finally living their faith freely. But this condition of submission to politics was entirely new, and was contrary to Calvinist theology.

Voices began to rise up here and there in favor of the Church's (Reformed) independence, which took place in 1848 with the creation of so-called "free" churches, which were therefore independent from the State; their leader was Frederic Monod.

The law of 1905 on the separation of Church and State put an end to the discussion; everyone was finally free to wholly live his faith, regardless of his religious affiliation, and every church of the Concordat now had to manage itself. This regained freedom did not displease the reformed orthodox, and naturally, the separation was warmly received by denominations which had not been recognized by the Concordat (Baptists, Methodists, Brethren, etc.). Paradoxically, the churches of Alsace and of Lorraine still remain under the Concordat, as both these regions were in German possession in 1905.

9. Name a few advantages to the union between Church and State:

10. Now, mention a few disadvantages of such a union:

11. Read the following verses. Next to the verses, note what they have to say regarding the union of Church and State, or their separation.

John 18:36

Matthew 22:17-21

Romans 13:1-7

B. The Major Denominations (Part 1)

Introduction

At the beginning of the reformation, many of the reformers tried to make changes in the doctrine and administration of the Roman Catholic Church, but they soon realized that it would be impossible. That is when men such as Luther and Calvin began to develop their own doctrinal and ecclesiastical systems, always based on the Bible alone. This is one of the great slogans of the reformation (only the scriptures, and only by grace, only through faith). Among the first churches to develop following this model were the Lutheran and Reformed churches.

Other evangelical denominations developed from these major branches of the family tree, as well as sects, primarily in the United States during the 19th and 20th centuries where a spirit of independence and innovation was predominant.

The Lutheran Church

The Lutheran Church obviously owes its existence to the reformer Martin Luther, formerly an Augustinian monk, who influenced the main doctrines of these churches through his writings and teachings which are summed up in the confession of Augsburg (1530). Luther began his fight against indulgences (the redemption of sins by money) and the corruption of the Roman Catholic Church, emphasizing salvation by grace and by faith.

Lutheran churches “developed following the Thirty Years’ War (1618-1648) throughout the Protestant German States and in the Scandinavian countries in the form of state churches. As a result, its pastors lived in dependence upon civil authorities, which hindered their testimony. In Germany, pietism kindled the formation of various communities and a vast number of charities among the Lutheran churches...

“During the 18th century, rationalism overran churches up until the awakening, in the beginning of the 19th century. In 1817, the unified church of Prussia gathered together Lutherans and Reformed for the event of the Reformation’s 300th birthday. The government had the authority to appoint pastors, which increased the submission of churches to the state. Some German states followed this model, but a number of Lutheran and Reformed churches did not participate in this union...

“In Scandinavian countries, some institutions tempered the state-owned and clerical nature of the national Lutheran churches. In Denmark, parishes could be created when over 20 families determined to pay their pastor. In Sweden, meetings for edification could be organized without the involvement of pastors...

“The Scandinavian countries benefitted from a biblical energy which permeated a portion of the population. They experienced great economical and social prosperity. Their standard of living is one of the highest in the world despite the scarcity of their natural resources.”
 (Jordan, 221-223)

The Reformed Church

All the churches which were born from the Protestant Reformation could be labeled “reformed churches”. However, very early on it became clear that there were certain doctrines and practices which differed between the so-called Reformed, southern European, and Lutheran churches. The Reformed branch was mainly inspired by the writings and teachings of the reformer John Calvin.

In 1647, the Presbyterian Church established its own identity in Brittany, although its doctrines remained virtually the same as those of the other reformed churches.

The doctrines shared by all the Reformed churches were, for centuries, the belief in predestination, the perseverance of the elect, the total depravation of man, his lack of free will, infant baptism (based upon the notion of God’s covenant with his people), limited atonement, and irresistible grace. The doctrines of the Reformed and Presbyterian churches are laid out in four main confessions: the Confession of Rochelle (1559), the Heidelberg Catechism (1563), the Westminster Catechism (1647), and the American Presbyterian Confession of 1967.

The Anabaptist Church

“The first Protestant church to practice separation between Church and State was established on January 21st, 1525, in Zurich. Among its founders were many former disciples of Zwingli, among whom Conrad Grebel and Felix Manz.

“This community only accepted professing Christians as its members, rejected infant baptism, and practiced non-conformity with the world.

“Despite the persecution from the State which stormed the young church, this movement from the Zurich brothers which has been given the name of ‘the radical Reformation’ rapidly spread to other cities and countries. A confession of faith referred to as ‘Schleitheim’ (1527) defines its doctrinal stances.

“This movement gathered many sincere Christians who, from even before the Reformation had been concerned about living in perfect biblical obedience. Among themselves, they called each other ‘true Christians’ or ‘brothers’. Their opponents called them ‘Anabaptists’ or ‘Rebaptizers’, because they did not recognize the value of the baptism of children practiced by the official churches at the time, baptizing only the believers.

“Menno Simons became one of these Christians’ leaders. He was born in Witmarsum, in Friesland. He was ordained priest in Utrecht, and appointed vicar in Pingjum, next to the town of his birth, in 1524. Twelve years later, he left the Roman Catholic Church and joined the Anabaptist movement, of which he became one of the main leaders...

“Although in agreement with the other reformers concerning the fundamental biblical doctrines which were the basis for the Reformation, Menno Simons rejected the baptism of believers’ children, a sign of the covenant of grace according to the reformed doctrine. He taught that one becomes a Christian by accepting Jesus Christ personally as Savior through faith in his expiatory sacrifice, and that baptism is a sign of this engagement which can only be given to believers set on leading their lives as disciples of Christ. Therefore, he only allowed professing believers in the church. Moreover, he did not accept any meddling of the state in church affairs. Finally, he emphasized that the principles of brotherly love and non-violence should be applied to every circumstance of our lives ...

“Menno Simons can be considered to be one of the major teachers of any church which still bears the name Mennonite today, and more generally, to the Baptist churches scattered essentially throughout the Anglo-Saxon countries.” (Jordan, 99-102)

Even if most of the Anabaptist church has currently vanished, we find proponents of this theological tendency among modern Mennonites. (See section C).

The Anglican Church

“King Henry VIII, favorable towards humanism, decided to purify the clergy and develop higher education. After studying theology in Oxford, he wrote a treaty against Luther in 1521. Pope Leo X then awarded him the title of ‘defender of the faith’. But Henry VIII, who had married Catherine of Aragon, wanted to divorce her so he could marry Anne Boleyn. As the pope refused, Henry VIII declared himself leader of the Church of England, or Anglican Church (1531). In 1534, the king was excommunicated, but the Parliament backed him through the Act of Supremacy. Henry VIII summoned one of the most prominent theologians to the archiepiscopal seat of Canterbury, Cranmer, and made him primate of the kingdom. Cranmer (1489-1556) was an illustrious humanist, disciple of Erasmus. Henry VIII did not know how to benefit from his advice. His vanity, his love of pleasures and riches made him squash the limited resistance without pity. High dignitaries were executed among whom was Thomas More. Some members of the clergy were condemned and tortured. Peasants who had revolted in the North were massacred. Monasteries were secularized in order to provide the king with great riches. Henry VIII’s attitude provoked indignation and concern among the population and the surrounding countries.

“The successor of Henry VIII, Edward VI, was brought up in the Protestant faith and encouraged the progress of the Reformation. He provided the church with a catechism imitating Luther’s, a liturgy adopted by the Parliament in 1549, and a confession of faith containing 42 articles which granted the Anglican Church a place among the Protestant churches for good. Marriage was allowed for clergymen and services were celebrated in the national language. The premature death of Edward VI was a disaster for the Reformation. Mary Tudor, the daughter of Henry VIII and of Catherine of Aragon became queen, and attempted to bring England back to Catholicism by force. She had Cranmer put to death, along with other dignitaries of the Church. In 1558, Mary, also called ‘Bloody Mary,’ died and was replaced by her sister Elisabeth, daughter of Anne Boleyn. Elisabeth undertook once more the reformatory work of Edward VI. She wrote out a new confession of faith of 39 articles which was put into effect. From this reign on, the Anglican Church put down deep roots and became the church of the land.” (Jordan, 116-117)

This church has the particularity of possessing reformed doctrine, and having a church structure based on the Catholic model.

The Presbyterian Church

As we have just seen previously, the Presbyterian Church is a denomination of the Reformed churches, officially created around the year 1647 in England. As for the administration of these churches, “the Reformed churches adopted, according to Calvin’s guidelines, a structure complying with the New Testament model which is known as the Presbyterian system. The confession of faith of La Rochelle in 1559 defines the “administration of the Church” in the articles 29 to 33 of the Presbyterian system:

— “Concerning the true church, we believe that it must be governed according to the order our Lord Jesus Christ established. Therefore, the church will be guided by a council of elders, or Presbyterian council, which recognizes the ministry of the pastors and deacons elected by the local assembly.

— “All true pastors, regardless of where they are, have the same authority and equal power” under the sole authority of Jesus Christ. In the same way, “no church is to claim any domination or lordship over another.

“In this way, the principles of sovereignty and independence of local communities, which manifest the Church of Jesus Christ wherever the ‘company of the faithful agree to follow the Word of God’ in a tangible manner and where there is faithful ‘administration of the sacraments’ are affirmed.

“This autonomous principle for the local church is fully upheld in Presbyterian churches of Congregationalist type. On the other hand, in churches that have a ‘synodal – Presbyterian’ system, the Presbyterian councils permanently delegate part of their powers to the regional and national synods. In this manner hierarchic assemblies are established...” (Jordan, 162-163)

The Episcopal Church (church led by a bishop)

The Anglican Church became the Episcopal Church in the United States. Later on, through the work of missionaries, it spread in Africa and in South America. Currently (2006), as is also the case in several of the other main denominations, there are strong discussions between American Episcopalians and those of other countries concerning homosexuality among the clergy.

The Methodist Church

“During the 18th century, two men sparked intense religious life, a great awakening within the official churches: Wesley and Whitefield. John Wesley was born on June 17, 1703, in Epworth, in the county of Lincoln. He was the son of a discharged non-conformist pastor who entered the Anglican Church. Miraculously saved from a fire from the paternal presbytery, he considered himself to be a firebrand snatched from the fire. Having accomplished brilliant literary and theological studies, he was appointed professor at Oxford. In a memorable meeting, on May 24, 1738, Wesley surrendered his heart to Christ. On January 1, 1739, during a shared meal, called a celebration of love, Wesley and Whitefield underwent a deep spiritual experience. From that day on, Wesley considered the whole world to be his parish. He preached outdoors, most of the time in front of gigantic crowds, and sometimes under the threat of being stoned. He founded schools and charities. His inflamed speeches shook the Anglican Church and all of England. Wesley collaborated with George Whitefield, an eloquent preacher born in 1714 in Gloucester. Just like his friend, he mostly preached outdoors. Whitefield, sterner and more Calvinist than Wesley, traveled to America. He died in 1770, about twenty years before his friend.

“The disciples of both of these preachers were called Wesleyans, or Methodists, because of the extreme consistency of their religious practices. Wesley and Whitefield always had the revival of the Anglican Church in view. Towards this goal, they had set up Methodist groups within it who met outside of church service hours in order to allow its members to participate in it. Lack of understanding and sometimes hostility on behalf of the Anglican clergy later led a great number of Methodists to create separate churches.” (Jordan, 197-199)

“After Wesley’s death, the Methodist movement organized itself into independent churches. However, some Methodists remained in the Anglican Church and reinforced its evangelical branch. The influence of this Methodist revival supported by such a flexible and effective organization was considerable. All the believers were personally devoted to seeking sanctification, a moral life, and being a daily witness. In this manner they became true evangelical ‘salt’ in their environment in accordance to Christ’s word. The Anglican, Presbyterian, Baptist, etc. churches were stimulated and revived in turn. A new breath of morality, justice and liberty revolutionized the whole Anglo-Saxon society. As a result, a new way of living came to pass for the entire population, demonstrated through scrupulous honesty, conscientiousness, seriousness, exemplary moral values, a simple and solid family life, and a sense of civic and professional responsibility. A great quantity of charity and educational organizations were created. Let us note in particular the Sunday school movement. Legislative reforms were carried out for freedom of conscience, the penitentiary system, the abolition of slavery, namely with Wilberforce, a member of Parliament, etc.” (Jordan, 242-243)

1. Considering all these denominations, how can unity be possible past these denominational barriers in light of Ephesians 4:3-6?

2. Read the passage in Romans 14:1-13. What should be the attitude of a believer toward other Christians who do not share the same doctrinal position?

C. The Major Denominations (Part 2)

The Mennonite Church

“The Mennonite churches developed in Holland where they enjoyed freedom of religion; they formed over two hundred communities. In 1970, after a time of spiritual decline, there still remained 142 of them containing 31,612 members baptized upon profession of faith. In southern Holland (present-day Belgium) there were substantial communities, particularly in Flanders (Antwerp, Ghent, Bruges). These communities were violently persecuted and disappeared during the first half of the 17th century. The last Belgium Mennonites from this time period took refuge in northern Holland (United Provinces).

“Just like the other churches resulting from the Reformation, the Mennonite churches defined their doctrinal position using confessions of faith. The most famous one contained 18 articles and was adopted in Dordrecht (Holland), in 1632, where the Mennonites are defined as ‘helpless Christians, without vengeance, known as Mennonites.’ The stance they took as supporters of non-violence and their refusal of military service earned them a difficult existence, and often forced them into exile.

“In German speaking Switzerland, churches were established during the Reformation, mainly in Zurich (1525) and in the Bernese countryside. But the Protestant authorities were not very tolerant of them. Persecuted, the Bernese Mennonites emigrated and established new churches in Palatinate, in northern Germany, in Alsace, and in the County of Montbéliard, France. Some Mennonite churches also spread to Eastern Europe, in the region of Danzig and in the Vistula valley. From there, the Mennonites emigrated from the end of the 18th century to the beginning of the 19th century to Russia... Then their colonies spread out along the lower level of the Volga and all the way to the Caucasus, Siberia and Turkestan. During the 19th century, there was a large emigration of European Mennonites to the United States. This country is where they are the most numerous. In 1986, there were 232,012 baptized members upon confession of faith, among whom were 41,007 Amish Mennonites and 3,968 Hutterites (Anabaptists who practice communal property).” (Jordan, 224-226)

The Baptist Church

“Baptist churches developed in England after the Reformation, and spread to America and from there into the whole world. In 1602, an independent church which practiced the baptism of believers was created in Gainsborough, in southern England, a region which had welcomed Mennonite immigrants. This church is considered to be the mother church of the Anglo-Saxon Baptist Church. John Smyth, former student of Cambridge University became its pastor after being the vicar of an Anglican church. Another independent church was formed in the same region in Scrooby by men who also contributed to the development of Baptist churches later on: Brewster, Bradford, Helwys, Murton, and Pastor Robinson who remained Calvinist and a proponent of infant baptism, and who was part of the emigrants on the “Mayflower”. Both these churches fled persecutions and established themselves in Holland; the first in Amsterdam, and the second in Leiden. John Smyth was welcomed, along with his church, by the Mennonite church of Amsterdam. He enjoyed its teachings –as well as Jacob Arminius’ for that matter– who was opposed to strict Calvinists at the time concerning the doctrine of unconditional predestination. Through this he was led to accept only the baptism

of believers, and he baptized himself and then baptized Helwys, Morton and several others by pouring. A confession of faith and ecclesiastical principles were written. Once the persecutions ceased, these Christians returned to England and established a church next to London in 1612. They were called general Baptists because they believed that Christ's expiatory work had been accomplished for everyone.

"Another Baptist tendency was defined under Pastor Henry Jacob who returned from Amsterdam as well. He established an independent church in Southwark near London in 1616. The members of this church practiced believer baptism by immersion, but their doctrine remained Calvinist, not Arminian. They were called Particular Baptists, alluding to the limited application of Christ's expiatory work for the elect. The Particular Baptists also wrote a confession of faith containing 52 articles, which specified that only professing believers could participate in Holy Communion, called "closed communion", and which was reserved only for baptized adults. It also claimed the right to religious freedom and to the obligation to obey civil authorities in all that does not contradict God's commandments.

"At approximately the same time, Roger Williams was establishing the first American Baptist church in North America (1639).

"The Baptist churches then spread throughout England and in the United States. The famous author of the book *Pilgrim's Progress*, John Bunyan, was a boilermaker and a Baptist preacher. The 'particular' branch grew much more than the 'general' branch which was troubled by doctrinal disputes...

"In 1891, the Federal Union of British Baptists gathered various branches of Baptist churches together." (Jordan, 226-229)

The Seventh-day Adventists

"A Baptist preacher, William Miller (1782-1849), came to the conclusion after years of studying the biblical prophecies that Jesus would come back in 1844. He proclaimed his return through writings, conferences and congresses which gathered Christians together from various denominations. This was the Millerite movement. The predicted return never took place. However, Christians continued to live in the expectancy of Christ's return, and in 1863 the Seventh-day Adventist church was formed, and Mrs. Ellen G. White (1827-1915) – one of W. Miller's group of faithful followers – was its founder.

"The Adventist church is listed by many Christians along with the false sects, but by others as one of the Protestant churches. The Adventists, however, do not consider themselves Protestants. They state: 'We esteem that other Christian denominations outside of Adventism can have –and in many cases do have– an important role to play in the spreading of Jesus Christ's message...'

"The Adventists teach the great evangelical truths concerning: the authority of the Bible, the divine nature of Jesus Christ, the trinity, salvation by grace through faith... but they do not believe in the existence of hell.

"The Adventists observe the Lord's Day –the Sabbath– on Saturday. This observance is one of the distinctive traits of the Adventist church; it is also the most controversial aspect of their doctrine. The writings of Mrs. White, although they do not replace the Bible, are given a lot of authority. They are 'revered'." (Jordan, 249-250)

Forsaking these writings, some of these churches have joined the evangelical movement in some countries.

The Brethren Churches

These are spiritual descendants of the pietistic movement which began in Germany during the 17th and 18th centuries from within the Lutheran Church. The Pietists rejected formal systems and rituals of the state churches. They sought an experience closer to the New Testament teachings. They refused to take oath, to take part in wars, or to discuss doctrinal issues with Christians of other denominations. Several Pietists immigrated to the United States in 1719-1740, and they lived in the states of Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana and Virginia. Generally speaking, these Pietists called “brethren” offer extensive social aid to the poor and unfortunate of this world.

In Europe, their descendants refused to acknowledge they were members of a specific denomination, but starting in 1848 they organized themselves into a denomination called the Plymouth Brethren.

Many Brethren do not want to intermingle with other Christians who aren’t Brethren. They were given the name of “exclusive Brethren”, in contrast to the “open Brethren” who commune with other denominations.

Church of God

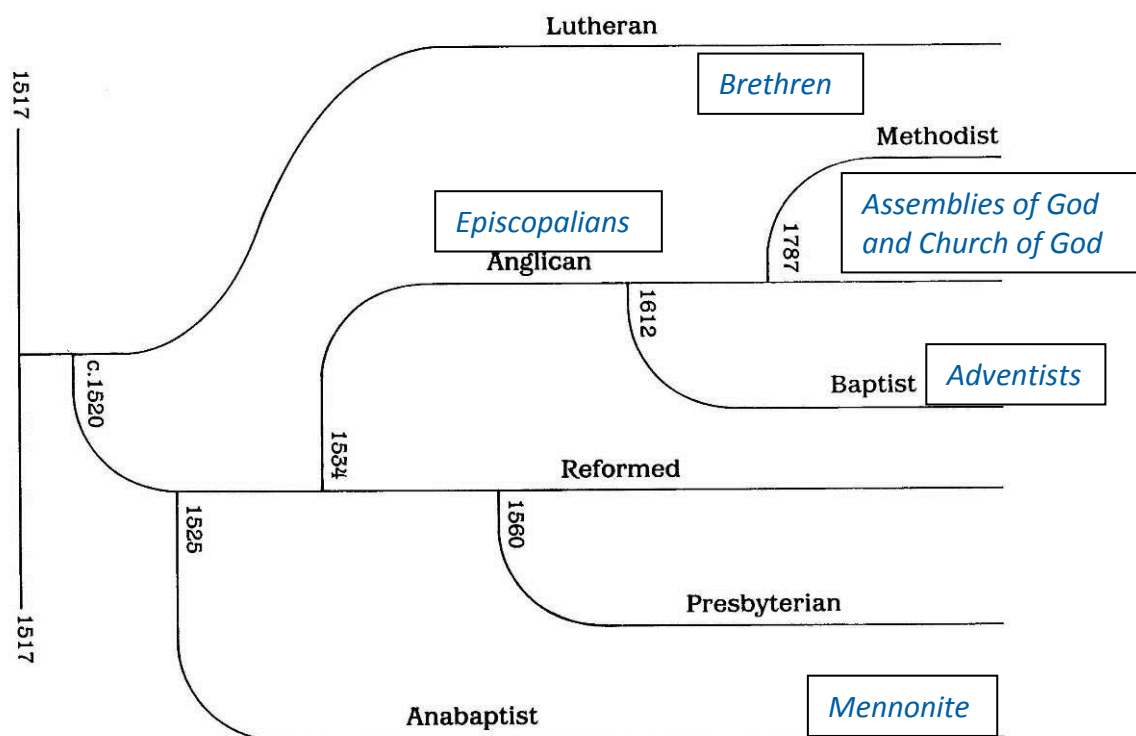
There are two main branches of this denomination; the most important one is governed by leaders living in Cleveland, Tennessee, and the other is run from Anderson, Indiana, both in the United States. Both branches come from the Methodist Church, after the beginning of the “holiness movement”, which began around the year 1886. Since then, a few divisions have occurred giving birth to additional Church of God denominations throughout the 20th century. Most of these churches are generally identified as Pentecostal and Fundamentalist. A common point between Pentecostal churches is the emphasis on the gift of speaking in tongues as a necessary sign of the Holy Spirit’s presence in the believer’s life.

Assemblies of God

This church, the largest Pentecostal church in the world, also has its origins in the holiness movement of the Methodist churches in the United States towards the end of the 19th century and beginning of the 20th. It is therefore of Arminian persuasion. This church became a denomination in 1914 in Hot Springs, Arkansas. Currently it is based in Springfield, Missouri.

The Assemblies of God have seen very vigorous growth during the end of the 20th century on a global scale. It is a very conservative church, holding the Holy Scriptures as infallible, and is very active in reaching unbelievers. As a Pentecostal church, it also emphasizes speaking in tongues as a sign of the Holy Spirit’s presence in the life of a believer. There is a general assembly which supervises and organizes missionary activities, publications and education, but the local congregations enjoy a great deal of independence concerning their structure and activities.

1. Attached, you will find a chart showing the family tree of several great denominations. Fill in the chart with the following denominations: Mennonites, Episcopalians, Adventists, Brethren, Assemblies of God, and Church of God.



Family tree of major Protestant denominations (Walton, page 44)

2. Read John 13:35 and 17:11. Why is it important for us to be united to each other as Christians, even if we come from different denominations?

3. Do you think we could remove doctrinal differences between Christians? If so, how? If not, why?

D. The Modern Sects Derived from Christianity

How to Identify a Christian Sect

Most of the time sects present certain distinctions by which they can be identified and distinguished from correct biblical doctrine. These attributes include:

- An innovative interpretation of the Scriptures based upon a misunderstood text or certain passages of the Bible without taking into account the larger context.
- The prohibition of reading and studying religious printed materials other than that which is produced by members of the sect.
- The prohibition of leaving the sect without forfeiting eternal life, and the forbidding of members of the sect to maintain contact with those who have left it, sometimes even among married couples!
- Emotional and/or mental and/or physical manipulation of its followers by the leaders of the sect.

- The sect tries to control every aspect of the lives of its followers, including their finances, and sometimes even the choice of a spouse!
- Sects see themselves as the only ones having understood the complete truth, and view other Christians as being lost, or at least very far from the truth.
- Generally, the sect will have added a few teachings or an authority in addition to the Bible. No longer is the Bible the sole foundation for establishing doctrines and practices of that religious system.
- The teachings of its founders or of another holy book are just as important, or even more so than the Bible.
- The divine nature of Jesus Christ

Mormons

“Mormons are also known as the ‘Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.’ Their founder, Joseph Smith (1805-1844), is claimed to have had visions showing him pages of gold buried under a hill of the state of New York. This book contained the Holy History of America, where a tribe of Israel is supposed to have migrated and been evangelized by the Mormon prophet during the 4th century AD. The *Book of Mormon* is considered to be a sacred book of equal importance to the Bible. Persecuted because of their polygamous practices, the Mormons traveled to establish a State in the middle of the Rocky Mountains of Utah with Salt Lake City as their capital. The Mormons are very zealous missionaries: their youth set aside two years of their lives to roam the world and spread their teachings.” (Jordan and Kreitmann, pages 252-253)

The Book of Mormon, which only Joseph Smith and eight others are ever alleged to have seen, is claimed to have been written in ancient Egyptian hieroglyphics and translated miraculously by using two “seer’s stones”. When the alleged translation was finished, Smith claimed that God sent an angel, Moroni, to take the tablets back to heaven. This proved very convenient to keep any skeptics from demanding to examine the alleged texts.

The Mormons have many striking beliefs and practices, most of which are concealed from outsiders until they accept the Mormon religion. For example, they believe that Jesus was the physical offspring of God the Father and that he became a god after his death and resurrection. Furthermore, anyone who follows the Mormon religion can become a god like Jesus did. Once this transformation occurs, the person-god will be placed on a planet in outer space which he will populate with his wife or wives. This is why polygamy has been important to the Mormons; the more wives you have, the faster you will be able to populate your planet with children. In the early years, the Mormons maintained their own militia for protection and certain members, called angels of death, were given the task of killing those who dared to abandon the faith.

Jehovah’s Witnesses

“The Jehovah’s Witnesses were established by Charles Russell (1852-1916). He also foretold the return of Jesus Christ, but thought this event would take place without splendor beginning in 1914. Russell denied the deity of Jesus Christ, prescribed the refusal of military service and of medical treatment and attention, such as blood transfusions. He loudly proclaimed the imminence of Final Judgment. His work was completed by Judge Rutherford, who died in 1942, and by Knorr. The Jehovah Witnesses print a great quantity of literature

and a newspaper: *The Watchtower*, published in many languages. They are active in promoting their faith from door-to-door, and they oppose both Protestants and Catholics alike.” (Jordan and Kreitmann, page 253)

Other false doctrines taught by this sect include the denial of a literal hell as a place of eternal punishment, that the Holy Spirit is not divine, but only the active power of God, the idea that only 144,000 chosen witnesses will go to heaven, and that the rest of the Jehovah's witnesses will live in a paradise on earth.

Members of this sect were required to evangelize door-to-door and in public places, at the risk of being expelled if they refused. This guaranteed a certain amount of growth annually. Furthermore, none of the members is allowed to have contact with those who, having been baptized as Jehovah's Witnesses, then choose to leave the religion.

Christian Science

“Christian Science or ‘Church of Christ, Scientist’ was established by Mrs. Baker Eddy (1821-1910). Her book, *Science and Health with a Key to Scripture*, is the authority of this community. It promotes a search for healing through faith, or more precisely, through the power of thought. Mrs. Eddy claimed that matter and evil are illusions. She denied sin, hell, the incarnation and redemption. Her followers do not seek the help of doctors and medicines.” (Jordan and Kreitmann, page 253)

Among the many doctrinal errors of this religion, the founder claimed that Christ's second coming had been fulfilled through the divine inspiration of her book, published in 1875. She forbade preaching in the congregations and, in its place, commanded the reading of assigned portions of the Bible or her own book. This effectively insured that the religion would always remain faithful to its founder's teachings.

Ironically, Madame Baker Eddy spent the latter years of her life in great pain and suffering, despite the promises she made of health and well-being for followers of her religion.

1. Look over the characteristics of a sect. Describe briefly how the Jehovah's Witnesses fall into this category.
2. What elements of a sect can be found in the Roman Catholic Church, especially during the Middle Ages? (For help, go to lesson 3, section D, or lesson 7, section C.)
3. Can you identify any sect-like tendencies in your own denomination or church? What are they?

Lesson 5: Development of the Church in North Africa

A. From 30 to 430 A.D. – The Golden Age in North Africa

At that time North Africa was under Roman supremacy, and the official language was Latin. Although the most recent written evidence concerning Christianity which was found in the Maghreb is only dated from the 2nd century (A.D. 180), in the narrative about the Scilly martyrs in proconsul Africa, it is believed that the first witnesses of the Gospel must have fled towards Egypt to the important coastal colonies of North Africa as early as the Jerusalem dispersion (Acts 8). Thus an ancient tradition reports that Simon the Zealot, one of the twelve apostles, preached in Mauritania (Algerian and Moroccan coast) before dying as a martyr in 74, in Europe.

The anticipation of the Messiah was important in those regions, and it certainly offered a warm welcome to the proclamation of the Gospel within the Jewish population and the Jewish Berbers, Libyans, and Romans.

It is in this manner the great preacher and father of the Church, Tertullian of Carthage (155-220), was able to write his apology, or defence of the Christian faith, "We appeared yesterday and we already fill up all your cities and houses". This statement should be related to a demographic assessment of approximately seven million inhabitants on the coasts of North Africa, which was colossal for that time period.

This church growth, as everywhere else in the empire, encountered the Roman fear of seeing law and order overthrown by the Christians' refusal to worship Caesar as a god, or to participate in the idol worship and the cruel circus games, seals of the political unity of the empire. Because of this, North Africa would not be spared from sporadic persecutions, both on a local level and generalized.

The Christians of the Maghreb therefore enter into Church history through the story of the Christian martyrs of Scilli in 180, and then through the very moving story of two young Christians, Felicitas and Perpetua, as well as 35 of their companions who were put to death in 203. These persecutions attest to the Church's expansion in North Africa by the fact that the authorities were beginning to be disturbed by the Christians. In 198, Marcel the centurion had been put to death for his faith in Tingis (Tangier) in Morocco. Despite these deaths, the Church of North Africa was about to experience what is called "the golden age." The story of this golden age can be divided into three parts, each dominated by the life of the three greatest leaders of the Church: In the 2nd century Tertullian, a jurist, preacher and apologist; in the 3rd century with Cyprian, bishop of Carthage, martyr and organizer of the Church, and in the 4th century Augustine of Hippo (Annaba), the great doctor of grace and protector of the unity of the Christian Church.

It appears that very early on, Carthage, the western capital of Africa, welcomed a large and prosperous Christian Church. After a modest beginning in houses, this city, because of its geopolitical position in the Roman Empire, became filled with churches and developed into the headquarters and residence of the primate bishop of North Africa (the president of a conference of bishops or pastors) and of the Councils (universal conferences of Church leaders), gathering delegates together from hundreds of parishes in North Africa.

In 220, Agrippinus, bishop of Carthage, called together a universal council. Then in 236 Donatus gathered 90 bishops in Carthage. During the 4th century, North Africa managed to gather approximately 500 delegates from local churches.

1 – TERTULLIAN (155–220): “The Blood of the Martyrs is the Seed of the Church”

Tertullian (v. 155-v. 220), in Latin “Quintus Septimius Florens Tertullianus,” was the first Christian author writing in Latin. We know very little about his life other than he was born in Carthage where he received solid literary and judiciary training. Between 190 and 195, he converted to Christianity while he was in Rome, no doubt edified by the moral strength of Christian martyrs. He returned to Carthage and married, but we are not sure whether or not he was a priest. He had a strong influence on the Christians. In his time, the Church was already strong and numerous. Its numbers included members of the Carthaginian elite among its ranks. The growing influence of Christians worried the authorities. Several sporadic persecutions took place. These were either mobs rising up against those who, according to them offended the gods and risked drawing a curse of the gods upon them, or imperial persecutions. Peaceful and innocent Christians were wrongly executed, many of them coming from great well-known families.

A fervent defender of Christianity, Tertullian offered his judiciary training to serve in the defense of faith. He wrote plenty of theological treaties designed to fight pagan doctrines, heretics, and to clarify Christian doctrine (theological work). Among the thirty-one treaties which have survived to this day, one stands out in particular, the *Apologetic* (ca. 197). This was the first apologetic work in Latin, in which he claims religious freedom for the Church, exposes orgies and pagan immorality, proves the legitimacy of Christianity and demonstrates the futility of persecutions: “**The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church!**” as he creatively said. However, we should mention that in 207, in reaction to compromises on behalf of the official Church and its increasing worldliness, Tertullian turned towards a rigid and widely contested doctrinal division called Montanism. Already uncompromising in his early writings (*On spectacles, On prayer, On penitence, On the attire of women*), he had already shown strict severity condemning remarriage, exalting fasting and abstinence, and advocating that Christians accept persecution without fleeing from it.

In the history of Christianity, Tertullian appears as an influential theologian because of his clear development of the Trinitarian doctrine and his Christology, both valuable contributions to Christian theology, in addition to his development of theological Latin. At this time, the Church was growing and establishing its doctrine.

2 – CYPRIAN (200 –258) (The First Hospitals and Refuges)

a) Cyprian’s Church

Cyprian, in Latin Thascius Caecilius Cyprianus (approximately 200-258), became bishop of the Christian Church in Africa and died a martyr. Originally from an aristocratic Carthaginian family, he gave away a large portion of his fortune to the poor when became a Christian around 245. He was elected bishop of Carthage in 249. Soon after the Christian persecution under Roman Emperor Decius began, Cyprian fled to Carthage. Many Christians denied their faith. When persecution came to an end in 251 under the rule of Emperor Gallus, the Church was divided in its opinion concerning the apostates and those who had been baptized by heretics. However, a new wave of persecutions took place under Emperor Valerian, and

Cyprian was beheaded after examination (258). The issue of reinstating renegades to the Church gave birth to a terrible Church split, the schism.

Cyprian is considered to be one of the greatest doctors of the Church, mainly due to his theses regarding the hierarchal organization of the Church which are explained in *De catholicae ecclesiae unitate* ("On the unity of the Catholic Church"). He worked very hard in his writings to affirm the authority of bishops, as responsible for the Church's unity, and granted them much decision-making authority which unfortunately led to the centralization of power, (loss of church autonomy and the absolute power of pastors) consistently with the Roman Empire. He also began a struggle against heretics, and especially schismatic Christians, the "Donatists." Under his authority, the Church extended its influence in society by developing charities such as hospitals and emergency supplies for the poor. This time period saw the construction of church buildings and Episcopal centers, and later asylums. We witness the professionalization of the Church leaders, here as well as in the whole Empire. The local church elders lost their power to the presbyter or priest, and were replaced by deacons who took charge of the material administration of the local church, and who took their place in preaching. In the cities, the delegate of the local churches was the bishop, who ended up ruling over the other priests or pastors of his city. The catechism or teaching of new Christians was very advanced. In big cities, the assembly began answering the priest during the service with songs and 'amen's, as spontaneity slowly faded away. The worship service was prepared ahead of time, the message written down. Christians progressively became spectators of the worship service, and obtained everything from the pastors or bishops who were appointed by acclamation. Christians became more and more dependant on their pastors, who expressed themselves in Greek at first, and later in Latin following Tertullian. The Bible was not distributed in local languages. The Church hierarchy and Cyprian himself increasingly appealed to Church tradition inherited from the Apostles as an argument for discerning error. Yet, what he calls apostolic tradition is merely a collection of customs and habits inherited from predecessors; not the sole, pure doctrine of Jesus.

b) The Schisms, or Divisions

Around AD 250, the global persecutions initiated by Emperor Decius towards Christians produced quite a few martyrs, but also caused renegades, clerics, young people and old to publicly deny their faith out of fear and to sacrifice to the gods of Rome. But as the emperor had to push back another invasion from the barbarian Goths on the northern frontier next to the Danube River, he turned away from the Christians. The Church then experienced an reprieve from the persecutions.

Immediately afterwards, however, the Church and bishops of North Africa had to face a new challenge, the reintegration or the exclusion of those who had disowned their faith, called "the lapsed," who were very numerous and who desired to reenter into communion with the Christian Church and have their spiritual and material privileges restored (cities granted privileges to those who were recommended by the bishop). Indeed, in the past a disciplinary measure of penitence (a measure which consisted of remaining in the back of the church during services and abstaining from responsibility) had been applied to fallen Christians.

But this time, and particularly in big cities, the lapsed jointly refused penitence and demanded their reintegration, otherwise, they threatened to create uprisings in the churches. Cyprian of Carthage responded to this and wrote three pastoral letters in reaction

to these disturbances recommending more discernment and less laxity. However, during the Council of 252, the bishops granted reconciliation to all who practiced penitence (or had publicly demonstrated their repentance after their fall) with the exception, nevertheless, of the elders and church leaders who had committed apostasy and who thereby permanently deprived themselves of any access to ministry. However, a group of uncompromising clerics who were opposed to Cyprian contested these disciplinary decisions under the leadership of a priest called Novatian and a deacon, Felicissimus. Novatian went to Rome to seek support in his resistance, and Felicissimus provoked a great division (schism) in the Carthaginian church. He created a “Church of the Mountain” and pronounced excommunication against all who followed Cyprian.

From then on one could observe a continual struggle between the institutional church, under the centralized power of a bishop, and the followers of a free church, where the Christian people chose their leaders and ideological orientations relative to the concerns of the times.

During this period, two Christian soldiers were executed in Tangier and Tebessa in 295. In 303, 49 martyrs from Abitinae were put to death under Emperor Diocletian. The following year, Crispina was martyred in Tebessa (next to Annaba, Algeria).

Beginning in the 4th century, Christianity experienced a great expansion in Morocco (Tingitania). Basilicas (great churches of stone) were built in Lixus and in Volubilis (to the north of Meknes, Morocco). Two dioceses were archeologically identified in Tangier and Larache.

The Donatist schism in North Africa, initiated by bishop Donatus, began somewhere between 308 and 310. The great persecution under Diocletian (4th century) had led a great number of Christians to deny their faith. The Donatists refused to restore them and proceeded to perform “second baptisms”. They considered invalid any sacrament that had been carried out by a minister believed unworthy (therefore emphasizing ritual over experiential faith). Many Christians followed this path, which led to a great division in the Church. The Donatists, numerous and supported by the people, grew in influence and were able to gather 270 bishops in Carthage from among themselves in 336. They were especially well represented in Numidia and in Mauritania (present day Morocco). Everyone was seeking unity, but destroyed each other in the name of this virtue. This schism lasted until the 6th century.

3 – AUGUSTINE (354-430):

a) Afer Sum (I am a North African)

Augustine, (354-430) was a theologian, preacher and doctor of the Church, and the author of the famous works *Confessions* and *City of God*.

Augustine was born on November 13th, 354 in Tagaste (present day Souk-Ahras in Algeria). Patrician, his father, was a pagan. His mother Monica, on the other hand, was a fervent Christian who prayed endlessly for the conversion of her son. Augustine studied rhetoric in the city of Tagaste, Madaura and Carthage, in North Africa. From the age of seventeen years

old till the age of thirty-one, he lived with a Carthaginian women who gave him a son in 372, Adeodatus. Despite this, he lived a life of debauchery and of every kind of excess in Carthage.

In 386, after passing through Rome he arrived in Milano where he obtained a position as rhetorician. There he discovered the neo-Plutonian philosophy, and then, as he listened to the preaching of Ambrose of Milan, he discovered God's grace and freeing salvation through Christ Jesus. In his garden of Milan he heard a voice which told him, "Take and read." He opened the Bible and fell upon the following passage: "Let us behave decently, as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and debauchery, not in dissension and jealousy. Rather, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the sinful nature" (Romans, 13:13-14). His conversion was immediate, and he was baptized by Ambrose, the bishop of Milan, in 387. Following this radical turnaround, he set his life in order, sending off his concubine, providing for her needs nevertheless, and kept his son Adeodatus (given by God) at his side.

Augustine went back to Tagaste in 388, and there he lived a life of prayer and study along with a few believers. But in 391 he was called by the Christians of Hippo (Annaba) to assist their bishop. There he was ordained priest and became bishop of the city in 395 until his death. He then took on intense pastoral activity: preaching, catechism, care for the poor, the solving of local problems, and participation in the larger conflicts which were tearing at the church at that time. During this period there were many great political and theological troubles with, on the one hand, the danger of barbarian invasions upon the Empire and the taking of Rome in 410, and on the other hand, the threatening schisms and heresies which were weighing on the Church with the Donatists. Augustine threw himself heart and soul into the theological struggle.

The second conflict he was involved in opposed him to the doctrine of the Britannic monk Pelagius. The Pelagians, ascetic and religious men, considered that man could obtain salvation through the force of his own nature independently from God, that man could achieve his own holiness, and that he was not in need of God's grace. For Augustine, man without God is sinful and incapable of releasing himself from his sin. He needs grace. Man becomes truly free—in other words capable of doing good—only when he cooperates with the divine presence at work within him once he has asked for it. It is in this important controversy that Augustine developed his doctrines concerning original sin, grace, predestination and free will; that is how he came to be called "the Doctor of Grace". This teaching of salvation by grace only through faith (Ephesians 2:8) travelled through history to the Western Christian Church which led to the conversion of Martin Luther, a German Augustinian monk who initiated the Protestant Reformation in 1517. The end of his life was accompanied by the barbarian invasion of the Vandals in North Africa. He died during the siege of Hippo on August 28th, 430.

Evidently, this was without doubt a golden age for the Church of North Africa. However, Christians became progressively more attentive to the writings of men than to the Word of God and began to deviate from the truth. They were led astray by mistakes coming from their cultural context, such as infant baptism (replicating the Jewish circumcision), worshiping martyrs, the adoration of saint relics (marabous and magic), and division within the Church. So it appears that even if services were celebrated in the local language following Augustine (a blend of Berber and Phoenician; Augustine mostly used Latin in

Carthage), the Bible wasn't translated for the people apart from a few Bible verses and a liturgy (worship readings).

This lack of Bible distribution in the Berber language appears to be an important component –along with that of the schisms– in explaining the disappearance of the Church in North Africa when compared to the Copts of Egypt, the Ethiopians, and the Syrian Christians, all of whom possessed translations of Scripture. But there were also what was called the “heresies”, that is, errors and serious deviations from the Biblical doctrine of the Church.

b) Division and Heresies

The divisions in the Christian Church are not only due to different systems of organization, but also to serious, unbiblical, doctrinal errors.

From the very beginning, when the Gospel was being proclaimed, Christians had to explain their faith and defend it against powerful antagonists. These opponents, at first coming from among the pagan intellectuals, were quickly replaced by Christian priests, monks and clerics who were in error. It took the Church centuries to define biblical theology. These crucial struggles did not only give birth to a confession of faith, but also to a canon (an approved list) of the New Testament writings (because at first the Christians only had the Old Testament as the inspired text from God).

The ecumenical councils, gathering representatives from all the churches, ascertained a definitive canon (approved list) for the New Testament after examining with care the authenticity and spirituality of the biblical writings which were in circulation. Several false Gospels were rejected, such as the Gospels of Mary and of Judas (writings of a Gnostic sect in the 4th century), the so-called Gospel of Thomas (Egyptian Gnostic writing), the Gospel of Jesus' Childhood, (from which several legendary stories are taken and which are cited in the Koran concerning Jesus as a child: the clay birds, the crib narratives, etc.). Only the writings produced by, or produced under the tutorship of one of Jesus' apostles, and those which are confirmed by all of the churches as being authentic were accepted. These writings bore the imprint of the Holy Spirit. The first ecclesiastical councils which assembled to confirm the canonical books of the New Testament both took place in North Africa (in Hippo Regius, or Annaba, in 393, and in Carthage in 397).

In this context of emergent biblical theology, several voices cried out provoking divisions and dangerous errors. These errors spread throughout North Africa as well, and caused many worries and struggles between Christians. Over the course of three centuries, all of the debates concerning heresies revolved around the definition of the God of the New Testament (One or Trinitarian), Christ's nature (man, God, or both at the same time), and the work of salvation (through faith alone or through works). The errors to which many Christians held laid the foundation for the devastation of the faith in North Africa (e.g., denying the death of Jesus on the Cross and his resurrection, the penetration of legends and human doctrines putting forth salvation through works, veneration of the dead, worship of images and of saints, infant baptism, the power of priests, riches, a thirst for power, the use of superstition and magic, giving tradition the same authority as the Word of God, etc.). All of this opened the way for Islam, which was originally considered a Christian sect.

1. What is the importance of distributing the Bible to people and Christians in their local language? (Acts 2:7-8; Colossians 3:16; Psalm 107:19-20)
2. What are the dangers of local culture penetrating too deeply into the Christian faith? (Romans 12:2; 1 Kings 17:7-15)
3. Should the main objective of Christian leaders be to pursue visible and geographic unity of the Church? Explain your answer. (Colossians 3:15-17; Ephesians 4:16)
4. In Tertullian's mind, what is the seed of the Church? (It is important to note that this is not to be sought out; rather one must be ready if the Lord came to request it) – Philippians 1:20-21)
5. What did the early Church do to fight false doctrines and heresies at that time, and what can the Church in North Africa do today? (i.e. the biblical canon, the Bible, councils, theologians, Acts 17:11; Acts 15:6-30; 2 Peter 3:14-18).
6. What are the dangers of divisions and schisms in the contemporary local Church? (Galatians 5:15)
7. As being a member of a local church, what should one do if there is a risk of division? (Acts 17:11 the Bereans; 2 Timothy 2:14-19; 2 Thessalonians 3:13-15)
8. Why is it important for the Church of North Africa to have pastors and teachers of the Bible? (Titus 1:8-9; Ephesians 4:11-15)

B. From 430 to 705: Struggles, Divisions and Defeats

In 430, Augustine died during the capture of his city by the Vandals, German barbarians who devastated all of Gaul, Spain and North Africa, and who were Arians (Christian heretics denying Jesus' divinity and the Trinitarian nature of God).

One of the first decisions the Vandals took was to confiscate all the goods from the official church of North Africa, and to transfer them to their Arian and heretical clergy. All the priests, bishops and clerics of the great church were persecuted and hunted down. The relationship between the diocese of Carthage and its provinces were broken. In 477, several members of the Catholic clergy were executed or deported, and on February 1st, 484, Genseric's successor Huneric summoned a council in Carthage gathering 466 delegates from Catholic, Donatist and Arian churches of North Africa.

In 533, the Byzantine general Belisarius (a Roman from the Eastern Empire), sent by Eastern Roman Emperor Justinian, regained North Africa and defeated the Vandals in Tricamarum, and then reestablished the Catholic Church and its privileges and goods, favoring Greek theology and liturgy in Christian worship. However, their reconquest essentially only covered Tunisia and the coasts of North Africa. They created a large program for the construction and renovation of churches and buildings; they appointed bishops who represented imperial power, and these took on an intense struggle collaborating with the state against all dissident peoples (Jews, Christians and pagans). Here we witness an ever increasing compromise on behalf of the church leaders possessing political power concerning principles. The Christian nation persisted, but most of the people were not truly converted. In 534, another council of 220 bishops was assembled in Carthage.

In 647, an army of Arab horse riders coming from Egypt carried out an initial raid on Africa. Abdallah ibn Saad arrived in Byzacena (Eastern Tunisia) and put to flight the army gathered by Patrice (general) Gregory in Sufetula (Sbeitla). They settled down in the Maghreb ("where the sun sets" in Arabic). The locals considered this new faith to be another Christian sect because of their claim concerning the unity of all believers (just like the Catholics), the oneness of God (like the Arians), and their strict observance of the commandments (Donatists). This status lasted for approximately twenty years as the Muslims took time to digest their conquests of Egypt and Libya. Seven other campaigns finally managed to overcome all of the Maghreb.

In 663, Okba Ibn Naf, from the Umayyad Caliphates dynasty in Damascus took over Fezzan, which is eastern Tunisia, and established Kairouan, the first Islamic University of the Maghreb, in 670. Islamization officially began in 681, following the training of the first Maghreb imams. The conquest began once more, but Berber resistance in Numidia (Algeria) escalated. The former Jewish and Christianized Berber tribes resisted the Muslim heretics and their desire to subject the tribes to the Caliph of Damascus. Between 683 and 705, the struggle was first led by the Byzantines by king Kusaila followed by the legendary Berber queen Kahina (+ 702). She was traitorously captured and executed, as were the main leaders of the resistance. Furthermore, Carthage was taken from the Byzantines in 697 by Governor Ibn Al Ghassani, and the only fortress they had left over all the coasts of North Africa was that of Ceuta (Septum). The compulsory Islamization began by the establishment of a "dhimmi" status for defeated Jews and Christians who had not converted. A "dhimmi" is a

citizen of inferior status, with limited rights, and subject to a particular residence tax which Muslims don't pay.

The Berber tribes who rejected Islamization fled toward the mountains and the desert. In the South, they brought along a few Jewish-Christian traditions with them, such as the depiction of the cross, abstinence from pork, fasting, prayer in the direction of Jerusalem and circumcision. However, several elements of magic folklore permeated their practices. Christians remained numerous and powerful in Carthage and in Algeria, but fear and the flight of pastors generated massive conversions among the people as they were unwilling to accept the inferior status which denied them all commercial and free activity.

In 705, Musa Ibn Nussair arrived on the shores of the Atlantic with his army. His army was for the most part composed of soldiers from the Berber tribes which had been converted by force. In 709, the last Byzantine fortress, Ceuta, fell. As result, all of the Maghreb was theoretically under Muslim rule in 710. However, in reality this dominance was only truly achieved in big cities and in the coastal plains.

Nevertheless, one must note that the Christian clergy had practically disappeared from the western Maghreb; the same was true of theological training centers. As the Bible hadn't been distributed in the Berber language, Christians found themselves in a dramatic situation of seclusion, as well as great hardship, when it came to doctrinal debates with Muslims. Several tribes who refused Islamization progressively migrated towards the desert, Mali, the banks of Niger (Fula people) and Sudan. Here began the withering of Christianity which resisted up until the 12th century.

1. What do these verses say about the reasons for the weakening of the Christian faith ? How have they contributed to the establishment of Islam? (See 1 Corinthians 6:1-10; John 10:11-12; Galatians 1:6-7)

2. What did the Muslims in Kairouan do to insure their conquests? (Acts 28:19-20; Acts 19:9-10)

3. What were Christians terribly lacking to resist Muslim teachings? (Galatians 2:4-5; 2 Peter 1:2; 1 Timothy 4:13-16)

4. In times when public worship is forbidden, how to practice a community faith ? What should biblical faith take refuge in (simulated conversion, meetings in private homes, underground Churches, family, armed resistance)? (Acts 8:1-4; Acts 18:1-7)

C. From 710 to 1200: Imposed Islamization

There are hardly any sources of information regarding the status of North Africa in the eighth century. We know close to nothing of the history of the North African Christians during the late Middle Ages, after Islam threw a veil over this part of the world.

From 786 to 959, the Maghreb (currently its common designation) was ruled by the Aghlabid emirates. A few Arab sources relate a common coexistence between Christians and Muslims. However, there is a text which forbids Muslims from accepting presents from Christians for Christmas or Easter. The Arabs recruited many mercenaries from amongst the Berber tribes to lead their Jihad, which meant that they had to convert to Islam. As for the other Christians, many emigrated to Sicilia, Sardinia and Italy, which were once again in the hands of the Byzantine and Roman Christians.

Between 959 and 1046, the Aghlabids (Sunnites = those who hold to traditional Islam) were replaced by the Fatimids (Shiites = advocates of the way of Ali, Muhammad's nephew). When they conquered Egypt, ruled by the Abbasids, the Christian Church was virtually destroyed in North Africa. Pockets of life still lingered throughout a few big cities of Tunisia and Algeria, but the decision of the ruling dynasties to build their capitals in new places, such as in Tunis and Fez, eventually led to the destruction of Carthage and other great Christian metropolises of antiquity.

In 1061, the Maghreb endured another dreadful invasion from an army composed of imam Berber warriors coming from the South of Morocco, directed by the influence of a brotherhood called the Almoravids (the veiled ones). Their leader, Youssef Ibn Tashfin, rose to power in the western Maghreb (all the way to Algiers) and in southern Spain. He married a Christian slave who bore him a son (Ali Ben Youssef). These Muslim Berbers from the Sanhaja tribe adhered to strict formalism and a literal interpretation of the Koran. They forced several tribes into conversion and persecuted Christians. In 1147, they were in turn defeated by the Almohads who originated from the Masmuda tribe from the Rif, in the Atlas Mountains.

Following this, North Africa experienced two great invasions which led to the Arabization of that region: first a tribe originating in Arabia, who went on to colonize Tunisia and Morocco in the 12th century with the Beni Hilal, and then proceeded to integrate natives by force, and afterwards the Beni Maquils in the 13th and 14th centuries. Each new invasion carried with it excesses of fundamentalism and a fierce struggle against any hint of Christianity. It is reported that the Almoravids required either conversion or death.

The bishops of Rome Leon IX and Gregory VII spoke of the letters which came to them from North Africa, where only five bishops still had their responsibilities in 1053, and merely one in 1076, Cyrius. When Episcopal hierarchy of North Africa was snuffed out, a few organized Christian communities still lingered here and there. In 1925, twelve pillars dated between 945 and 1003 were found in En Gila, 15 km away from Tripoli in Libya. They were erected in memory of deceased Christians such as Andreas, Petrus, and Maria. One of these stones bears the title of a legal supervisor of the community, the 'judex'. Other steles bear biblical texts which are obviously cited by memory. Later on, three other steles were uncovered at Kairouan in central Tunisia. They are dated approximately between 1007 and 1046. These display the presence of an organized Christian community with its pastors. But these stones

written in poor Latin bear dates recorded according to the Muslim calendar, for example: 397 ano infidelium (397 according to the age of the infidels, i.e., 397 years after the Hegira).

According to scholars, this is a definitive sign of their integration into Muslim society, and therefore the end of the Christian Church in North Africa. However, because of the richness of God's grace, we know that Vaudois missionaries went to evangelize Algiers and Istanbul towards the end of the twelfth century. What fruits were they able to reap? Only God knows.

1. In the event where freedom is removed, should evangelism cease? Why, and if not, how can we carry on? (Acts 5:28-32; 1P 3:13-17; Mat5:3-16)

2. Read the example found in Deuteronomy 6:4-9; how can one ensure the transmission of the Gospel in times of strong opposition? (For example, such as in Kairouan in the 8th century.)

3. Considering the Church lasted during four hundred years in Kairouan, which was an Islamic university and a key location for the conquerors, what examples should we follow, and what pitfalls could be avoided? (Revelation 3:1-13)

D. From 1200 to 2005 – From Silence to Revival

We possess virtually no information concerning the presence of churches or organized Christian groups between the 12th and 19th centuries, rather we essentially have stories of evangelization on behalf of Catholic missions in the Middle Ages.

However, we know that, because of commerce around the Mediterranean, Italian, French and Spanish trading posts in the Maghreb were granted permission to foster Christian churches for their personal use.

Following the miserable time of the Crusades, of which one of the goals, excluding religious ones, was the reopening of commercial routes to the East and the enrichment of merchants, the contact between both civilizations grew in intensity as each desired to know its adversary better. In the 13th century, when some kind of political stability had been recovered in the West, the Catholic Church concerned itself with the re-evangelism of its lost territories, and bringing back the Word of Christ to the infidels with the assistance of several Orders of evangelistic monks, among which were the Dominicans and the Franciscans, as well as Orders dedicated to redeeming Christians held in slavery (the Trinitary) in the Maghreb.

A famous person emerged from the midst of the Franciscan monks in regards to missions in Maghreb and Islamic territory, Raymond Lull (1232-1315). A noble Spaniard and official of the king, he converted to Christianity following a vision and a painful experience. He then dedicated himself to study and debate with Muslim scholars. He sensitized Christendom to its need for study of Arabic and of the Koran in order to debate with and convince the infidel intellectuals of the falseness of their religion. In order to do this he established missionary training schools. He took several trips to Tunisia (Tunis) and to Algeria (Bejaia). In 1292, Raymond Lull gathered all the Muslim scholars and debated the faith in Tunis. He kept this going for 23 years and won several Ulemas to the gospel who later saved his life twice before his martyrdom. He also established a community in Bejaia, Algeria, before dying from wounds on a ship returning home.

It is said that in the 17th century, the frightful dictator of Morocco, Moulay Ismail (1642-1727), had the city of Meknes built by 60,000 Christian slaves captured by the Salé and Algiers pirates. These were kept in dreadful underground prisons where they were tortured. The only way for a slave to elude such a horrible fate was for him to convert to Islam. Many did and were scattered throughout Morocco. One thing remains certain; many of them only denied Christianity with their lips.

It is not until the close of the 19th century (1867-1880) that we see a true evangelism effort resume once more in the Maghreb following the colonization effort which started in 1830. However, a treaty was signed which provided protection for the Islamic religion, therefore short-circuiting the evangelism of the masses.

The white fathers settled in Algeria in 1868 and started schools and farms where they offered religious and professional teaching. In 1876, George Pearce from the Assembly of Brothers of England came from Paris to Algeria, where he also started peddling Bibles among the soldiers, and then among the more receptive Kabyle people. In Europe, he pleaded for the creation of a missionary work also capable of bringing medical assistance to the poor people of Kabylia. He is one of the founders of Kabyle Mission which would later become the North Africa Mission. The first missionaries settled in Djema Saharidj and in Algiers. They dedicated themselves to the translation of the Bible in the Kabyle tongue and in Arabic dialect; and then directed their focus on Morocco. In 1918, Thomas Warren established a carpentry and woodcarving workshop which became very successful.

Beginning in 1888, the "Algiers Mission Band" was created by Miss Lilius Trotter in Algiers. This lady musician/writer forsook a promising career, despite all counsel and advice, and settled in the Kasbah of Algiers to evangelize the women and children.

The Roland Mission also arose in Tizi Ouzou, Kabylia, in 1896 in response to the English NAM which was experiencing many difficulties with French administration. Mr. Rolland and his family developed workshops and foster homes for the Kabyle girls and women in difficulty, which had a great impact in Kabylia. The Mission was expelled a few years after the end of the war of Algeria. Concerning the Methodist Mission, it was initiated in 1886 and was consolidated after 1910, creating a medical charity. Both of these charity works were joined together in the 20th century by the Salvation Army.

An evangelistic charity, doing distribution in Arabic and Kabyle, was discreetly developed throughout Algeria, as colonial authorities desired to avoid any disturbance in social order. A Counsel of Evangelical Missions was founded in 1940. It would later come to be known as

the Association of Protestant Churches and Institutions. Around 1967, almost every Christian work died off, and the various properties were confiscated by the state. But the Word of God had not been sown in vain. Twenty years later a powerful spiritual revival was blowing over Algeria, beginning in Kabylia.

The North African Mission (NAM) also initiated missionary work in Morocco in 1881. A Christian hospital was opened along the coast in Tangier, and a great work was begun in the Spanish enclaves of Melilla and Nador. In 1888, the Southern Morocco Mission established a free clinic in Marrakech under the leadership of Cuthbert Nairn for 52 years. In 1893, the SMM had already opened four main centers: Mogador, Mazagan (Al Jedida), Marrakech and Safi. The mission obviously cared for patients, but it also distributed and spread the gospel. It merged with the NAM in 1959. A few rare and precious fruits resulted, such as the courageous and tireless Moroccan evangelist Si Mehdi Ksara (1903-2006). Mr. Taylor settled in Larache and visited the markets and mountain tribes, spreading the gospel. Several missionaries spread the word of God and a few souls welcomed the gospel and joined the European Churches of Casablanca, Marrakech, Tangier and Rabat all throughout the 20th century. Contact with the West and the work of the Christian radio brought about a spiritual awakening as well, which led to the formation of specifically Moroccan churches, particularly in the years following 1990. However, active police pressure in addition to the traditional popular opposition has constrained these Christians to relative secrecy until recently.

The North Africa Mission began its evangelistic outreach in Tunis with a Bible course and a library in 1882. Installations were also established in Sousse, Sfax, Bizerte, Kairouan and Nabeul. The Mission counted that 20,000 students had followed these Bible courses up until 1964, when it was thrown out. Following 1964, the ministry left the Maghreb to establish itself in Marseille (Radio School of the Bible). Regarding the Algiers Mission Band, it settled on the desert border in Tozeur, and later merged with NAM. Several missions sent evangelists to the country in Gabès, and then to Tozeur (Dr. Olley). In 1908, the American Methodist Mission formed a community in Tunis, taking care of children. In 1956, following the end of the French protectorate, the Biblical library of Kairouan was closed by the authorities, but several Tunisians had found faith in Christ. The work continued in a concealed manner and later blossomed in the late 1990s as well.

In 2006 it is obvious that the Spirit of the Lord is once more blowing over the Maghreb. As North Africans have taken the evangelizing of their countries into their own hands, organized churches are being opened all over the place and the work is making progress. It is important to note that there is much fruit among the Berber and Kabyle peoples. Following a relative opening to the gospel on behalf of the governments, new restrictions on public expression of the Christian faith have arisen. In February 2006, a law was passed in Algeria which greatly threatens the spread of Christianity and forbids evangelism of any shape or form. The church of North Africa is once more undergoing the sufferings of the 2nd century. Will it demonstrate the courage of Felicitas and Perpetua, and the audacity of the Scilly martyrs?

1. What do you think of Raymond Lull's method? (2 Timothy 2:1-2)

2. Is it good to correlate social work (professional training and medical care) with evangelistic effort? Explain your answer. (Galatians 2:9-10; Titus 2:11-14)

3. Is Islam the only obstacle to the Gospel in North Africa? Explain. (Romans 8:35-39; Matthew 17:19-20)

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Lesson 6: Development of the Church in Asia and the Middle East

A. From 30 to 632 B.C. – Expansion of the Church Eastward

As we saw in lesson one on the books of Acts of the Apostles, the church expanded rapidly throughout Palestine and around the coasts of the Mediterranean Sea. By the end of the first century AD there were congregations of Christians extending from Israel to Spain on the northern shores and at least to Algeria on the southern shores (using the modern names for these areas). To the south, churches existed in Ethiopia and the Arabian Peninsula. Churches were established in Iraq, Iran and probably as far as India to the east.

“According to the Acts of Thomas, a book written in the third century, the apostle Thomas was a missionary to India during the reign of a king named Gundaphorus. Then in 1833, coins were discovered with inscriptions proving Gundaphorus’s reign as king in Northwestern India during the first century. In Southwestern India the ancient church of the “Thomas Christians” claims that they were founded by the apostle Thomas; therefore it is likely that Thomas was the one to first bring the gospel to India.” (Rusten, 83)

Toward the end of the second century, Clement (155-220) “traveled to the centers of learning in the eastern Roman Empire searching for a teacher to instruct him in the Christian faith. He found Pantaenus (d. 190), the founder of a school in Alexandria, Egypt. In about 190 Clement succeeded Pantaenus as head of the school, which became the official catechetical school of Alexandria. While in this post, Clement wrote three books that have survived. Clement adopted an allegorical method of interpreting the Bible, using Greek philosophy as a means of understanding Scripture. Clement was forced to flee Alexandria in 202 during the persecution under Emperor Septimius Severus (145-211).” (Rusten, 106)

Later, the mid third century saw the rise in the Middle East of one of the early heresies called Manichaeism. “Mani (216-276) grew up in southern Babylonia in an aristocratic Parthian family. Revelations he received at ages twelve and twenty-four led him in 240 to proclaim the truth he felt he had received. His teaching, called Manichaeism, presupposed a primal conflict between light and darkness. He taught that religious practice was to free particles of light, which Satan had stolen from the world of light and had imprisoned in the brain of man. Jesus, Buddha, the prophets, and Mani himself had been sent to aid in this process. Manichaeism spread throughout the Roman Empire and as far as China, becoming a major rival to Christianity in many regions. Mani himself was imprisoned in Persia by a competing religious group known as Zoroastrians, and in about 276 was skinned alive.” (Rusten, 109) Furthermore, the Manicheans thought that the God of the OT and that of the NT were different; i.e., that there were two gods: one god of evil and the other of good. They also believed that the body was evil and that they needed to despise the flesh; therefore, sins of the flesh were not considered important. This doctrine was mistakenly attributed to the Cathars in the 12th century.

As we have repeatedly seen, Christians were often persecuted and martyred for their faith in spite of being model citizens of great value to the society as a whole; two such men were the Arabic speaking Syrians, Cosmo and Damien. Despite their service, generosity, and compassion as physicians, they were commanded to deny their faith in Christ during the persecutions of Diocletian’s reign. When they refused, they were put to death around the year 295.

“Armenia was a buffer nation between the Persian and Roman Empires. As a result, it had a turbulent history. The great missionary to Armenia was named Gregory the Illuminator (240-

332). Gregory seems to have been of Armenian aristocracy and to have become a Christian while in exile in Cappadocia. Returning to Armenia, he converted his relative, King Tiridates III, to the Christian faith and baptized him on January 6, 303. When the nobles of Armenia followed their king in converting to the Christian faith, the general populace did as well. Many pagan priests were converted as well, with many of them entering the Christian ministry.” (Rusten, 114)

Arius (250-336) was a contemporary of Gregory the Illuminator. He became a presbyter in Alexandria, Egypt, and sparked one of the most significant controversies of the Christian faith: he taught that Jesus was not coeternal with God the Father, but was a created person. Thus, he clearly denied Christ’s deity. This led to a dispute between Arius and Bishop Alexander, beginning about 318. Finally, Emperor Constantine called the Council of Nicene in 325 to resolve the conflict. These bishops almost unanimously reaffirmed Christ’s divinity. It was about this time that an Egyptian by the name of Pachomius (287-346) began setting up communities of monks who lived an ascetic lifestyle in Tabennisi, Egypt. He is commonly considered to be the “father of communal monasticism.” The monastic movement quickly spread as people sought to devote themselves more fully to God, while removing themselves from the temptations of the world around them.

Antioch, in Syria, was the site of influential discussions in 325, 330 and 341 about the precise divine and human nature of Christ. Their councils were initially intended to combat the Arian heresy which denied the deity of Christ (see above). The members of these councils later went on to also reject the Nestorian understanding which defined Christ as having two distinct natures, one human and the other divine, as well as the Monophysite position which claimed that Christ had only a single nature, combining the human with the divine (see below).

“Born in Cappadocia (present-day eastern Turkey), Basil (329-379) was the oldest child of Christian parents. He, his brother Gregory of Nyssa (330-395), and Basil’s close friend Gregory of Nazianzus (330-389) became known as the Cappadocian Fathers, theologians who had a profound impact on the development of Christian theology. After studying at the University of Athens, Basil returned to Cappadocia and in approximately 358 founded a monastery in Annesia. His *Rules* for the monastery became famous. It included monastic regulations and answers to practical question. In 370, Basil became bishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia, devoting himself to making monasticism a core part of the church, performing works of charity, and above all, defending the orthodoxy of the Council of Nicea against Arianism.” (Rusten, 122)

Bishop Athanasius (295-373), of Alexandria, Egypt, was another strong opponent of the Arian heresy. Not long after this, however, Ulfilas (311-382), a bishop who lived among the Germanic Goths, invented the Gothic alphabet, translated the Bible into their language, and taught them the Arian heresy. As a result, the Goths and Vandals carried this version of Christianity into North Africa during the invasions of the 5th century. The doctrine which denied the divinity of Christ eventually helped pave the way for the acceptance of Islam by the North African nominal Christians in the mid 7th century.

John Chrysostom (347-407) was born “in Antioch into a Christian family of above average means. He first studied to be an attorney but then became interested in monasticism. After living as a hermit for ten years, he returned to Antioch where he was ordained as a deacon in 381 and a priest in 386... His eloquence earned him the name Chrysostom, meaning ‘golden mouthed.’ In 386, he reluctantly was made bishop of Constantinople. In that position, his uncompromising zeal to reform the church raised the ire of the empress and

many clergy. As a result, he was banished twice and died in 407 in transit to a place of exile.” (Rusten, 127)

Two main languages were used widely around the Mediterranean Sea; Greek in the eastern half and Latin in the western half. The eastern half had the entire Bible in Greek from the first century onward because the Old Testament had been translated into Greek (the Septuagint) by about 200 B.C. and the New Testament was written mostly, if not completely, in Greek from the beginning. However the Latin speaking world was also in need of a good translation of Scripture. In 383, Damasus (304-384), the bishop of Rome and opponent of Arianism, commissioned a scholarly monk named Eusebius Hieronymus Sophronius, better known as Jerome (345-420), to do this task. Jerome translated the entire Old Testament in Latin directly from Hebrew and the New Testament directly from the Greek. The translation which Jerome carried out was adopted by the Roman Catholic Church as the officially recognized version of the Bible (the Latin Vulgate) to be used for all liturgical purposes. Until recent times, the use of local languages in Scripture reading and mass was forbidden in the Roman Catholic Church. (For more on this subject, see DOCT202, lesson 7, “For further study,” part A.)

Another important controversy arose in the church after 428 when the eastern Roman emperor, Theodosius (401-450), appointed Nestorius (d. 451) bishop of Constantinople (Istanbul, Turkey). Nestorius believed that it was incorrect to call Mary, the mother of Jesus, “Theotokos” (God-bearing), a custom still continued today in the Roman Catholic Church, and that she should rather be called “Christotokos” (Christ-bearing). Nestorius was denounced by Cyril, the bishop of Alexandria, as a heretic, and the Council of Ephesus, held in 431, removed Nestorius from the office of bishop. In light of the misunderstandings of the true nature and person of Mary current in the Catholic Church, it would seem that Nestorius was making an important distinction, even though it was seen as a hint of Arianism by his contemporaries. (For information on the important Council of Chalcedon, held in 451, see lesson 3, section C, of this course.)

By the Second Council of Constantinople, held in 553, we begin to observe the confusion growing in the Roman Catholic Church over who Mary is. Again, this council met primarily to further define the relationship between Jesus’ human nature and his divine nature. The council declared that he was “true God and true man in one person.” The Monophysites held to the belief that Christ’s divine and human natures were fused into one. They tended to deemphasize his human side and underscore his divine side. The Second Council took a more open approach toward the Monophysite belief, without actually approving it.

Unfortunately, this council also affirmed the perpetual virginity of Mary (i.e. that she never had sex with her husband); despite clear indications in the gospels that Jesus had half brothers and sisters through his mother’s marriage to Joseph (e.g. Mark 6:3).

Nestorius followers organized into the Nestorian Church, which later initiated one of the very early missionary efforts to reach the Far East. They sent a missionary named Alopen to evangelize China in 635. His efforts met with broad success and the Nestorian Church expanded “all the way to the borders of Korea. Churches flourished until the tenth-century fall of the (Chinese) dynasty that had supported them. Traces of the Nestorian Church remained until the thirteenth century, at which time it largely disappeared.” (Rusten, 142)

1. Dozens of verses, such as John 1:1, Philippians 2:5-8, and Colossians 2:6-10, make it very clear that Christ was God incarnate in a human body. List here any verses or evidences which show that he was also just as much a human being as you and I:

2. The Bible never states with complete clarity exactly how divinity united with humanity in the person of Jesus Christ. Unfortunately, many early divisions of the church resulted over attempts to describe this mysterious combination in detail. Read Paul's declaration in Romans 11:32-36 and state how these verses could help us avoid falling into such heated arguments over certain difficult issues.

3. For centuries, the Catholic Church discouraged and even forbade the reading of Scripture by anyone who was not a priest. How could the following verses have helped people avoid falling into false ideas about the role of the Virgin Mary, Jesus' mother?

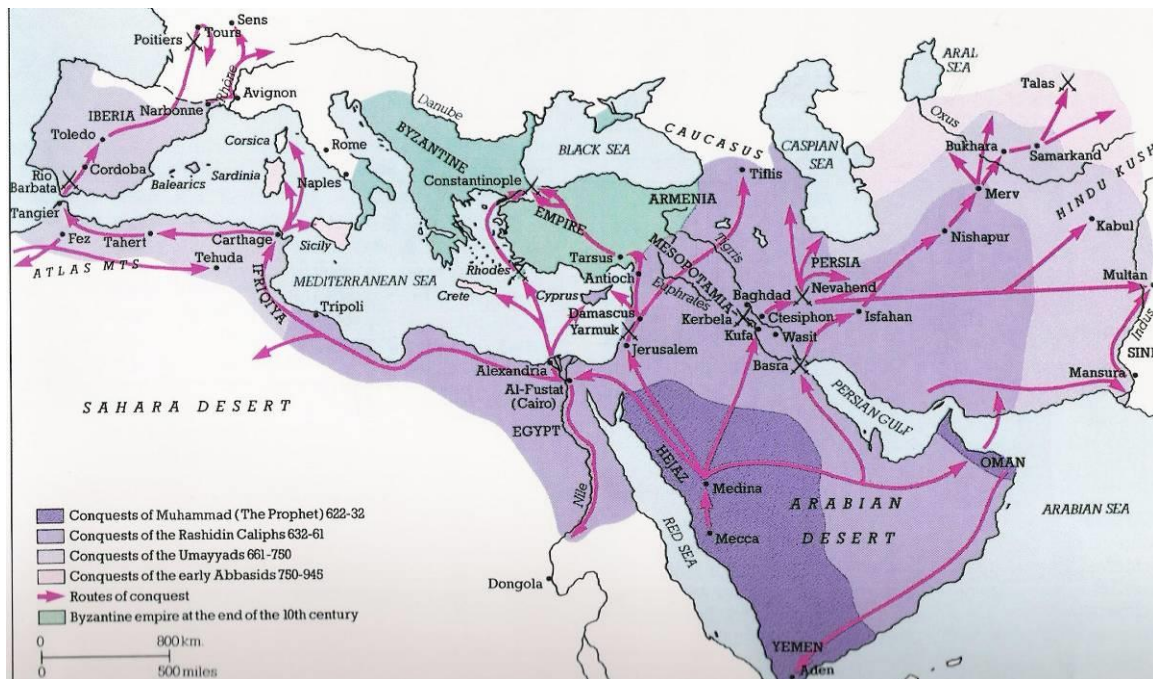
a. Mark 6:1-3

b. Luke 1:46-49

c. John 2:1-5

B. From 632 to 1453 – Islamization of the East

Soon after the death of Mohammed (570-632), the Muslim armies began to conquer most of the Middle East, large portions of Asia, all of North Africa, and parts of Europe. Most of this was the result of military conquest, though some of it involved economic and political incentives. Many also became Muslims by becoming convinced of the superiority of the Islamic religion.



Islamic conquests of the 7th and 8th centuries (Khoury Harb)

The Muslims armies crossed over into Gibraltar and southern Spain in 711 and would have conquered all of Europe had they not been stopped by Charles Martel in Poitiers, France in 732. The Reconquest of the lands taken over by the Muslims lasted from then until 1492, during the reign of the Catholic king and queen, Ferdinand and Isabel, who finally expelled the Muslims from Spain. However, Islam became and remained the dominant religion across North Africa and throughout most of the Middle East until today, not to mention some Far Eastern countries, such as Indonesia, with an Islamic population of over 170,000,000 people! At the inception of Islam, the weakening and nominally Christian Byzantine Empire controlled the Middle East. However, the Muslims defeated their army decisively in the Jordan River valley in 636. “The following year the two principal Muslim armies converged in a siege on Jerusalem. The siege lasted four months as the Christians zealously defended their Holy City. When further defense appeared hopeless, Sophronius (560-638), the patriarch of Jerusalem, offered to surrender to Caliph Omar of Medina (581-644) if he would come to Jerusalem. The caliph came riding on a camel, accepted the surrender, and promised the Christians of Jerusalem freedom of worship and possession of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. The Jews of Jerusalem also survived as a tolerated minority.” (Rusten, 142) In 691, Caliph Abd al-Malik (646-705) completed construction of the Dome of the Rock on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. The structure is the oldest remaining Islamic building and was built to commemorate the place where Mohammed is said to have landed in a night vision.

In 726, Emperor Leo III (680-741), perhaps in reaction to Islamic dogma, ruled that all icons, paintings, mosaics and statues must be removed from Christian churches because they amounted to idol worship. Those opposing images became known as “iconoclasts,” that is, image breakers. However, Popes Gregory II and Gregory III opposed his decree. John of Damascus (675-749), a defender of the use of images in worship, was born to Christian parents and wrote *Orations* and *Fount of Knowledge*. Although he served in the court of an Islamic caliph in Damascus, he supported the use of icons for worship during the iconoclast controversy. Eventually, he left the caliph’s service to join a monastery. The theological work

he produced there became normative for the Eastern Church, which still uses icons and images extensively in their places of worship.

Emperor Constantine V (718-775) called together the Synod of Hieria in an attempt to further eradicate the use of images. 338 bishops met near Chalcedon and declared that all images of Mary and other saints must be destroyed because they amounted to idolatry. Some monks were so devoted to their images that they chose martyrdom over giving them up! Nevertheless, this synod was not supported by the pope in Rome, nor any of the patriarchs of Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem. The icon controversy continued until the Second Council of Nicea in 787 (to the east of Istanbul). During this council, the more than 300 bishops present agreed that icons could be given “veneration” (an expression of respect or reverence), but not adoration. Although this decision solved the controversy, it eventually led many Catholics into idol worship, as was shown during the Protestant Reformation, and which is still practiced widely today in Catholic countries, although they still call it “veneration” of the saints, especially the Virgin Mary.

By the ninth century, the eastern churches were quite different in many ways from the western churches. They used different languages, held somewhat different doctrines and their worship differed as well. The gap grew even wider when Pope Nicholas I (820-867) deposed Photius (820-895), a well respected eastern scholar, from his position as patriarch of Constantinople in 863. Emperor Michael III (842-867) restored Photius to his post, but the next emperor, Basil (812-886), convened the Fourth Council of Constantinople in 869 and installed Ignatius (d. 877) as patriarch. When Ignatius died, Photius called together another council in which he was reinstated as patriarch in 879.

During the early period of Photius’ leadership, Prince Ratislav of Moravia requested that missionaries be sent to the Slavic peoples. Photius sent Cyril (826-869) and his brother Methodius (815-885). These men created an alphabet to write the Slavic languages and translated Scripture in the language of the region. Their influence was such that they earned a reputation as “the apostles to the Slavs.”

The first Russian ruler to become a Christian was the grand duchess of Kiev, Olga (d. 969). However, it was her grandson Prince Vladimir (956-1015) who succeeded in introducing orthodox Christianity to Russia. When he married Anna, the sister of the Byzantine emperor, he turned Christianity into the state religion and declared that everyone in the country must be baptized. The Russian Orthodox Church remained the official religion until 1917 when the Bolsheviks overthrew the tsar. The Russian Orthodox Church has lately been regaining some of its former influence after the collapse of Russian communism.

The Coptic Church of Egypt had already broken away from Rome back in 451 over the Monophysite controversy and experienced periodic persecution from time to time for different reasons. One of the most severe of these took place during caliph el-Hakim’s rule between 996 and 1021. He destroyed some 3000 Coptic churches and threatened Christians with death if they did not convert to Islam.

In 1054, the eastern churches finally broke off from the western church. The popes in Rome claimed to have sovereign control over the whole church universal, while the Orthodox Church felt strongly that the church should be ruled by a council of bishops from all regions. When the dispute over leadership became irresolvable, the Orthodox Church broke away definitively from the west. The western church became the Roman Catholic Church and the eastern Christians broke up into three main branches: the Eastern Orthodox Church, the Greek Orthodox Church, and the Russian Orthodox Church. The Maronite Church developed

in Syria during the seventh century and strengthened its ties with the church in Rome in 1187. They use Syriac in their worship and are particularly numerous in Lebanon.

“Christian pilgrimages to the Holy Land were common during much of the medieval period. But in the eleventh century trouble in the Byzantine Empire made travel increasingly dangerous. Deaths of key rulers and leadership dissensions threatened the stability of the empire from within. Around this time Seljuk Turks, Islamic converts from Central Asia, were establishing an empire that spread from Mesopotamia to Syria, to Palestine, and into Egypt. They were considered even more formidable than the Normans in the West, who simultaneously were conquering southern Italy. In 1071, the Seljuk Turks moved north and defeated Christian Byzantine forces at the Battle of Mazikert, near Lake Van in Armenia. The resulting request of Byzantine rulers to the pope for support in their fight against the Seljuk Turks contributed to the commencement of the Crusades.” (Rusten, 166-167)

As a long term result of the conversion of Constantine, the Roman Catholics believed that Christianity and Christendom had to be defended through military action and violence (e.g. inquisition). Thus began the Roman Catholic Crusades against the Muslims in 1096 and they continued until 1291 when the crusaders lost Acre, Israel. The scars and memory of these bitter battles against the Christians are still vivid in Muslim minds today as if they had happened only yesterday.

The Byzantine emperor Alexius Comnenus (1048-1118) asked the west to help him win back the lands lost to the Seljuk Muslims. “Pope Urban II (1042-1099) announced the First Crusade in a sermon he delivered at Clermont, France, on November 27, 1095, at the Council of Clermont. In response, the crowd shouted, ‘God wills it!’ This became the battle cry of the campaign. Mustering five thousand men, the First Crusade set out for Constantinople, eventually making its way to Jerusalem. The Crusaders captured Jerusalem in 1099... Their victory was bloody, with a horrendous massacre of Muslims within Jerusalem. Godfrey of Bouillon (1060-1100), who was selected to be defender of the Holy Sepulchre, did not live through the next year. His brother Baldwin (1058-1118) established the Kingdom of Jerusalem and was crowned king on Christmas Day 1100. The conquest of Jerusalem, along with Antioch and Tripoli, gave the Christians footholds of power in the region. These victories, however, would not be permanent.” (Rusten, 168, 170)

“Appointed caliph in 1174, Saladin (1138-1193) controlled the region from Damascus, Syria, to the Nile. With his ability to unite his fellow Muslims, Saladin was determined to conquer Jerusalem. On July 5, 1187, the definitive battle was fought in the village of Hattin... The Muslim forces won a decisive victory over the Crusaders, killing some thirty thousand Christian soldiers. To his credit, Saladin’s entry into the defeated Jerusalem on October 2, 1187, was not marked by the butchery that occurred during the Crusader’s conquering of Jerusalem ninety years earlier.” (Rusten, 177)

The Third Crusade, which began in 1189, became known as “the Crusade of Kings” because it involved three European rulers, one of whom was Richard the Lionhearted (1157-1199), king of England. He managed to capture Acre (present day Akko), but was unable to take Jerusalem.

During the Fourth Crusade, the knights captured Constantinople in 1202 and rather than going on to the Jerusalem, they held the city in order to reunite the Eastern Church with the Roman Church. This served only to aggravate the already strained relationship between them and favoured the advance of Islam.

In 1212, a children’s crusade, inspired by a boy named Stephen who claimed to have seen a vision of Christ, ended in utter failure. Many children died on the way; others were sent back

home first by the Genoans, and the rest by the pope; while still others were sold into slavery in North Africa.

The Fourth Lateran Council of the Catholic Church (1215) made provision for the Fifth Crusade. This council, which had many long term effects upon the church, approved the doctrine of transubstantiation (the belief that the bread and wine of communion turn literally into the body and blood of Christ in the Lord's Supper), and forced Jews and Muslims to wear distinctive clothing so that they could be easily identified.

The Seventh (1248) and Eighth (1270) Crusades were arranged and led by a devout French Catholic king, Louis IX (1214-1270). He was captured and later ransomed during the Seventh Crusade and died of fever in Tunis during the Eighth Crusade. Because of his devotion to Catholicism and his social reforms, he was regarded by many Frenchmen as the "model Christian king." The Roman Catholic Church canonized him as a saint in 1297.

The crusading fiasco slowly ran out of energy until the Egyptian sultan, al-Ashraf Khalil, successfully led an army against the final crusader stronghold in Acre in 1291. As a result of the crusades, local Christians in the Middle East began to suffer more persecution at the hands of Muslims than they had before the crusades began. As anyone living in Islamic lands can testify, the crusades have permanently blemished the name of Christianity and still inspire Muslims to engage in acts of violence against all Christians, even though the Roman Catholic Church alone was responsible for this hideous distortion of the Christian message.

China

An interesting event occurred while the crusades were nearing their end. "In 1269, two Italian merchants, the Polo brothers, arrived in Acre on the coast of the Mediterranean with a letter from Kublai Khan (1214-1294), ruler of China's Mongol Empire. The letter requested that the pope send one hundred teachers to China so that the Chinese could study the science and religion of Europe. In 1271, the Polo brothers and one son, Marco (1254-1324), started back to China accompanied reluctantly by two Dominican monks." Even though the monks turned back before arriving, some years later, "the rumour reached Europe that Kublai had been baptized." (Rusten, 186) Then in 1294, Pope Nicholas IV sent John of Monte Corvino (1247-1330) to China to evangelize. He was received well by Khan Timor Olcheitu and gained some six thousand converts to Catholicism, as well as accomplishing a translation of Psalms and the New Testament in Chinese. "The Mongol rulers were very tolerant of Roman Catholicism, and under their rule the number of Roman Catholics in China may have grown as high as one hundred thousand. But in 1368, Mongol rule fell to the Chinese Ming Dynasty. With the expulsion of the Mongols from China came a reaction against anything not Chinese. There is no record of any Christian churches in China from this time until the arrival of Jesuit missionaries in the late sixteenth century." (Rusten, 193)

1. Images and idols for use in worship are expressly forbidden in the Law of Moses (Exodus 20:4-6 and Deuteronomy 5:6-10) and were repeatedly condemned by the Old Testament prophets (e.g. Isaiah 44:6-20). Meditate on the following verses where Paul speaks of scolding the apostle Peter. In light of this text, tell whether it is permissible for Christians to "venerate" the holy men and women of the past and why: Galatians 2:6-16

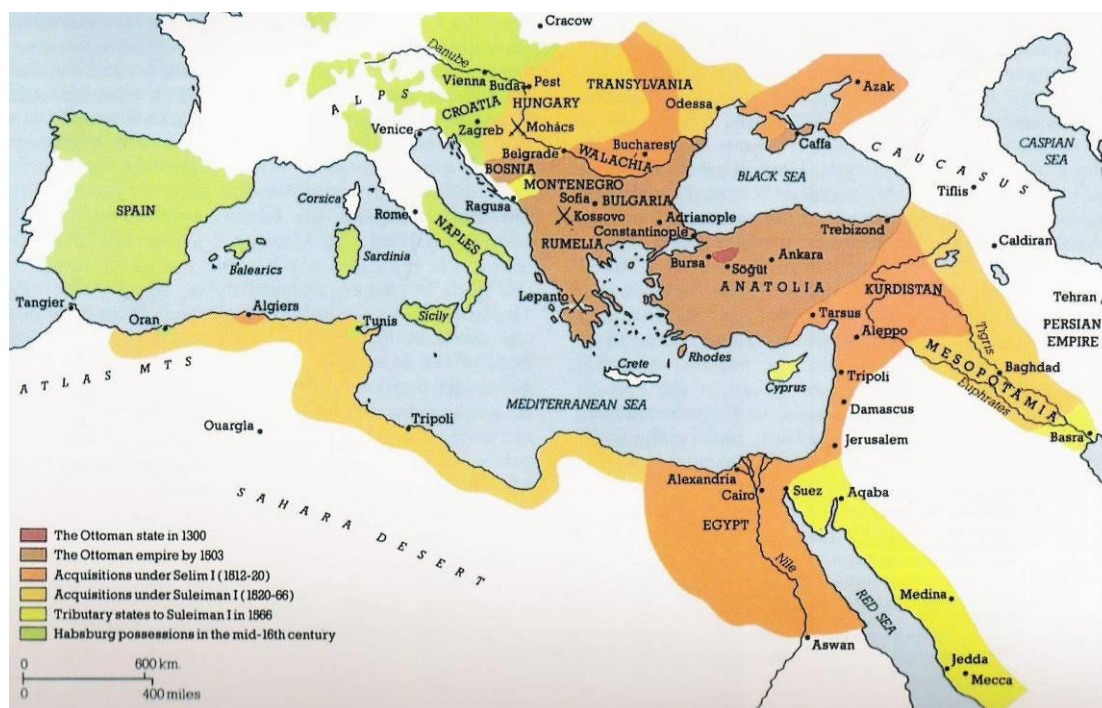
2. Look over this lesson and explain why the crusades were in fact a perversion of the message of Christ. Support your answer with verses from the Bible as much as possible; for example, Matthew 5:38-48.

3. How might a Christian share his or her faith with a person who has bitterness toward Christianity because of the evil those calling themselves “Christians” have done?

C. From 1453 to 2005 – Catholicism, Orthodoxy, and Other Confessions

“By the late 1300’s the Ottoman Turks (Turkish Muslims) had started to build an empire that was destined to cover much of the Middle East, as well as parts of North Africa and southeastern Europe. With Constantinople threatened by Muslim invasion, the Greek Orthodox Church had agreed at the Council of Florence in 1439 to reunification with the Roman Church. Largely motivated by the hope of reinforcement against the Turks, the Greeks were to be disappointed in the little aid they received. Constantinople fell on May 29, 1453, to the Ottoman forces led by Mohammad II (1430-1481). The Byzantine Empire was no more; the reunification of the Eastern and Western churches was short-lived. Constantinople was renamed Istanbul.” (Rusten, 202)

“In 1516, the Turks defeated the Egyptian armies, giving them control not only of Syria but of Palestine as well. The presence of the Ottoman Empire, an enemy of Europe, brought unity to the Middle East, and their influence often benefited the Jews in the area. The Ottoman sultan, Suleiman the Magnificent (1520-1566), used his power in the region to build the walls that still surround Jerusalem. The flag of the Ottoman Empire flew over Palestine for four centuries, until World War II.” (Rusten, 214)



Ottoman Empire in the 16th century (Khoury Harb)

Catholicism in the East

While Islam was growing in power and influence in the Middle East and parts of Asia, the Roman Catholic Church continued to exercise influence, not only in areas of the Middle East, but increasingly in Asia and the Far East.

“Eastern Catholic Churches are a group of independent but related Christian churches in eastern Europe, Africa, and Asia that accept the pope as their head. The Eastern Catholic Churches also accept the doctrine and celebrate the sacraments of the Roman Catholic Church. However, unlike the Catholic Church in the West, the Eastern Catholic Churches allow married men to become priests. In addition, each of the Eastern Catholic Churches uses its own liturgy (acts of worship) and maintains its own structure, law, and customs.

“The Eastern Catholic Churches include the Maronite Church in Lebanon, the Chaldean Church in Iran and Iraq, the Catholic Coptic Church in Egypt, and the Syro-Malabar Church in India. The Melkite, Ukrainian, Ruthenian, and Russian Catholic churches are Eastern Catholic Churches of the Byzantine Rite. About 12 million people belong to Eastern Catholic Churches.

“The Eastern Catholic Churches are also referred to as Eastern Rite Churches because they have retained the liturgies that developed in the East Roman Empire. In addition, they are sometimes called Uniat or Uniate Churches because they broke from and later reunited with the Roman Catholic Church.” (World Book)

The Roman Catholic Church has had a long tradition of sending missionaries into the Far East, many of whom are discussed briefly in lesson 9, section B, of this course.

It must be recognized that, despite many false doctrines and rampant idolatry, unknown millions of Catholics have lived and died in a true relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. Only God knows who the true believers are, no matter what Christian church they actually identify with. Our salvation does not rest ultimately on perfect knowledge and understanding of Scripture, but on our faith in and our relationship with Jesus Christ (e.g. John 17:3).

Among the Catholic missionaries who went out even before the Reformation began we find those who accompanied the Portuguese Admiral, Vasco de Gama (1469-1524), who sailed around Africa to India in 1497. He reported finding churches there founded by the Apostle Thomas. Afterwards, he made two more voyages, dying on board ship during the third one. One of the most famous Catholic missionaries, “Francis Xavier (1506-1552), set out from India for Japan, arriving on August 15, 1549, with two other Jesuits and a Japanese interpreter. He spent two years in Japan teaching the Christian faith throughout the country. After his trip, many Jesuits followed him and subsequently many Franciscans as well. By 1581, there were more than two hundred churches and 150,000 Roman Catholics in Japan.” (Rusten, 232)

“After Magellan discovered the Philippine Islands for Spain in 1521, the first major missionary effort by the Roman Catholic Church came in 1565, with the arrival of the Spaniard Miguel de Legaspi (1510-1572). The royal court of Mexico sent him to the Philippines accompanied by Augustinian priests. The Franciscans, the Dominicans, and the Jesuits closely followed the Augustinians. By 1620, approximately half of the population, now under Spanish rule, was nominally Roman Catholic. It was not until the United States took control of the Philippines from Spain in 1898 that Protestants were permitted. In 2000, the Philippines were 67 percent Roman Catholic and 17 percent Protestant.” (Rusten, 243)

Other Catholic missionaries went to China, such as Matteo Ricci (1552-1610), and to India, notably Robert de Nobili (1577-1656). They met with considerable success and Catholics in these countries came to number in the hundreds of thousands in the centuries which followed.

Because of the political nature of Catholicism, it was sometimes banned in Far Eastern countries. When a pro-Buddhist emperor came to power in Japan in 1614, he began to persecute the Catholics. In 1637, a number of anti-Christian edicts were put into effect. The Catholics revolted against the government and, as a result, the emperor forbade all contact with westerners, refused access to missionaries, and banned Christianity. The Catholic Church continued to survive underground for another 200 years.

After a dispute between the Jesuits and Dominicans in China over the use of Chinese rites in the church, Emperor K'ang Hsi (1654-1722) forbade entry to Catholic missionaries in 1717 and began to persecute the roughly 250,000 Catholic Chinese Christians. China's persecution of Christians, both Catholic and Protestant continues even today.

1. In the text above, the following statement is made: "Our salvation does not rest ultimately on perfect knowledge and understanding of Scripture, but on our faith in and our relationship with Jesus Christ." Do you agree with this statement? Why or why not?

The Byzantine Churches

"The support that Christianity had traditionally received from the Byzantine Empire was not an unmixed blessing. It is true that its relation to the Empire gave the Greek Church great prestige, but it is also true that her freedom was greatly limited. While in the West popes were often more powerful than kings, in the East the emperors ruled the church, and patriarchs who did not do their bidding were easily deposed and replaced. When the emperor decided that reunion with Rome was necessary in order to save his empire, that reunion was achieved even against the clear wishes of the vast majority of the Byzantine Church... In 1453, Constantinople fell to the Turks, and many Byzantine Christians interpreted this event as an act of liberation from a tyrannical emperor who had forced them into a union with heretical Rome.

"At first, The Ottoman regime granted a measure of freedom to the church. Mohammed II, conqueror of Constantinople, invited the bishops to elect a new patriarch—the former one had fled to Rome—to whom he granted both civil and ecclesiastical authority over Christians in his territories. In Constantinople itself, half the churches were turned into mosques, but in the other half Christian worship continued with full tolerance from the state. In 1516, the Ottomans conquered Syria and Palestine, and Christians there were also placed under the government of the patriarch of Constantinople. A year later, when Egypt fell to the Turks, the patriarch of Alexandria was given special powers over Christians in Egypt. Although this policy made the patriarchs virtual rulers of a Christian state within the Turkish state, it also meant that a patriarch who did not implement the Sultan's policies was soon deposed.

"For several centuries, theological activity in the Greek-speaking church was dominated by western influences and reactions against it. The issues debated in the West during the Protestant Reformation were also discussed in the Greek-speaking church and, in 1629, Cyril Lucaris, patriarch of Constantinople, published a 'Confession of Faith' that was clearly

Protestant. Although Lucaris was deposed and murdered, his memory was venerated by many—some claiming that the Confession of Faith was spurious. Eventually, in 1672, a synod condemned him ‘if indeed he was a Calvinist heretic.’ By the next century, however, the issue was no longer Protestantism; rather, it was western philosophy and science, and the impact they ought to have on Orthodox theology. In the nineteenth century, when Greece became independent of Turkey, this issue took on political overtones. In general, Greek nationalism sided with those who advocated the introduction of western methods of research and scholarship—who also argued that the Greek Church, existing now in an independent nation, should be independent from the patriarch of Constantinople. The conservatives, on the other hand, held that commonly received tradition should guide scholarship, and that part of that tradition was subjection to the patriarch of Constantinople, even though he was subject to the Turkish sultan.

“During the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the Ottoman Empire broke down, and national Orthodox churches were formed, not only in Greece, but also in Serbia, Bulgaria, and Rumania. In each of these areas, the tension between nationalist sentiments and the transnational nature of Orthodoxy was a dominant issue. In the period between the two world wars, the patriarchate of Constantinople recognized the autonomy of the various Orthodox churches, not only in the former Turkish territories in the Balkans, but also in other parts of Europe, such as Estonia, Latvia, and Czechoslovakia. Since most of these territories fell under Russian hegemony after World War II, Soviet religious policies were generally applied in them. Early in the century, the ancient patriarchates of Jerusalem, Alexandria, and Antioch found themselves under Arab rule. At first, these newly formed Arab states existed under the shadow of western powers. At that time, significant numbers of Christians under those patriarchates became either Catholic or Protestant. Then growing Arab nationalism reacted against western power and influence, and the growth of both Protestantism and Catholicism was curbed. By the second half of the twentieth century, the only nation where Orthodox Christianity could still count on something like the traditional union of church and state was Greece.

“All of these churches, however, did show signs of vitality. For a time it was feared that the loss of church schools, and the pressure of government propaganda, would keep newer generations away from the church. But the experience of several decades seemed to indicate that the liturgy, traditionally the source of spiritual strength for Orthodox believers, was equal to the task of transmitting the Christian tradition in the midst of hostile states. Although the civil disabilities under which Christians have been placed in several of these states at various times have indeed resulted in a decline in active church participation on the part of those involved in the job market, it is significant that, after retirement, vast numbers return to the church. It is clear that the post-Constantinian period has not spelled the end of those churches that have fallen heir to the ancient Byzantine tradition.” (González, 338-340)

2. Think about the rituals practiced in the dominate religion of your area. List some of these rituals and aspects of worship. Tell how they serve to strengthen people’s commitment to that religion.

3. What are the two main rituals practiced by all Christians? (See Luke 22:17-20, 1 Cor. 11:23-29, Matthew 28:18-20, and Acts 2:36-39)

The Russian Church

"The fall of Constantinople in 1453 was interpreted by many in Russia as God's punishment for having agreed to reunion with heretical Rome. Eventually, the theory developed that just as Constantinople had replaced Rome as the 'second Rome,' now Moscow was the 'third Rome,' the new imperial city whose providential task was to uphold orthodoxy. In 1547 Ivan IV of Russia took the title of 'czar' or emperor, by which he meant that he was the successor of the ancient Caesars of Rome and Constantinople. Likewise, in 1598, the metropolitan of Moscow took the title of patriarch. To support this self-understanding, the Russian church produced an array of polemical writings against Greeks, Catholics, and Protestants. By the seventeenth century, these notions were so entrenched that an attempt at rapprochement with the Greeks led to schism in Russia.

"Czar Alexis I Mikhailovich (1645-1676) saw this rapprochement with Greek Christians as a preliminary step to the conquest of Constantinople, and therefore encouraged Patriarch Nikon to revise the liturgy so as to bring it into agreement with Greek practices. But many in Russia, particularly among the lower classes, reacted violently. They were suspicious of everything foreign, particularly since it appeared that it was the aristocracy that was interested in promoting the new ideas. The result was the schism of the Old Believers, some of whom then joined the peasants in rebellion. This was crushed with great bloodshed, and the peasants' condition of serfdom worsened...

"Czar Peter the Great (1689-1725) took a different tack. He was not interested in a rapprochement with Greek Christians, but rather with opening his country to western influences. In the life of the church, this led to increased interest in both Catholic and Protestant theology. Those who followed these conflicting schools of thought did not generally abandon their Orthodox faith. Rather, they sought to develop an Orthodox theology using either Catholic or Protestant methodologies. On matters that were open to debate, some followed the Catholic lead, while others took their cue from Protestantism...

"The Russian Revolution put an end to much of this debate. A different western philosophy, Marxism, had gained the upper hand. In 1918, the church was officially separated from the state, and this was ratified by the constitution of 1936 which guaranteed both 'freedom for religious worship' and 'freedom for anti-religious propaganda.' In 1920, religious teaching in schools was outlawed. Two years earlier, all seminaries were closed. After the death of Patriarch Tikhon in 1925, the Russian Orthodox Church was not allowed to elect his successor until 1943. By then, partly as a result of the war with Germany, the government had decided to recognize the continued existence of the church. That same year, seminaries were reopened. Also, permission was granted for the printing of some books and periodicals, and for the manufacture of items necessary for worship.

"As in the case of other Orthodox churches under communist rule, the Russian church has found its liturgy capable of supporting the faithful and transmitting the traditions to new generations. Late in the twentieth century after almost seventy years of communist rule, the Orthodox in the Soviet Union were still some 60 million strong.

“Besides the churches discussed above, there are Orthodox bodies in various parts of the world. Some of these, such as the Orthodox Church of Japan, and those in China and Korea, are the result of the missionary work of the Russian Church. They are fully indigenous, with a membership and clergy that is mostly native, and celebrate the liturgy in the native tongue. Others are the result of what has been called the ‘Orthodox Diaspora’...

Nestorian, Assyrian, Syrian, and Armenian Churches

“Since the time of the Christological controversies in the fifth century, a number of Eastern churches that disagreed with the decisions of the councils had established an independent existence. In the former territories of the Persian Empire, the majority of Christians refused to call Mary ‘Mother of God,’ and therefore they were dubbed ‘Nestorians.’ These Christians—also known as ‘Assyrian’—have a long and checkered history. Although for a time in the Middle Ages this church was numerous, and its missions extended into China, in more recent times it has suffered severe persecution, particularly from its Moslem neighbors. Early in the twentieth century, such persecutions decimated its members. Many of the survivors fled to the western hemisphere—including its head, the “catholicos,” who sought refuge first in Cyprus and finally in Chicago. At present, their total membership is approximately 100,000 Christians scattered throughout Iraq, Iran, Syria, and the United States.

“Those churches that refused to accept the Chalcedonian ‘Definition of Faith’ because it seemed to divide the humanity of Jesus from his divinity are usually called ‘Monophysites,’ although such a name does not accurately describe their Christological understanding. The largest of these bodies are the Coptic Church of Egypt and its daughter church, the Church of Ethiopia. The latter was one of the last Eastern churches to receive the active support of the state; but such support ended with the overthrow of Emperor Haile Selassie in 1974. The ancient Syrian Monophysite Church, also known as ‘Jacobite,’ is strong in Syria and Iraq. Its head, the Jacobite patriarch of Antioch, resides in Damascus, the capital of Syria. Technically under this patriarch, but in reality autonomous, the Syrian Church in India, which claims to have been founded by St. Thomas, is fully indigenous, and has about half a million members. “As noted earlier, the Armenian Church refused to accept the Chalcedonian Definition of Faith, mostly because it resented the lack of support from the Roman Empire when the Persians invaded Armenia. Their territory was conquered by the Turks, and their staunch refusal to abandon the faith of their ancestors was one of several causes of enmity between them and their Turkish masters.” (Gonzalez, 340-344)

“Beginning in 1895, Turkish forces commenced a terrible massacre of the Armenian Christians living in Turkey, killing at least three hundred thousand. The genocide, which lasted until 1897, was the first of two large Armenian massacres to take place in Turkey within a twenty-year period, the second occurring in 1915. Both campaigns sought to annihilate the Armenians, a people with Christian roots since ancient times.” (Rusten, 399) During the 1915 massacre, which coincided with World War I, the Islamic Turks slaughtered as many as one and a half million Armenians while the rest of the world took no action to stop them. Hundreds of thousands of Armenians fled to predominately Christian countries to avoid being brutally murdered. Large numbers of them can be found in Russia, parts of the Middle East, Europe and North America.

Contacts between Eastern and Western Churches

“In the early decades of the twentieth century, the participation of the Eastern churches in the ecumenical movement was rather reserved. They feared that a willingness to discuss issues of ‘faith and order’ would be construed as uncertainty as to their own beliefs, or as a willingness to compromise such beliefs. Therefore, although several of them collaborated with other Christians in practical matters, they refused any official participation in discussions that could be interpreted as attempting to settle matters of faith by negotiation. When the invitation was sent out for churches to attend the First Assembly of the World Council of Churches, to take place in Amsterdam in 1948, most of the Orthodox churches conferred among themselves and decided to abstain. In 1950, the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches issued a statement that allayed most of the misgivings of the Orthodox. After that time, most of the Orthodox churches have become full members of the World Council of Churches...

“As one looks at these various churches as a whole, two conclusions can be drawn. The first is that these churches, due to their history of having to move with shocking rapidity into the post-Constantinian era, may have significant insights to offer to other Christians who now find themselves living under similar transformations. The other is that western Christians may have underestimated the power of liturgy and tradition that have allowed these churches to continue their life, and even to flourish, in the most adverse circumstances.” (González, 344)

4. Throughout the centuries Christians have taken different approaches in dealing with attempts to annihilate them. The most common of these are listed here. Choose which option you think is the right way to respond and defend your answer with Scripture and/or examples from history.

- a. Go peacefully and joyfully to martyrdom.
- b. Pretend to abandon your faith in exchange for being left alone.
- c. Flee from the situation by going to another region or country.
- d. Begin a movement of organized, armed resistance to the murderers.
- e. Another better option?

D. From 1792 to 2005 – Protestant Influence

The most prominent Protestant missionaries to the Far East during this period are treated in lesson 9, section C, of this course.

India

The year 1792 is significant for the Protestant missionary movement, and consequently for the growth of Protestantism in the East, because in that year William Carey (1761-1834), along with other English ministers, founded the “Baptist Society for Propagating the Gospel among the Heathen.” Carey himself became one of their first missionaries to be sent out. He arrived in India in 1793 and accomplished a phenomenal amount of work during his lifetime. Later, Adoniram Judson (1788-1850) labored there successfully following his arrival in 1812. After 1813, the influential East India Company removed restrictions which had been placed on mission work in the country and as a result missionaries from many European countries, as well as North Americans, began to set up work there.

China

China opened up to missionary activity in 1842, following the Treaty of Nanking which ended a military conflict between Britain and China over the opium trade. Only six years later, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels wrote the Communist Manifesto which would eventually cause enormous problems for the spread of the gospel in China after its acceptance of communism. Even today Chinese Christians experience periodic persecution, to the point that it is said that no Christian leader is fully respected until he has been imprisoned or tortured for his faith.

Another early Protestant missionary to China was Hudson Taylor (1832-1905), famed for his adaptation to Chinese culture, dress and language. He began his ministry there in Shanghai in 1854 and founded the China Inland Mission in 1865.

In their struggle against foreign exploitation and influence, a secret Chinese society, nicknamed “Boxers” by the British, gained control of the government in 1900 and “began a violent assault on Christian missionaries and their converts. In Beijing, foreign diplomats and their families took cover in a makeshift fort for more than a month until an international force arrived and crushed the Boxer forces. A total of 188 missionaries and their children died in the rebellion, along with more than thirty thousand Chinese Christians. In the aftermath of the rebellion, the empress’s Ch’ing dynasty was destroyed, and foreign access to China continued unabated until World War II.” When Mao Zedong (1893-1976) became chairman of the People’s Republic of China, all missionaries were thrown out of the now communist country. Nonetheless, the Chinese church grew from one million in 1950 to some 75 million by the year 2000. (Rusten, 403, 455)

Important to the Chinese church’s growth at a crucial point was Jonathan Goforth (1859-1936). Inspired by the “Korean Pentecost” (see below), he began praying for revival in China. In 1908 he gave of series of revival messages in Mukden, China, which led to major renewal of commitment among pastors and laypeople alike. (Rusten, 408-409) Also very influential has been the Brethren house church movement, and the teachings of Watchman Nee, a controversial Chinese believer who underwent severe persecution. The Witness Lee movement is an outgrowth of Watchman Nee’s work.

Japan

“In the mid-nineteenth century, for the first time in more than 250 years, missionaries made their way back into Japan. Following a treaty between France and the Japanese government, Japan opened its borders for trade, and in May 1859, the first Protestant missionaries arrived. Despite more than two centuries of severe persecution of Christians in Japan, both Protestant and Roman Catholic missionaries found secret groups of Christians who had maintained the faith for generations, without the aid of formal education or clergy.” (Rusten, 374, 376)

“Following the Second World War, missionary effort intensified even more. Within a six-month period, 2,000 missionaries representing approximately 50 different American missionary agencies returned to the Far East. In Japan, as the emperor was no longer considered to be a god, Christianity found itself on a par with the other religions. Confronted with the catastrophe of their defeat, many Japanese converted to the Christian faith. Over ten thousand villages requested a pastor or Christian missionary. The awakening of the Christian faith in Japan spread like fire. The same is happening today (1991) in Korea and Indonesia.” (Jordan, 302)

Korea

Despite persecution by Confucian rulers, the Roman Catholic Church became rooted in Korea as early as 1784 by Lee Seung-hoon, a converted Confucian scholar. However, “Protestantism was introduced by Suh Sang-yum who was converted by Scottish missionaries in Manchuria in 1878. Although it was against the law to do so, Sang-yum returned with parts of Scripture translated into Korean and quietly converted the first Korean Protestant Christians. The first Presbyterian and Methodist missionaries arrived in 1884. By 2000, there were more than 7 million evangelical Christians in South Korea and approximately 355,000 in North Korea.” (Rusten, 321)

The Korean church experienced a major revival in 1907 which has been dubbed the “Korean Pentecost.” About 50,000 Koreans accepted Christ at that time. Evidence of the strength of the church there came during “Explo,” held in 1974 in Seoul, Korea, by Campus Crusade for Christ. The event “far surpassed everyone’s expectations... Official police estimates numbered the crowd at more than 1.3 million during two of the evening rallies, making the convention the largest Christian gathering in history. In the four years following Explo '74, the South Korean church grew from 3 to 7 million members.” (Rusten, 475)

Paul Yonggi Cho, born in 1936, founded the Yoido Full Gospel Church in Seoul, Korea, in 1958, with six members. In 1962, his church joined the Assemblies of God denomination. Based on a cell-group approach (small groups meeting in private homes), his church has grown to an astounding membership of 780,000 by 2003! (Rusten, 460) Despite his wild success, certain of his teachings concerning charismatic gifts and “the gospel of prosperity” are widely criticized as being dangerously close to heresy.

Indonesia

“During the 1960’s, the majority of professing Christians in the Timor Evangelical Church in Indonesia were also involved in magic, sorcery, promiscuity, and drunkenness. In Response to this crisis, the church at Soe, East Timor, Indonesia, began conducting evangelistic meetings early in 1965. A revival began and quickly spread from Soe to Kupang, on to Niki-Niki, and then beyond Timor. From 1965 to 1972, one hundred thousand people in East Timor were converted to Christ from animism, in addition to large numbers of nominal Christians who experienced a new awakening.” (Rusten, 467) Protestant Christians are currently estimated to number around 15 million throughout this mainly Muslim country.

Russia

Russia had been predominately Orthodox until the introduction of communism in 1917. Lenin confiscated all church properties and made teaching any religion to children under the age of 18 illegal. Atheism was promoted in public schools. Nonetheless, the Orthodox Church continued to operate and a growing number of Protestants witnessed quietly, in spite of regular brutal treatment by government officials. “Brother Andrew” and other brave Christians underwent torture for their faith and still continued to carry thousands of Bibles secretly into the country. It wasn’t until Mikhail Gorbachev (born in 1931) became general secretary of the Communist Party in 1985 that the government began to loosen restrictions on religious activities. When the Soviet Union broke apart in 1991, both Russia and the resulting countries became open to Christian witness in varying degrees. The Russian

government even invited religious teachers from the West to come teach Christian morality because atheism had led to rampant crime and corruption countrywide.

1. Describe how the Christian faith, when lived according to the Word of God, can have a positive and stabilizing effect on the society as a whole. Refer to Galatians 5:13-26 and Titus 3:1-9, and mention the example of Indonesia above.

Protestant Women Ministers

Women have nearly always played a key role in almost every Protestant evangelistic and missionary enterprise. Much of this has consisted of loving care for their husbands and children, coupled with daily testimony to the people whose lives intersect with their own. Other women, usually single, have had broad and significant impact in different parts of the world as church planters and evangelists. Among these who served the Lord in the east we find Lottie Moon (1840-1912) who founded some 30 churches in China. Noted for her extreme generosity, she eventually starved to death. Another outstanding figure is Amy Carmichael (1867-1951) who founded the Dohnavur Fellowship in 1901 and rescued thousands of abandoned children from starvation or prostitution in India.

2. Although men are responsible to provide primary leadership in the church (1 Tim. 2:12, Titus 2:3-5), Scripture speaks of many influential women in the Old and New Testaments, such as Rehab (rescuer), Deborah (judge), Huldah (prophetess), Priscilla (teacher), Philip's daughters (prophetesses), Phoebe (deaconess), Junias (well known among the apostles), etc. What important roles might women be able to occupy in the church in your own culture?

The Middle East and Gulf

"At the beginning of the 19th century, evangelical missionaries, primarily from evangelical Reformed churches in the United States and Scotland, some from the Anglican Church in Britain (also known as Episcopal), and still others from the German Lutheran Church, took the message of the Reformation to the Middle East and established numerous centres in the Ottoman territories. Initially, the goal of these different missions was not to establish the evangelical church in the Middle East. The first missionaries came to preach the good news of salvation in Christ, as they understood it, to the Jews first, and secondarily to the Muslims and Middle Eastern Christians...

"Of course, as the years passed, the missionaries realized that this policy was not successful... Eventually it became apparent to them that the vast majority of individuals and groups who were drawn by their theology, their piety, their rites, and their culture were the eastern Christians- Roman Orthodox, including Catholics and Maronites, as well as Copts, Armenians, Syrians, and Assyrians. Thus, after 25 years of mission work, because of the religious structure followed by the Ottoman state, the missionaries faced reality and pursued a different policy which no longer forbade the appointment of pastors and the establishment of churches in order to carry out the task. This included seeking recognition by the Ottomans of the evangelical division as a valid creed like any other Christian confession...

“At that time, the Ottoman law did not permit foreigners to reside permanently in Jerusalem or to own property in it. Thus, as the missionaries passed through Beirut on their way northward from Jerusalem, they chose it as their first official base and settled there in 1823... One of the missionaries, William Godel, met some Armenian clergy... and began to study the Armenian language with them. Through them, the missionaries discovered a large Armenian colony in Istanbul, the capital, and decided to send Godel there where he began work among the Armenians in 1831.” (Badr, 713-715)

They began to plant Protestant churches in many towns in what are today Turkey, Syria, Lebanon and Israel. The first of these was opened in Istanbul in 1846. Before long, the missionaries recognized a need for schools, which they began to open in several cities. This proved to be one of the most important steps toward influencing the region. They were the first to establish a school for girls in the Middle East. It opened in Istanbul in 1891.

Many of the schools have grown and remain in operation even today. These include Robert College, founded in Istanbul in 1864, and the Syrian Evangelical School, opened in Beirut in 1866. This school became the American University in Beirut in the 1920's. Another important school, the Junior College, was founded not far away in 1924. After continued growth and success in training students, it turned into the American-Lebanese University. With time, most of these schools eventually have become secular institutions, no longer under the supervision of Protestant denominations.

Another key decision was made back in 1834 to move the printing operations from the island of Malta to the cities of Istanbul and Beirut. The Armenian communities immediately experienced a period of cultural and spiritual growth which lasted until the decimation of their population by the Turks in 1895 and 1915. Furthermore, the printing presses in Beirut eventually became the principal suppliers of Christian and educational literature in Arabic for the whole Middle East. Since the civil war in Lebanon (1975-1976), however, the majority of printing of literature has moved to Egypt.

The Bible was translated into many of the regional languages and made available to the public. The Arabic translation of Scripture was done first by the erudite and influential Butrus Bustani. His work was passed on to others who did theological and linguistic editing, until it was finished by Carolinius van Dyke and Yousef Aseer in 1863. This translation remains the preferred version of Scripture for many millions of Protestant and Coptic Christians today. Beirut saw the inauguration of its first Protestant church building in 1869. Since then, many other churches have been built and inaugurated as both the city's population and church membership increased. As the work grew, the missionaries knew that proper Bible training would become an important and crucial need if the local churches were ever to have well qualified national leadership. At first they inaugurated a seminary in a town near Istanbul in 1844, followed by a second one near Beirut in 1846. The seminary near Beirut changed location twice since then and is currently named the Near Eastern School of Theology (NEST), located not far from the American University in downtown Beirut.

The Protestants were not only concerned about educational opportunities, but also built hospitals, orphanages, and homes for the mentally ill wherever they set up ministry. One such institution, the American University Hospital, is still among the best in the region. As an example of medical ministry, the dentist, Anthony Groves, a contemporary of Georges Muller and member of the Brethren Assemblies, took his family to Bagdad and later to India. His missionary work combined medical practice with active evangelism.

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, other Protestant denominations in the United States began sending workers to the Middle East. The Quakers arrived in Lebanon in 1873, the

Southern Baptists in 1895, and the Church of God in 1912. They were also engaged in establishing schools, hospitals, and orphanages. The Church of God still operates the Mediterranean Bible College which they founded in Beirut. (Badr, 717-724)

Significant numbers of Protestants who read biblical prophecies concerning the people of Israel believe they point to the establishment of the present nation of Israel as a key step leading to the eventual return of Christ in the end times. They believe that near the end, there will be large numbers of Jews who accept Jesus as the Messiah. For this reason, some Protestant Christians have been expending energy and resources for nearly 200 years in evangelizing Jews in different areas of the world, sometimes to the neglect of other people groups. In fact, these efforts have had considerable success since the mid 20th century, as the Messianic Jewish movement demonstrates. Thousands of Jews have become Christians in the past 50 years.

According to Rafiq Farah, the first missionary to establish permanent residence in Jerusalem was John Nicholson in 1823, where he lived until his death in 1856. He was sent out by the London Society for the Proclamation of Christianity among the Jews. By 1847, when the first Protestant church in Jerusalem was build, the number of Jews meeting together with Nicholson and the other missionaries reached 57, counting children. They opened what was likely the first hospital in the Middle East in 1843.

In 1846, King Wilhelm IV sent Samuel Gobat to Jerusalem to appoint readers who would “read the Bible in homes, markets, and any other place.” Gobat “believed that the way to evangelize the inhabitants of the Ottoman Empire was through the members of the eastern churches. However, in as much as these churches had gone astray and were spiritually dead, as he believed, it was necessary to awaken them and return them to the pure and true faith, that is, the evangelical faith built only upon the Bible as the unique resource for this faith.” When Gobat received strong opposition from the Catholic and other eastern churches, he joined forces with the Church Missionary Society who shared his zeal for Scripture as the foundation and whose strategy sought to establish churches which were “economically independent, self-governing, and self-propagating.” Their church planting effort went through three stages: 1. Sowing the Word through establishment of schools and medical clinics (1851-1879), 2. Growth and development (1879-1905), and 3. Turning over direction of the churches to the national believers (1905-1918). This proved to be an effective vision and strategy for the establishment of lasting indigenous churches in the region. (Badr, Farah, 727-729)

Much more could and should be said about the growth of the Protestant church in Palestine (surviving despite the hostile environment), Jordan (important for its seminaries and Christian organizations), Egypt (of special note for its missionary activity and success in general), Sudan (presently growing amid persecution), Iraq (under stress, but growing), Iran (persevering under trial) and the Gulf (existing for decades, but experiencing new growth recently). Unfortunately, space will not permit in this short introductory course. We strongly recommend that the students do further reading in the resources cited in the bibliography at the end of the course. (Contact members of the program “Progressing Together” to find out how to obtain these books and articles.)

3. Read Ezekiel 36:22-28, Romans 2:17-29, 9:1-8, 11:23-32, and Galatians 3:27-29. It is of primary importance in the interpretation of these verses to know whether the Israel spoken of in these verses is a reference to the Jews as the physical descendants of Abraham, or a reference to all those in the church who have become the spiritual descendants of Abraham.

Do you believe the Protestant Christians who see the Jews and the modern nation of Israel as important to the end times have understood these verses correctly? Why or why not?

Open Answer- Example: It would seem that Protestant Christians have placed too much emphasis on the ethnic group called Jews, who are the physical descendants of Abraham. The passage in Ezekiel had its fulfillment when the Jews came back to Palestine from exile in Babylon. It probably isn't a prophecy which needed to be fulfilled again after that (for example, the Jews were not involved in idol worship when the nation of Israel was restored in 1948, as they were in Ezekiel's time). Romans 2 and 9 show that being "a Jew" or a "descendant of Abraham" is a spiritual condition, and not a matter of physical ancestry. According to Romans 11, however, it is clear that God has a plan and concern for the Jews which will not be shown "until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in." In the meantime, it is right to evangelize the Jewish people, but not more important than evangelizing any other nation in the world, as has sometimes been believed.

4. Suppose we take the model applied by Gobat and his fellow missionaries as the ideal model for church planting. Answer the following questions about their approach and results:

a. What was the primary method of evangelism used?

b. What were the three goals they set for the national churches to eventually reach?

-
-
-

c. How long was each stage of the work?

Evangelism:

Growth:

Self-governing:

d. How many years passed altogether before they attained their goal?

Lesson 7: Development of the Church in Europe

A. From 325 to 476 B.C. – The Roman State Religion

Constantine was a patient, astute, ambitious and intelligent leader. Apparently, he had decided from the beginning that he wanted to rule the entire Roman Empire, which he eventually did. Through a series of wise tactical moves, he progressed from control of Gaul in A.D. 308, to ruling the Iberian Peninsula and Morocco in 309, to Italy and the rest of the Maghreb in 312 (through his victory at the Milvian Bridge under the sign of the cross), to control of Greece and the Balkans in 314, and finally to the defeat of his own brother-in-law, Licinius, in 324. At that point, Constantine became emperor over the entire Mediterranean basin until his death in 337.

Many changes took place during his reign, two of which profoundly affected Europe, North Africa and the Middle East for the next 1000 years, at least. Constantine made Byzantium (now Istanbul, Turkey) his capitol city. He renamed it Constantinople, after himself, and initiated an immense project to amplify the city walls, beautify the city, build public buildings, and fill the revamped city with inhabitants. He even went so far as giving away oil, wheat and wine to the citizens of Constantinople, thus enticing thousands to live there. This strategic move gave him control of both the Eastern and the Western ends of the empire, which came to be known as “Byzantine,” taken from the original name of Constantinople. Furthermore, the move distanced him from the rich and influential, pagan upper-class of Rome. Without this distance, his absolute control may have been threatened or at least reduced.

The other major change involved the growing influence of Christianity and the gradual suppression of pagan religion. The sincerity of Constantine’s conversion has been the subject of much scholarly debate and ultimately only the Lord knows who belongs to him and who doesn’t. However, there are certain points which lead us to believe that his interest in Christianity was more practical than personal. For example, as emperor, he was also considered to be the high priest of pagan religion. He carried out his functions as such with no apparent qualms, including making sacrifices to pagan gods. Also, he never came under the tutelage of a bishop or any other Christian leader, as was the custom for young Christians, and he was never even baptized until on his deathbed. Many scholars are convinced that Constantine was not so interested in being a Christian as he was in receiving the blessing of the Christian God, whom he saw as more powerful than the pagan gods and therefore, by favoring his followers, he became recipient of this God’s favor.

Although many Christians felt that Constantine’s “conversion” was a direct salvation by God for believers and the vindication of their faith, it is easy to point to several negative influences upon the whole of Christianity. Pagans began to flow into the church by the thousands because it had now become advantageous to follow the professed religion of the emperor. This had the effect of introducing pagan elements into the previously pure doctrines and practices of the church, as the church was not able to keep pace with the demand for proper teaching for all of these new adherents. Previously, to become a Christian meant to face death and persecution; now it meant political power and economic advancement. A priesthood began to develop whose motives were not always to serve and benefit others. Worship and the worship setting became formalized and a hierarchy developed which placed the bishops and priests on a higher economic and social level than

the other believers. Bishops began to hold and exercise power in the secular world and not all were able to keep their ambitions and lusts in check. The negative effects of these changes are still being felt even today in many ways.

1. Read 1 Timothy 6:6-19. How does this passage relate to the things happening in the church after Constantine's conversion?

Christians reacted to the favoring of Christianity by Constantine in different ways according to how they perceived the effects of his reign upon the faith. As mentioned above, many embraced this turn of events as sent by God to give the true faith its rightful place in the world. Eusebius of Caesarea is the most outstanding representative of this group. Born around the year 260, he went through some fierce periods of persecution against Christians when Diocletian and his successor, Maximinus Daia, ruled Palestine. Eusebius' mentor, Pamphilus, and many other believers were martyred prior to Constantine's victory in 313. Eusebius, joyful for the end of persecution against the Christians, went on to write a detailed book on church history which is one of the primary sources of information on the first three centuries. Due to the circumstances surrounding it, the purpose of his *Church History* was to show how Christianity "was the ultimate goal of history," as proven by its triumph through Constantine.

On the other hand, many Christians were not happy with the loss of certain fundamental Christian values. A message of hope and joy for the poor had turned into the bandwagon of the rich. An organization which was simple and egalitarian in its application had become ritualized and hierarchical. A gospel which proclaimed the future kingdom of Christ began to conform to the present kingdom of the emperor. As a result, "monasticism" began to arise. The monastic ideal (word derived from the Greek "monachos"- solitary) is to separate oneself from the hustle and bustle of the world for three pursuits: 1. to avoid temptations and sins which come through contact with a sinful society, 2. to live an austere and disciplined life in order to mortify the flesh (put to death the desires and lusts common to mankind), 3. and to concentrate solely on one's relationship with God. To do this, people began to move into deserted and solitary places where most people did not desire to be. Although some were already practicing a monastic lifestyle even before the time of Constantine, especially in Egypt, the concept spread widely in Europe during the fourth century. Eventually, the monks and nuns began to organize themselves into communities to facilitate their solitary lifestyle and to allow for disciples to be near their mentors. In later years, these monasteries and nunneries would become important centers of help for the needy, as well as centers for the gathering and preservation of knowledge and the Scriptures.

Perhaps the most famous example of the monastic life of the period can be seen in Saint Martin of Tours (from about 335 to 397). His life and the book describing it influenced the European church and its view of the episcopacy to a great extent. As a soldier in Amiens, France, Martin tore his cape in half and gave half to a naked beggar. He became famous for this act of selfless kindness. After leaving the army, he settled in Tours, near Poitiers, France, where he lived as a monk and is said to have done many miracles. When the bishopric of Tours became vacant, the people clamored to have him elected to the post. His simple

lifestyle and rejection of the luxury and pomp usually accorded to bishops caused this model to be seen as the norm for the episcopacy even today.

2. The three pursuits just mentioned, although appearing to be worthy goals, are misguided when placed under the scrutiny of God's Word. Read the verses and answer the following questions:

- a. How can temptation be avoided and personal sin be dealt with (Mt. 6:12-13 and Romans 8:1-4)?

- b. Mortification of the flesh cannot be carried out through scourging, austerity, self-denial, discipline, and other religious practices (Rm. 7:24-8:1 and 1 Tim. 4:1-3). In fact, to attempt to do so in this way is to fall prey to the Gnostic and Stoic philosophies of ancient Greece. What does the Bible teach us about getting victory over the flesh and its desires which can drag us into sin (Gal. 2:20 and Col. 2:13-3:5)?

- c. When did Christ separate himself occasionally from society (Luke 5:15-16 and Mk. 6:31)?

- d. Rather than separating themselves from society, what did Christ desire that his disciples would do (Mt. 28:18-20 and Mt. 5:14-15)?

Theologically, the European church faced one of the greatest challenges when it was forced to define the place of Christ in the Godhead. A controversy, which originated between Arius and Bishop Alexander in Alexandria, was taken to the First Ecumenical Council in Nicea in 325. Arius, represented in the Council by Eusebius of Nicomedia, claimed that Christ was God the Father's first creation, and was not, therefore, co-eternal with the Father. (This claim is still made by the false sect of the Jehovah's Witnesses.) Alexander, however, argued that if Christ is not eternal, then he is not divine. If he is not divine, Christ must not be worshipped, and yet he had been worshipped by believers continuously and without exception since his resurrection and ascension into heaven (e.g., Luke 24:52). The bishops together wrote and signed a document, the Nicene Creed, which stated in no uncertain terms that Christ is co-eternal with God the Father and of one substance (Greek "homousios") with him.

Even though the council almost unanimously declared that Arius' view of Christ was mistaken, this did not put an end to the controversy because Eusebius of Nicomedia was able to convince Constantine to banish the supporters of the Nicene Creed, and when his son Constantius became sole ruler of the empire, he pressured many bishops to accept the Arian belief, banishing those who refused from their cities.

After nearly half a century of controversy and two emperors later, the Second Ecumenical Council, held in Constantinople in 381, the Arian heresy was finally rejected as unbiblical. The principle champion of the Nicene Creed had been Athanasius, an Egyptian bishop who, despite much pressure and opposition, held firm against the heresy until his death in A.D. 373.

3. Look at Paul's famous declaration about Christ in Philippians 2:5-11. Reread verse 2:6 and compare verses 2:9-11 with Isaiah 45:22-24, from whence Paul is quoting. What is Paul trying to communicate to his readers by applying the verses in Isaiah to the person of Jesus Christ?

B. From 476 to 1492 – Christian Middle Ages

It should be stated here that the church of Jesus Christ has never been completely void of those who knew the Lord personally, who took Scripture to be the foundation of all rightly guided faith and practice, and who lived Christian lives in holiness, seeking to do the will of Christ at every turn. This is not to say that these relative minorities never fell into doctrinal error, or that they never made mistakes in judgement. Unfortunately, from the later half of the fourth century until the Protestant Reformation in the sixteenth century, these churches and Christians were often persecuted and murdered for not agreeing and complying with the state church which exercised control in politics as well as religion. We know little about these true believers in Christ because they, as well as their documents, were frequently destroyed by the Roman Catholic Church.

"In Asia Minor, in the region of Mount Ararat and of the Euphrates, independent churches arose early on, calling themselves 'the holy, universal and apostolic church of our Lord Jesus Christ.' Their opponents and persecutors from the official churches called these Christians Paulicians, no one knows why. These believers obeyed the teachings of the scriptures. They denied admission to their gathering to Christians who were not truly converted, and opposed worldliness and the official support of the Catholic churches. They were falsely accused of Manichaeism. Their churches had no central leadership; each community was independent. Consequently, there was a variety of churches amongst themselves. The situation of these churches varied according to the places and the times. We know that some remarkable believers carried out a ministry of itinerant ministry to encourage and strengthen these various churches, similar to the way Paul worked for the early church. In this manner, Constantine was one of these itinerant preachers towards the mid VII century. He was also known as Sylvain, the name of Paul's companion. He saw many conversions amongst the pagans as well as amid the Catholic Church officials. His sermons insisted on rejecting the adoration of images and other superstitions of the Byzantine era. His sermons encountered such success that he caught the emperor's attention, who then published a decree against these independent congregations. This was the beginning of a time of persecutions. Later on, the invasion of Islam contributed to the extinction of these Christian communities. But this movement continued in other regions. Emperor Constantine, the son of Leo the Isaurian, had the Christian members of these churches who were opposed to the worship of images deported to the region of Constantinople and Thrace. Later, another emperor had them migrate to Bulgaria. These believers also established independent

churches in these regions, faithful to the scriptures. They were called *Bogomils*, a Slavic name which meant *Friends of God*. They were also called Bulgarians, from the name of the region they lived in. Among the preachers these churches knew, we may point out a doctor, Basil, who, while practicing medicine, visited the churches to teach and strengthen them in faithfulness to the teachings of the Lord. The vitality of the “Friends of God” also was extinguished through persecutions, imprisonments, burning at the stake, and massacres. They had to struggle against the official churches, as well as the Muslim invasions.

“Through the work of these itinerant preachers who travelled by twos, the ideas of these Christian members of independent churches spread to other parts of Europe, which is how we can establish a spiritual affiliation between the Paulicians and the “Friends of God” on the one hand, and the Cathars on the other, who were situated in the South of France. Starting in the 11th century, the Albigensians, also known as Cathars or as the Purs, appeared in the South of France, particularly in Albi, hence their name. They desired to go back to the simplicity of early worship as well, and to faithfulness to the Holy Scriptures. The Cathars were also given the name of “Bulgarians”, which clearly demonstrates a link between both these movements.

Cathars condemned hierarchy, luxury, ceremonies, and the lifestyle of the clergy. They likewise condemned marriage, the consumption of meat, oaths and war. Desiring to be perfect, members of these churches lived an austere life. According to the only Languedoc Cathar document (dated from the beginning of the 12th century, discovered in Lyon and published in 1887 by professor Clédar) which escaped the destruction of the inquisition, the fundamental acts of worship in Cathar ritual were tied to Scripture. The rituals of the early church were awakened in Catharism, which had for the most part been forgotten for centuries...

“Innocent III gave order to crush these churches, and in 1508 he organized a crusade with Simon of Monfort which thrust the South of France into a conflagration of fire and brimstone. In Beziers 20,000 people were massacred, among whom 7,000 in one church. The Pope’s legate was crying out, ‘kill them all; God is capable of discerning His own.’ The inquisition concluded this gloomy work laying waste the Cathar churches in the mid 13th century.

“Following this, a group known as the Waldensians arose. They inherited their name from Peter Waldo, a rich merchant from Lyon who had a few portions of the Gospel translated into the common tongue so his disciples could read them from house to house. Due to their poverty and their humility, they were also called ‘the poor of Lyon’. They denied the validity of mass, the worship of images and saints, purgatory, indulgences, oaths and military service. Their pastors, called ‘bearded ones’, were single missionaries who travelled from place to place preaching the Gospel. They were excommunicated in 1184 and were often persecuted. They established groups throughout Europe. Some of them withdrew more and more to the high valleys of the Alps, between Piedmont and Dauphine. From there, they migrated to Switzerland, following persecutions, to the canton of Vaud, finally returning to their original valleys later on.” (Jordan and Kreitmann, pages 70-74)

1. Name three things which the Paulicians practiced and which set them apart from the Roman Catholic Church:

- a.
- b.
- c.

2. What practices of the Catholic Church did the Waldensians reject which brought persecution against them?

a.	b.
c.	d.
e.	

Once the hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church was firmly in place, it was only a matter of time before struggles began among the popes and clergy to gain and maintain political and religious power. The struggles led several of the popes to engage in shameless acts motivated by selfishness, contentiousness, greed, and some of the worst evils which Christ meant to do away with by his death and resurrection. Plotting and even murder were the order of the day when it came to achieving certain goals. Many books have been written to describe the convoluted intrigues of the popes and the archbishops, but we will only take up a few cases here for the sake of illustration.

Not long after the Islamic invasions, “pope succeeded pope in rapid sequence... Popes were strangled, or died of starvation in the dungeons where they had been thrown by their successors. At times there were two popes, or even three, each claiming to be the one true successor of Saint Peter... In 897 Stephen VI presided over what came to be known as the ‘Cadaveric Council.’ One of his predecessors, Formosus, was disinterred, dressed in his papal robes, and exhibited on the streets. Then he was tried, found guilty of a multitude of crimes, and mutilated. Finally, what remained of the body was thrown into the Tiber.

“In 904, Sergius III had his two rivals, Leo V and Christopher I, incarcerated and killed. He had come to power with the support of one of the most powerful families of Italy. This family was headed by Theophylact and his wife Theodora, whose daughter, Marozia, was Sergius’ lover. Shortly after the death of Sergius, Marozia and her husband Guido of Tuscia captured the Lateran palace and made John X their prisoner, subsequently suffocating him with a pillow. After the brief pontificates of Leo VI and Stephen VII, Marozia placed on the papal throne, with the name of John XI, the son whom she had had from her union with Sergius III. Thirty years after the death of John XI, that papacy was in the hands of John XII, a grandson of Marozia. Later, her nephew became John XIII. His successor, Benedict VI, was overthrown and strangled by Crescentius, a brother of John XIII. John XIV died of either poison or starvation in the dungeon where he had been thrown by Boniface II, who in turn was poisoned.” (González, 275)

These types of intrigues and political struggles continued for centuries until the grip of the Roman Catholic Church on the political life of nations weakened to the point that the papacy became a primarily religious function and the political aspects of the position took a secondary role.

3. Read Mark 10:35-45. What is the proper attitude for leaders of the Church in Christ’s kingdom?

C. From 1492 to 1800 – The Reformation and its Consequences

“The Reformation was an extraordinary religious movement brought on by the Holy Spirit through the reading of the Bible. Early in the 16th century, reformers arose in every country of Western Europe. All carried more or less the same message: a return to strict faithfulness to the Word of God and to evangelistic simplicity. They reminded people that the Holy Scriptures, which is the Bible, included both the Old and New Testaments, constituting the sovereign authority over all Christians in matters of faith and conduct. Besides, Luther said the Bible is the book of Jesus Christ. The Bible clearly teaches that the crucified and resurrected Christ must be at the heart of faith and of piety. Following confession of one’s sin directly to God, the blood of Christ purifies whoever trusts in him of all sin. Christ’s sacrifice, accomplished once and for all, cannot be repeated, contrary to the Roman Catholic doctrine of mass. The spiritual presence of Jesus Christ in the intimacy of the heart and of the home is the joy and light of Christians; but it is ‘abominable idolatry’ for one to prostrate himself before a ‘host’ thinking that the presence of Christ would reside in it. Jesus Christ is the living leader of the Church, its corner stone. He is the only Mediator between God and men. ‘In Him you have all the fullness,’ as the apostle Paul said. Basing their teaching primarily on Ephesians 2:4-10, the reformers emphasized the great biblical doctrine of salvation by grace alone, attained through faith alone. They affirmed, always looking to the Bible, the universal priesthood of all believers. All Christians are priests. They are not to live separate from the world, but are to become light in it, salt full of flavor. The discovery of these fundamental biblical teachings was truly revolutionary, in contrast with the doctrines and practices of medieval Catholicism.” (Jordan and Kreitmann, page 89-90)

1. What was the driving force behind the outbreaks of reformation around Western Europe during the 14th and 15th centuries?

Prominent Protestant Reformers

We have already discussed the life of Martin Luther and the role he played in the Protestant Reformation, as well as three early reformers. Let’s turn our attention now to some of the other prominent men who contributed to this significant turn of events in European history, most of whom were contemporaries of Luther.

Among these other reformers is Ulrich Zwingli (1484-1531) of Switzerland. Originally a Catholic priest, Zwingli was influenced by the work of the great scholar, Erasmus, who compiled a critical version of the Greek New Testament, the same one used by Luther. By studying Scripture, even before he knew of Luther, Zwingli became convinced that religious exercises such as pilgrimages to holy places were worthless as a means of obtaining salvation. He was sent to Zürich in 1518 to act as priest there. When the peddlers of indulgences arrived, he persuaded the governors to send them away empty-handed. Later on, Francis I asked the Swiss to send him mercenaries to fight against Charles V. Only after the pope’s insistence were troops sent from Zürich, an incident which directed Zwingli’s criticism toward the political abuses of the papacy. He went on to reject abstinence from meat during Lent and priestly celibacy. The Council of the Government finally called for a public debate between Zwingli and the representative of the bishop. Zwingli brought up his complaints against the church and supported his words with passages of Scripture. The

bishop refused to attempt a reply, so the council ruled that Zwingli could continue teaching and preaching. This decision led to a break in ties with the Roman Catholic Church.

Unfortunately, several of the Swiss cantons chose to remain with the Catholics. Tensions grew between the Catholic and the Protestant cantons until the Catholics attacked Zürich by surprise in October of 1531. Zwingli went out as a chaplain with the army and was killed in battle. About a month later, an agreement was made between the two sides by which each would respect the right of any canton to choose between being Catholic or Protestant.

William Farel (1489-1565) studied under Jacques Lefevre in Paris. When expelled from France for his Protestant teachings, he spent most of his life preaching in Switzerland, where he was instrumental in bringing Bern and Geneva into the Reformation. Having known John Calvin for some time, he convinced him to make Geneva his base.

One of the most famous and influential reformers was John Calvin (1509-1564). Born in Noyon, France, he began a career in the Catholic Church. He graduated with a Master of Arts from Paris in 1528 and then studied law at his father's request. Although it is not clear when Calvin became a Protestant, he went into exile in Basel, Switzerland, in 1535, when Francis I decided he would no longer tolerate Protestantism. A year later, he published the first serious exposition of Protestant doctrine, entitled *Institutes of the Christian Religion*.

Because he wrote it in Latin, it was circulated and read in many different countries. He continued to expand the work and the first edition in French appeared in 1541. The final and most extensive edition in French was published in 1560. After serving for a time with Farel in Geneva, he lived in Strasbourg from 1538-1541 where he was pastor to the French Protestant refugees. He then moved back to Geneva and continued to preach, study, and write.

In one of the regrettable decisions taken by the reformers, Calvin approved of the execution of a Spanish doctor, Servetus, in 1553. Servetus had already been condemned by the Catholic Church as a heretic for denying the doctrine of the trinity, but had escaped and fled to Geneva, where he was burned at the stake by the Protestants.

Calvin is renowned, not only for his excellent writings in systematic theology, but also as the father of the "Reformed" churches. This term arose to contrast the doctrinal positions held by the Lutherans on the one hand and the followers of Calvin and Martin Bucer on the other. The Lutherans believed that the body of Christ actually descended from heaven during communion and could be literally present at several places at once. Calvin and Bucer, however, taught that Christ was spiritually present during communion and that the believer was spiritually ushered into his presence in heaven as a foretaste of the marriage feast of the Lamb. Although Luther and Calvin had essentially "agreed to disagree," many Lutherans insisted that the difference was important and opposed the Calvinist position. The churches holding to the Calvinist view were thereafter called Reformed Churches.

Conrad Grebel (1498-1526) was a disciple of Zwingli and participated in the establishment of the first church to practice separation between church and state, founded in January of 1525. They rejected the idea of infant baptism and only accepted professing believers into membership. As a result, they began baptising adults publicly. Their opponents, both Protestant and Catholic, called them "Anabaptists" (which means "rebaptisers"). They also advocated separation between church and state and refused military service. The Catholics ruled that the Anabaptists were heretics and many thousands of them were put to death by drowning, burning, torture, or being drawn and quartered.

Menno Simons (1496-1565) was born and spent most of his life ministering in and around Holland. Though a Catholic priest for many years, he joined the Anabaptist movement in

1536. He and his followers, who became known as Mennonites, were staunch pacifists and refused to serve in the military. This stance brought persecution even from the Protestant rulers who needed soldiers to fight against the Catholic armies. He was against infant baptism and only allowed adults who professed Christ to be baptised. The Baptist denominations, besides the modern Mennonites, find their roots in Menno's teachings. Philip Melanchthon (1497-1560) worked closely with Luther until his death in 1546 and afterwards became the main proponent of Lutheranism. He wrote the Augsburg Confession, a document drafted to be read in front of the emperor, Charles V, in 1530. This confession still serves as the basic document for Lutheranism today.

Theodore de Beza (1519-1605), who worked with Calvin in Geneva, became director of the Genevan Academy where hundreds of young people were trained in Calvinist doctrine. Many of them then returned to their homes in other European countries and continued to teach others what they had learned from Beza.

"Throughout sixteenth-century Europe, rulers proclaimed one religion for their region, and all subjects were expected to conform. The Edict of Nantes changed this practice in France. The edict was an agreement signed in 1598 between King Henry IV (1553-1610) of France and the French Protestant Huguenots after the formerly Protestant Henry converted to Catholicism in an effort to end the Wars of Religion. The Edict of Nantes enlarged the rights given to French Protestants to include civil equality, free exercise of religion, and fair administration of justice. This edict introduced the new concept of two religions tolerantly coexisting. King Louis XIV (1638-1715) revoked the Edict of Nantes in 1685" and persecution of French Protestants began anew. (Rusten, 251)

Many books have been filled with information about the Protestant Reformation in Europe, but space will not allow us to go into more detail here. We recommend that the student read more about church history worldwide after being briefly introduced to the subject in this course.

2. Briefly describe the contribution of each of the following leaders during the Protestant Reformation:

a. Ulrich Zwingli (1484-1531)

b. William Farel (1489-1565)

c. John Calvin (1509-1564)

d. Conrad Grebel (1498-1526)

e. Menno Simons (1496-1565)

f. Philip Melanchthon (1497-1560)

Lasting Effects of the Reformation on European culture

The Protestant Reformation resulted in many political, economic, and social changes, especially in northern Europe, but later in many other countries of the world:

1) Politically, democracy replaced government held by the aristocracy and the absolute power of kings and popes began to wane or even disappear in many places. Government started following the pattern of many Protestant churches where the leaders were elected by the members of the congregations, who, although they were respected and generally obeyed, could be removed by the group if it was deemed necessary. This same model led to the decentralisation of government. Since local churches enjoyed a degree of autonomy in the election of leaders and their collective decisions, central government became limited to certain fundamental sectors, such as the army, printing of currency, foreign diplomacy, etc. One of the most important results of democratic rule is the guarantee of certain fundamental human rights.

Knowledge of the biblical teachings concerning the value, rights and moral responsibilities of each human being also brought political stability to Protestant nations.

“Solid democratic regimes only managed to establish themselves where the human and psychological conditions necessary for their development were present; these include a sufficient number of men and women passionate for liberty and owning a sense of one’s responsibilities. These conditions were met in countries where the Bible was widespread, read and cherished. But in countries of Catholic tradition such as Italy, Spain, and the states of South America, as well as in the African countries of Muslim majority, or having diverse religions today, democratic attempts have generally remained precarious. In these countries, the Bible is poorly known, scarcely read and little appreciated, and consequently the notion of freedom and responsibility which it communicates is often all too lacking.

“The ideas of the Reformation which have favored political freedom and the suppression of absolutism beginning in the 16th century are still current in the 20th century. Indeed, totalitarian influence is once more threatening everywhere and already spreading out over vast territories.” (Jordan and Kreitmann, page 141)

2) Economically, the Reformation provided the mindset and environment where ingenuity and hard work could take people from the poverty of society’s lower class and raise them up to a life of dignity and ease. The biblical qualities which contributed to this change include recognition of hard work as a ministry and priestly service. Scripture exhorts the believer to work “as unto the Lord and not unto men.” Honesty in work and respect for one’s promises also contributed to an atmosphere of mutual trust and confidence. The boss no longer had to play the role of a demanding, mistrusting taskmaster. Furthermore, the desire to live a sober and simple lifestyle led to families and businessmen saving what was left over from their wages. These savings were then reinvested in improvements and industrial developments which brought on further growth and income. The Protestants also tended to practice a brand of “economic democracy” as well. “Industrial societies were

governed according to the same model as the religious local assemblies, where each member nominates and monitors the council of elders. They had their administration council which was appointed by the general assembly of shareholders and accountable to it. In this manner, work communities were naturally created which have guaranteed the efficiency and durability of action taken on the economic level, at least as long as a Christian spirit of friendship contributed to unifying the members of these companies.

“Therefore, the Reformation made evolution towards the great industry of the 19th century possible on an economic level. Poverty and the widespread famines of the middle Ages disappeared. This resulted in demographic growth and unprecedented improvement of Western society. Much greater than this, the economy, organized according to principles of freedom and of responsibility inspired by the Reformation progressively blossomed to such an extent that it granted the Western World supremacy for several centuries.” (Jordan and Kreitmann, page 146)

3) Socially and culturally, the Reformation introduced many biblical concepts which are now taken for granted by the majority of Europeans. Love for one’s neighbour, and even for one’s enemies gave the Protestants a sense of brotherhood with one another, which in turn tended to level out the social strata of society, along with the barriers separating rich from poor and aristocrats from commoners. Many organizations were set up to aide the underprivileged members of society. People became concerned about the exploitation of workers by the owners of companies, especially during the industrial revolution. Parents and leaders began promoting generalized education for children so that they would be prepared to read and study the Bible for themselves. Schools were established, and later universities. In fact, most of the long-lived, first class universities were initially established for the training of Protestant Christian leaders. The intellectual freedom which resulted from the break with the Catholic Church also led to advances in science, as dissenting ideas and original concepts were no longer punishable by burning at the stake or excommunication. Unfortunately, most of the secularized European countries have forgotten their Christian origins and actually persecute and suppress many of the biblical teachings which brought the west into its present state of prosperity and freedom. The long term results of this mistake are slowly making themselves felt in the growing destruction of the family unit and general breakdown in morality.

3. Speak briefly about how your own country might benefit politically, economically, socially and culturally if the power of the message of the gospel were to take root in the hearts and lives of thousands of your fellow citizens:

a. Politically

b. Economically

c. Socially

d. Culturally

D. From 1800 to 2000 – Philosophy, Science and Religion

The new climate of freedom which accompanied the break with the Catholic Church fostered advances in scientific knowledge, but because the process of separation had been long, bitter and bloody, many Europeans were disillusioned with religion in general and sought other explanations for reality as they experienced it. This situation led to the formulation of new philosophical ideas, as well as the eventual rejection by many of the biblical account of human history, both in the realm of science and the realm of theology. The idea became popular that reason and rationality could solve any mystery of the universe. “Rationalism,” that is the quest to explain all reality through philosophy, scientific research, and the sheer power of human reason, turned into the driving force for large sectors of society and eventually won over a majority.

The roots of the philosophical shift can be found in the ponderings of René Descartes (1596-1650), John Locke (1632-1704), David Hume (1711-1776), Voltaire (Marie Arouet, 1694-1778), and Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), among others.

The Frenchman Descartes’ starting premise was that he should doubt everything until he was able to establish some indubitable truth. This foundational truth is expressed in the famous statement, “I think, therefore I am.” He could not doubt the fact that he was a thinking entity and this proved for him the reality of his existence. Although Descartes was a profoundly religious man, theologians rejected his method of doubting everything as counter productive for the Christian faith.

John Locke, a professor at Oxford University in England, held that experience is the basis of all true knowledge, whether it is inner experience in our minds or outer experience in our surroundings. These experiences lead us to make judgments concerning reality, that is, we are led by our experiences to hold certain things as true, even though they may not be directly observable. His book on *The Reasonableness of Christianity*, published in 1695, stated that Christianity is the most reasonable religion and its tenants could be arrived at merely through the application of sound reasoning and judgment, even without the aid of divine revelation. (See the course DOCT202 for further treatment of this mistaken concept.) His philosophical methodology, called “empiricism,” influenced many people, both inside and outside of the church to lean more heavily on experimentation and reason to discover truth.

Another group, the deists sought a middle path between the growing numbers of atheists, freethinkers, and adherents to strict orthodoxy. They claimed that true religion should be universally available to people the world over by the application of human intuition. They arrived at what they felt were five universal and basic doctrines to be discovered in this way: “the existence of God, the obligation to worship God, the ethical requirements of such worship, the need for repentance, and reward and punishment.” (Gonzalez, 190.)

However, the Scottish philosopher, David Hume, dealt a heavy blow to the philosophical methodology of the deists, empiricists, and rationalists by pointing out that there are truths which cannot be established by experience alone. For example, no one has seen or experienced the idea of “cause and effect”, and nonetheless, we all agree that it exists. Furthermore, it is inaccurate to speak of the substance of our experiences, because they are

merely perceptions of a series of attributes, made by our five senses. What is an apple, for example, other than the combination of form, color, texture, weight, taste and smell? Voltaire, influenced by Locke's writings on religious tolerance and by his observation of the merciless persecution of Protestants carried out in France, proposed that the monarchy, though necessary, should have as its goal the good of the subjects, not the comfort and welling-being of the monarch. Society and government should be tolerant of individuals, since human history really only amounts to man's progressive understanding of himself and his adjustments to that ever-changing understanding. Thus he introduced a kind of relativism which questions the validity of absolute truths, such as those expounded in Scripture, and turns the focus on humankind.

One of the most influential thinkers on the relationship between faith and reason was Immanuel Kant. He critiqued the various forms of rationalism by arguing that reality is nothing more than the mind's organization of experiences into certain mental categories, the most basic of which were time and space. In this sense, we cannot prove or disprove anything, because all we have to work with are our perceptions and categorization of stimuli. These men and others helped set the stage for a rejection of divine revelation and faith as the basis for the establishment of what truth and reality are.

In the area of science, anti-biblical rumblings began to be felt mainly in the fields of geology and biology, but were eventually extended to all fields of investigation as more and more scientists began to view their research under the philosophical lens of rationalism.

The first geologist to present what was seen to be "irrefutable proof" of the antiquity of the earth was James Hutton (1726-1795). He believed that the earth's surface had been slowly eroded, slowly uplifted, and slowly eroded again many times over millions of years. He discovered an outcrop of rock strata which seemed to confirm his theory at Siccar Point on the coast of Scotland. The idea that geological processes have always been extremely slow, called "Uniformitarianism" or "actualism," gave rise to the well known adage that "the present is the key to the past."

In 1830, the famous geologist Charles Lyell (1797-1875) published his book, *The Principles of Geology*, which expounded on Hutton's uniformitarian hypothesis. Unfortunately, geologists began to accept the assumptions of Uniformitarianism as though they were fact, even though the only historical accounts we have of these ancient events all point to rapid, catastrophic events which reshaped the earth's surface over a short period of time.

Charles Darwin (1809-1882) imbibed Lyell's teaching about the antiquity of the earth and applied the notion of slow, gradual changes to biology in his book *The Origin of Species, or the Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life*, published in 1859. His book proposed that all living beings were related to each other, and that they slowly changed from one species into another through a process of evolution by natural selection. This meant that man was not a special creation by God, but was rather the end product of a long chain of random changes from simple forms of life to more complex forms. (For more on this subject, see the final lesson in the course DOCT202 and the "Additional Resources" on the Progressing Together CD.)

Lyell's work had added millions of years to the age of the earth and Darwin's work had removed the need for a creator of life. The effects of their work soon spilled over into the arena of theology.

“A liberal train of theology also developed through the German theologian Schleiermacher (1768-1834). He placed rationality above the authority of the Holy Scriptures, and rejected everything in the Bible which challenged this. At the same time, Biblical criticism doubted the authenticity of the texts through German theologians such as Graf (1815-1869) and Wellhausen (1844-1918), and the School of Tubingen with Baur (1792-1860) and Strauss, the Rhineland German, and then in the 20th century Bultmann (born in 1884) and the Formgeschichte.” (Jordan and Kreitmann, page 174)
 (For a fuller discussion of the theological debate between liberal and conservative theologians, refer to part A of lesson 4.)

Lest the student be left with the impression that nothing positive was happening during the 19th and 20th centuries, this was also a period of tremendous growth and spread of the Protestant-Evangelical Church worldwide. This phenomenal growth is treated in the following sections of this course: Lesson 5, section D; Lesson 6, section D; Lesson 8, sections C and D; and Lesson 9, sections C and D.

1. Read Isaiah 55:8-9. What are the limitations of rationalism in light of this passage?

2. On what basis and to what extent can man claim to ever know that something is absolutely, universally and eternally true? Meditate on Psalm 119:160 and John 17:16-19 in relation to this question.

3. Read 2 Peter 3:3-6. Discuss the relationship between this prophecy, made by the apostle Peter in the mid 1st century, and the uniformitarian idea, developed in the late 18th century, that the earth's surface was changed by very slow processes of erosion and sedimentation over millions of years.

Lesson 8: Development of the Church in North and South America

A. From 1492 to 1834 B.C. – Catholic Influence

In 1492, Christopher Columbus' trip to the Americas opened up new areas for colonial expansion of the growing European powers. Spain, Portugal, and France sent expeditions of soldiers to establish colonies and subdue the local native populations. Since these European countries had always been strongly Catholic, they began to introduce their religion to the conquered peoples of the newly discovered lands.

"As the Spanish conquistadors moved through the Americas, Catholic missionaries usually followed close behind. This was the case as Franciscan missionaries arrived in Mexico City in 1524. The next year, an Indian convert named Quauhtlatoatzin (1474-1548) was baptized by a Franciscan priest, and his name was changed to Juan Diego. In 1531, Juan Diego reported having a vision of the Virgin Mary in Tepeyac, northwest of Mexico City. He claimed that she had appeared to him and charged him to tell the bishop to build a temple on that site. She then is said to have left an imprint of herself on Juan Diego's cactus-cloth garment. In the years since the reported vision, many miracles have been attributed to this imprinted garment, and millions have visited the shrine built on the site" (Rusten, 225)

"Mission life in America thrived for more than 250 years in a belt of North America known as the Spanish Borderlands. From the 1560's to the 1820's, Spanish missionaries established themselves among the Indians in this region, which covered a vast area north of Spain's colonial empire in Latin America. Missions developed in what are now Georgia, Florida, Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and California. French missions arose in the Great Lakes area...

"In the 50 years after the arrival of Christopher Columbus in 1492, Spain claimed most of the New World. The pope, as head of the Roman Catholic Church, granted the Spanish monarchs great authority over the church in the Americas. As a result, missions became agencies of the government. The Spanish government paid the missionaries' expenses, hoping they could persuade the Indians to become loyal Spanish citizens, as well as Roman Catholics. Spain's two chief interests--the protection of its empire and the conversion of the Indians--usually determined where and when missions would be established. Spanish soldiers and missionaries came to Florida from Cuba and the Caribbean. Other missionaries in the Spanish Borderlands came by way of New Spain (Mexico).

"In the Roman Catholic Church, missionary work had long been a specialty of certain groups known as orders. Members of one order, the Society of Jesus (Jesuits), labored and died among the Indians of the humid south Atlantic coast between 1566 and 1572. Most of the missionaries in the Spanish Borderlands, however, were members of the Order of Friars Minor (Franciscans).

"Franciscans operated missions in what are now Florida and Georgia for almost 200 years. By 1655, there were 38 missions in the area. Because the Indians moved around a great deal to hunt, fish, and wage war, the missions often changed locations. At times, European diseases caused many deaths among the Indians. After the founding of Charleston, S.C., in 1670, English settlers began to lure surviving Indians away with trade goods and guns. Some attacked the Indians, often enslaving or killing them. By 1708, only a few missions were left, and in 1763, Spain surrendered Florida to Great Britain.

"In 1598, Spain established a colony in the New Mexico area, where Pueblo Indians had an advanced civilization. The group that settled there included Franciscan missionaries, who

sought to control the colony in the 1600's. Churches were built in about 50 Pueblo towns. In the early 1600's, the friars claimed to have about 35,000 mission Indians...

"In the 1680's, Spaniards began occupying parts of present-day Texas. Spain relied on missions, presidios (forts), and other settlements to prevent the advance of French explorers and traders into the Texas area. Spain also hoped to befriend the powerful Indian tribes of this region, including the Apaches and Comanches. By the mid-1700's, there were a few widely scattered clusters of missions that had survived Indian invasions...

"The Spanish settlement of California began in 1769. That year, soldier-settlers and missionaries took possession of the area that became the city of San Diego. The Franciscan Junipero Serra founded the first California mission, known as San Diego de Alcalá, on this site. Serra went on to found 8 more of California's 21 missions before his death in 1784. These missions became home to thousands of Indians. Some of the California missions developed into major agricultural and manufacturing centers.

"In 1833 and 1834, the Mexican government seized and redistributed properties that belonged to the missions. This action brought an end to the active involvement of missions in the Spanish Borderlands...

"Missionaries were able to keep many Indians under mission discipline for several generations. When the missionaries left or the missions closed, however, some Indians returned to their former way of life. Discrimination and a lack of education prevented even skilled Indians from getting good jobs and receiving equal rights among whites." (World Book)

"When the pope partitioned between Spain and Portugal all lands to be discovered, no one knew that the eastern tip of South America reached across the line of demarcation. In 1500, a Portuguese squadron... accidentally sighted what is now Brazil... Several preliminary explorations led to the conclusion that the only source of wealth to be found in the area was brazilwood, which could be used for making dyes. King Manoel of Portugal granted the monopoly on brazilwood to a group of Portuguese merchants, whose representatives established trading centers along the coasts...

"When brazilwood became scarcer, the Portuguese turned their attention to sugar cane, which could easily be grown in the area... Growing sugar cane, and processing it into sugar, required abundant cheap labor, and the Portuguese sought to obtain this by enslaving the Indians...

"These methods, however, did not produce sufficient slaves, and many of those captured ran to the jungles at the first opportunity. It was then that the Portuguese began importing slaves from Africa, which lay fairly close across the Atlantic. As the Indian population moved to the interior, died, or was absorbed by the rest, blacks and Portuguese came to be the majority of the people of eastern Brazil...

"The Jesuits founded missions very similar to those of Paraguay, except for one important difference: instead of placing them as far as possible from the settlers, they built them where the Indians could serve in the plantations. The missionaries were grateful for the support of the Portuguese, and in exchange offered the labor of the Indians in what practically amounted to slavery. As one missionary said, 'They quake in fear before the governor, and that fear is enough for us to teach them. It helps them to hear the Word of God.'

"The Indian reaction took the form of a messianic cult that combined Christian elements with others derived from ancient beliefs... Likewise, black slaves developed various

combinations of Christianity with their ancestral religions. Both of these movements allowed oppressed blacks and Indians a sense of dignity that official Christianity denied them...

"All told, the early story of Christianity in Brazil, as in so many other lands in that period of colonial expansion, is not an inspiring one. It would be many years before the negative consequences of such inauspicious beginnings could be overcome" (González, 409-411).

"The conquest of the coast of present-day Colombia was begun in 1508, but failed. It was begun anew in 1525, with the founding of Santa Marta by Rodrigo de Bastidas. He was convinced that Indians should be treated humanely, and for that reason the other settlers forced him to return to Hispaniola. Then began a wave of terror against the Indians, trying to force them to tell the secret location of El Dorado - another of those incredible fables that the conquistadores believed. With Santa Marta as their base of operations, the Spanish moved west, where they founded Cartagena, and south, where they defeated chief Bogota and founded the city of Santa Fe de Bogota.

"Very soon after the founding of the first cities, the transplanting of the Spanish church was completed with the establishment of a series of bishoprics and the introduction of the Inquisition... Eventually, a tacit agreement was reached, that only in extreme cases would the Inquisition intervene against Indians or black slaves. Since by that time the British were making their appearance in the Caribbean, the Inquisition was also used against them, and a number were killed for their Protestant convictions.

"The two great Christian figures of this area were Saints Luis Beltran and Pedro Claver. Luis Beltran was one of the hundreds of missionaries who sought to bring Christianity to the Indians, and to undo the evil done by the conquistadores and the settlers. A Dominican, he spent the earlier part of his career as master of studies in the Dominican house of his native Valencia. The news from the New World, about the millions who needed someone to minister to them, moved him, and he decided that he had to find out if he was called to be a missionary. In 1562, when he was thirty-six years old, he landed in Cartagena. He repeatedly clashed with the encomenderos, and his preaching about justice often resounded with echoes of the Old Testament prophets. But he was still uncertain about his vocation and finally returned to Spain, where his piety and holiness gained him many admirers. Luis Beltran died in 1581...

"Pedro Claver, the other great Colombian saint, led a very different life- He was born in 1580, shortly before Beltran's death, and from early youth decided to join the Jesuits and become a missionary to the New World. His superiors thought that he lacked intelligence, and he was still a novice when he arrived at Cartagena in 1610. He had ample opportunity to see the sufferings of black slaves, and therefore when he was finally allowed to make his final vows in 1622 he added a further vow to his signature: *Petrus Claver, aethiopum semper servus*—Pedro Claver, forever a servant to blacks...

"As soon as a slave ship arrived, Claver and his interpreters ran to meet it. Sometimes they were allowed to enter the hold of the ship, but most often they had to wait until the slaves had been transferred to the barracks that would be their temporary homes until they were sold...

"His methods were dramatic. He gave them water, of which they had not had a sufficient supply since they had boarded their ships, and then explained to them that the waters of baptism quench the thirst of the soul. Getting together a group who spoke the same language, Claver would sit them in a circle, sit among them, and give the only chair to the

interpreter, who sat in the center and explained to the bewildered slaves the rudiments of the Christian faith...

"Claver's concern, which was first shown at the arrival of the slave ships, was evident in many other ways. Since leprosy was a common disease among slaves, and those who had it were simply expelled by their masters, Claver founded a leprosarium where he spent most of his time when there were no slave ships in the bay, or slaves in the barracks waiting to be sold. There he was often seen embracing and trying to console a poor leper whose rotting body made others shy away. Also, during the years of his ministry there were three outbreaks of smallpox in Cartagena, and in all three occasions Claver took upon himself the task of cleaning the sores of infected blacks, who had been cast out to die...

"The western part of South America was under the control of the Incas. Although the Spanish eventually called their heartland 'Peru,' the Incas called their empire Tahuantinsuyu, which means 'the four corners of the world.' With borders that are now difficult to determine, this empire included all or part of Peru, Ecuador, Bolivia, Chile, and Argentina—a total of approximately 750,000 square miles.

"The conquest of this vast empire was accomplished by Francisco Pizarro through a combination of luck, daring, and treachery. Inca Atahualpa was captured in 1532, but this did not put an end to upheavals and civil wars. While the Indians continued a valiant and spirited resistance, the Spanish fought among themselves...

"The role of the church in these events, as in the entire Spanish enterprise in the New World, was twofold. On the one hand, it supported conquest and exploitation. On the other, some of its members raised vigorous voices of protest. A priest who had been instrumental in the betrayal through which Atahualpa was captured was rewarded by being made bishop of Cuzco—the capital of the empire. The enormous wealth of Peru seems to have corrupted even many of the friars, who in other areas were noted for their sacrificial ministry among the Indians...

"The territories that are now Argentina, Uruguay, and Paraguay were the last to be occupied by the Spanish. After several unsuccessful settlements, in 1537 they built a fort in what is now the city of Asuncion, in Paraguay. Since they were isolated, and knew that they depended on the Indians for their subsistence, the Spanish in Asuncion were fairly moderate in their treatment of the Indians. Many of these were gathered in a number of small towns founded by Franciscan missionaries who taught them European methods of agriculture, as well as the rudiments of the Christian faith. One of these missionaries also translated St. Toribio's catechism into Guarani, the language of the local Indian population...

"The Jesuits decided to venture into areas where European influence was barely felt. Roque Gonzalez, a Jesuit who had grown up in Asuncion, and who therefore spoke Guarani with ease, was the driving force behind these missions. Since he knew the language and customs of the Indians, he was able to defuse a great deal of their hostility, and was thus able to found villages whose inhabitants were there voluntarily, without any coercion by the Spanish.

"These towns were actually small theocracies. Although the Indians elected their leaders, they were under the final authority of the missionary, whose word was final, not only in matters of religion and morals, but also in all the practical affairs of the community...

"But there were difficulties. Near each town there were other Indians who refused to join, and who constantly invited others to leave or to rebel. It was in one such rebellion that Roque Gonzalez, the founder of the entire enterprise, was killed. He was declared a saint in

1934. The worst enemies of these missions, however, were whites, both Spanish and Portuguese...

"In 1628, some Portuguese out of Sao Paulo began attacking the Jesuit missions. They would raze villages and carry away their inhabitants to be sold as slaves. In some cases, the Jesuits followed their flocks in their unhappy trek, until the slavers forced them back. The Jesuits then moved their villages farther away from Brazil. But they were soon followed by the slavers, who simply penetrated deeper into the territory.

"Given this situation, the Jesuits decided to arm the Indians. Their shops were converted into arms factories, and a standing army was organized under the leadership of one of the Jesuits. Pope Urban VIII excommunicated any who would venture into Jesuit territory to hunt Indians, and King Philip IV declared that the Indians were free, and not subject to slavery. But still the Portuguese came, often with the help of Spanish settlers who wished to destroy the entire enterprise. In 1641, in a pitched battle, the Indians and Jesuits defeated the invaders. Repeated accusations brought against the Jesuits, that they were arming the Indians illegally, found no support in either Rome or Madrid, both of which declared that the Jesuits had the right to arm themselves and their flock, since it was done in self-defense. Under such conditions, the missions flourished, and by 1731 there were more than 140,000 Indians living in them." (González, 391-398)

Eventually, through a long series of wars and treaties, all of the countries in the Americas gained their independence from the European countries which colonized them. Nevertheless, a majority of Central and South Americans still hold firmly on to Roman Catholicism (nearly 80%), although most have an instinctive dislike for European and North American intervention and influence, gained through centuries of exploitation of their human and natural resources.

1. Describe how the Catholic colonialists and priests applied and failed to apply Christian principles, such as those outlined in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7), in North, Central, and South America.

B. From 1607 to 2005- Protestants in North America

"Englishmen publicly claimed that the primary purpose in establishing the American colonies was to spread the gospel among the Indians. In truth, their motivation was greed. In 1606, the London Company was formed for colonial expansion and trade, obtaining a royal charter to found a colony in Virginia. Without taking time to prepare plans for the new colony, three ships carrying 105 colonists set out for Virginia on December 19, 1606... In May the ships finally entered the Chesapeake Bay. The colonists named their colony Jamestown after their king, James I... Only one minister had been sent with them- an indication of how interested England really was in evangelizing the Indians. Reverend Robert Hunt was a man of God whose passion to evangelize the Indians was not shared by anyone else... By September 1607, half of the little colony had died... The colony at Jamestown became entirely

dependant on the Indians. Yet only Hunt thanked God for their assistance... Nine out of every ten people who embarked for Jamestown died, including Rev. Hunt.” (Rusten, 253) By 1619, the first African slaves were shipped to America to work in the tobacco, rice and cotton fields. The first couple of decades in Virginia proved extremely difficult for the colonists, due in part to the selfishness of those who went, and partly to their general failure to rely on God.

Fortunately, not all of those arriving in America came for economical reasons. Some, like the Pilgrims and the Puritans came in order to practice their Christian faith in peace and without fear of persecution. “On November 11, 1620, forty-one men aboard the Mayflower signed the Mayflower Compact off the coast of Cape Cod. The authors, who were sixteen of the signers, were Pilgrims associated with the Separatist church in Scrooby, England. They had fled first to the Netherlands and then sought religious freedom in America. Because the ship had been blown off course and did not land in Virginia as intended, they no longer were under the jurisdiction of the Virginia Company, the sponsor of their voyage. This was the first time in recorded history that free men covenanted together to form a civil government with the authority to enact laws that the people promised to obey.” (Rusten, 259)

Another important Protestant religious group, the Puritans, began to migrate to America in 1630. In one year alone, nearly a thousand moved to the towns of Salem and Boston in Massachusetts. Since they only allowed Puritans to run for public office, the colony became a kind of “theocracy in which religious principles guided civil government. For the first time, the authority for a colony’s government resided in a colony, not in England.” (Rusten, 263, 265)

Virtually all of the early universities in the American colonies were founded by Christians. The Puritans founded Harvard College in 1636, the first and oldest American university. Harvard’s first president, Henry Dunster, who held a master degree from Cambridge University, fled from England to avoid persecution in 1640. After 14 years of fruitful service to the school, he was forced to leave because he became convinced that only adult believers should be baptized and not babies. (Rusten, 267, 269)

As the colonies took root and expanded, many injustices were committed against the American Indians. The violent response of some of the native tribes to the invasion of their lands by the whites provided justification for their removal or annihilation.

On the other hand, some of the Christian governors made real attempts to respect the Indians rights and to live in peace beside them. For example, William Penn, the founder of Pennsylvania, established a colony in Philadelphia (city of “brotherly love”) in 1682. He not only treated the Indians fairly, but also led a form of government under which there was freedom of religious belief and practice for everyone. These ideas were the seeds of what later grew into the philosophical foundation for America’s Declaration of Independence from Britain in 1776.

The Salem witch trials stand as one of the early black spots on the record of Protestant Christians in America. In 1692, pastor Samuel Parris became concerned that people in Salem, Massachusetts were practicing witchcraft. Over 150 people were arrested and put on trial. Those found guilty were hanged publicly, leading to the deaths of dozens of people. “The following year Parris repented of the part he played in the witch hunts and publicly denounced his behavior in a sermon.” (Rusten, 288)

Following the general tendency, although Christian influence was strong throughout the colonies, after about the third or fourth generation colonists treated their faith more as a cultural tradition than as a vital part of their daily existence. When Christians become

nominal, Scripture becomes secondary and almost forgotten, while general morality begins to decline and sin to increase. This lack of spiritual reality in people's lives set the stage for the first and second "Great Awakenings" which took place in America. The first one lasted from around 1726 until 1760. Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758) and George Whitefield (1714-1770) were prominent catalysts for this major revival. The "Second Great Awakening" started in 1797 and ended around the mid 19th century. Prominent men during this period include Francis Asbury (1745-1816), James McGready (1758-1817), Barton Stone (1772-1844), Alexander Campbell (1788-1866), and Charles Finney (1792-1875). Finney authored a well known book on revivals. After these tremendous revival movements of the 18th and 19th centuries, the Christian faith once again passed through a period of relative quiet. (Both of these awakenings are discussed in greater detail in section D of this lesson.)

Although during the 19th century individual interest in foreign missions was increasing and there were important revivals taking place, this period also saw the founding of three major Christian sects which are still active today: (1) the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints, the Mormons (Joseph Smith 1805-1841), (2) Christian Science (Mary Baker Eddy 1821-1910), and (3) the Jehovah's Witnesses (Charles Taze Russell 1852-1916). These sects are treated in more detail in section D of lesson 4.

1. Read Acts 15:1-30, especially verses 6-7, 12-13, 19, 22-23, and 28. As we observe the practice of leadership in the early church of the first century in the deciding of this doctrinal issue, discuss how this compares to the type of government adopted by the Puritans.

2. In light of the human tendency to drift into practicing religion rather than living an active and growing relationship with Christ, what steps can be taken by individuals and parents to insure that this does not happen?

Pentecostalism and the Charismatic Awakening of the 20th Century.

"Around the same time the Awakening of Wales was taking place (1904), on the other side of the Atlantic a Methodist pastor named Charles Parham decided to open a Bible school in the region of Topeka, Kansas, in the United States. Along with approximately forty students, he directed his research towards the secret behind the power of the first Christians through whom God worked miracles, healings and mass conversions. The Bible taught that this power came from the Holy Spirit. But beyond this, Parham and his students believed that in the narration of Acts, the 'speaking in tongues' was *the* visible sign demonstrating with certainty that one had indeed received the power of the Holy Spirit. So they decided to pray to ask God for this 'gift of tongues', and all ended up receiving it. Three years later in El Dorado Springs, Missouri, during the summer of 1903, Parham began a ministry of prayer for healing through the power of the Holy Spirit. He achieved a healing in this manner. After this, crowds flocked to his gatherings. The power of the Holy Spirit continued to be

manifested through healings, conversions and speaking in tongues, both known and unknown.

“Parham then decided to open another Bible school in Houston, Texas. From this base, enthusiastic students spread the Pentecostal Revival in the United States, particularly in Los Angeles with the African American pastor Seymour, and then to the whole world. They were encouraged by the spontaneous appearance of similar groups of Christians receiving the gift of tongues in various parts of the world: in Armenia, amongst the Presbyterians in North Carolina, in the Baptist churches, in Bombay, in the Indies, in southern China, etc.

Just like the other movements of the Awakening, Pentecostalism stirred up opposition on behalf of established churches. It was criticized for the excitement which was often manifested during its gatherings, and especially for the fact that they did not really consider anyone a Christian, or truly filled with the Holy Spirit, unless he spoke in tongues. It was also pointed out to them that many of the sick who attended these gatherings, and on whom the Pentecostal believers laid their hands, were not healed. Instead, they were dangerously demoralized because preachers would claim the Holy Spirit was not acting in them because of their sins.

“Therefore, Pentecostals were ‘under the ban’ among Christian churches, and quite often considered to be a dangerous sect. For their part, Pentecostals were inclined to despise traditional churches, accusing them of having forgotten the Gospel in its entirety and the power of the Holy Spirit.

“Beginning in 1960, this situation thawed by what we may consider as an intervention from God himself, especially through the worldwide ministry of the Pentecostal South African pastor, Duplessis. Among prayer groups existing in traditional churches some people received the gift of tongues, and so Pentecostalism ceased to be a marginal movement and church. The ‘charismatic’ revival spread in Protestant churches as well as in the Roman Catholic Church, among cultivated celebrities as well as among people of extreme modesty, amid youth and adults alike. Because of this, Pentecostalism has had the tendency to lose its exclusive nature. Many members of the charismatic movement today do not believe that the filling of the Holy Spirit is necessarily accompanied by the gift of tongues. In the same way, they do not claim that the sick are not healed due to their sins, but recognize that God can be glorified through health and disease alike. Following this, traditional Christians have increasingly ceased to reject all hint of Pentecostalism. In turn they also have sensed the need to seek a living faith in which the power and gifts of the Holy Spirit are manifest.

“The charismatic Revival is thriving today. Just like any revival, it bears beautiful fruit to the glory of God. In a materialistic and incredulous world which is facing a theology of the ‘death of God’, it asserts that God is living, that His Word is true, that Christ is the Savior and Lord of the world, that the time for miracles and conversions has not yet ended and that all believers regenerated by the Spirit are one in Jesus Christ through faithfulness to the Word of God. However, it also sparks intense opposition in churches, as some even go so far as to say it is the seducing of the Antichrist. The charismatic Revival must therefore remain watchful, so as not to let itself be hijacked from that which constitutes the real strength of the Gospel:

- In particular, Christians who have received a gift of the Holy Spirit should avoid believing that they no longer have anything to change in their behavior and thoughts. On the contrary, this gift of God should encourage them to seek the presence of Christ all the more and apply

themselves to knowledge of the Bible, whose authority is sovereign, being the Word of God, and to practicing it according to the teaching of John 14:23.

- It is also important to keep in mind that not all spiritual experiences are good ones. The Bible warns us against false prophets and evil spirits. Every experience, feeling and prophecy must therefore be examined according to the benchmark of the Bible's teaching.

Overlooking this could lead to the worst of errors and deviations.

- Finally, any authentic Revival must not only transform inner lives but also lead to the reformation of established churches, or to the forming of new churches which conform in every aspect to biblical teaching in order to enable the training of adult Christians who become witnesses in the community where they live, and morally regenerated, calling all men to repentance and faith in Jesus Christ.

"Modern civilization at the close of the 20th century is in particular need of the testimony of such Christians and churches, in order that it may know the deep moral and spiritual renewal which alone would enable it to survive." (Jordan, 263-267)

3. What are the three major complaints the Protestant churches raised against those who practiced speaking in tongues?

a.

b.

c.

4. How did the Pentecostals Christians respond at first to these criticisms?

5. What phenomenon taking place during the 1960's served to break many of the barriers created by the tongues controversy?

6. Summarize in your own words the three suggestions made by Jordan and Kreitmann which are intended to give proper balance to the Pentecostal movement.

a.

b.

c.

C. From 1910 to 2005 – The Development of the Protestant Church in South America

“The states of Central and South America were former Spanish and Portuguese colonies who won their independence in the 19th century. Catholicism is predominant there, sometimes tainted by local customs.

“In Brazil, the largest state of South America, independence was proclaimed in 1822. The 1889 revolution established the republic and the separation of Church and State. The first Protestant church was founded in Rio de Janeiro, in 1824.

“Protestant churches at first gathered German and Anglo-Saxon emigrants. But beginning in 1835, The American Methodist pastor, Kidder, began an evangelistic ministry aided by the piety of the owners of isolated territories and vast domains. The evangelistic societies carried out systematic work, encouraged by the conversion of some remarkable men: Joseph Manuel of Conception, also called ‘Saint Frances’ of Brazil and Miguel Uieira Ferreira, an intellectual from a prominent family. In 1986, it is estimated that there were approximately 105 million Catholics and 24 million Protestants. The number of the latter is continually increasing. The Pentecostal churches are most numerous. The social influence of the evangelical faith is starting to be sensed throughout public life: decrease in alcoholism, gambling, etc.

“The Roman Catholic Church still remains widely predominant, but it lacks priests and has great need to overextend its parishes which sometimes hold between 10,000 and 20,000 parishioners. Many foreign priests have come to cover the lack of Brazilian priests.

“In Mexico, following the execution of the great duke Maximilian of Austria (1867), the separation of Church and State was declared; Jesuits were driven out of the region. Evangelism did not begin until 1865 following the conversions of priest Aguilar and the Dominican priest, Aguas, enlightened by the study of the Bible. In 1900, the Anglican churches numbered 70 parishes containing approximately 10,000 attendees. American missionaries from various denominations engaged in evangelistic work. Later on, after the Second World War, great evangelistic campaigns were organized. Approximately 88% of the population is Catholic, 4% is Protestant.

“Argentina freed itself from Spanish rule in 1816 and in 1825, and its new constitution granted tolerance to all faiths. The majority of monasteries were closed. The apostolic nuncio was sent back in 1884 for requesting the government to restrict the freedom of Protestant churches. There is currently a confederation of evangelical churches. Approximately 86.5% of the population is Catholic, and 5.5% is Protestant.

“In the other countries of South America, religious freedom was not always obtained without difficulty. In Colombia around 1960, evangelical Christians were still persecuted and their churches and houses were destroyed.” (Jordan, 336-338)

“The first (Protestant) missionary to arrive (in Argentina) was probably the Scotsman James Thomson, a Baptist representative of the British and Foreign Bible Society who arrived at Buenos Aires in 1818. In the next few years, he visited several countries—from Argentina and Chile to Cuba and Mexico—and then departed for other lands. His work consisted mostly in the distribution of Spanish Bibles and personal discussion with priests and others. It was during the second half of the century that permanent Protestant work began in most countries. The first Protestant sermon in Spanish in Buenos Aires of which there is a record was preached in 1867. At approximately the same time, the Presbyterian Church was beginning work in Chile. In general, it was after 1870 that missionary agencies from the United States began taking an active interest in Latin America.

“One of the factors inhibiting such interest, in Europe as well as in the United States, was the presence of Roman Catholicism in the area. To organize missions to Latin America was to declare that Catholics were not Christian, a step that many Protestant agencies and churches were not willing to take. Particularly among Anglicans and Episcopalians, there was strong opposition to missions among Catholics; therefore, the earliest Anglican missions in Latin America worked among Indians in Tierra del Fuego.

“By the beginning of the twentieth century, however, Protestant missions had made great strides in Latin America. Most of the early missionaries were concerned, not only with the salvation of souls, but also with physical wellbeing and intellectual development. Therefore, Protestants soon became known for their work in education and medicine...

“Schisms in Latin America gave rise to new churches. In both Mexico and Puerto Rico, groups that broke away from the Catholic Church eventually became Episcopalians. In Chile, a small charismatic group expelled from the Methodist Church in 1910 formed the Methodist Pentecostal Church, which soon outgrew the parent body. Thus, by the time World War I broke out in 1914, there were significant numbers of Protestants in every country in Latin America who belonged both to churches that were the direct result of missions, and to others that had been born in Latin America itself.” (González, 320)

“As a general rule, the countries of Latin America freed themselves more quickly from clerical influence than the Latin countries of Europe. Evangelism was helped along by the arrival of European emigrants coming mainly from Germany and Switzerland. But the work of North American missionaries, characterized by passionate faith and the spirit of the Revival was extremely influential. Evangelistic campaigns of different kinds were carried out, and markedly, every evangelical Christian was personally involved in the witness. This resulted in a truly explosive growth of the churches. While the number of evangelical Christians of Latin America was approximately 3 million in 1945, it exceeded 34 million in 1985, and it is still growing in the same way today. Pentecostal churches are among those which are developing the most rapidly, particularly in Chile. In this country where there originally was just a handful of Protestants, whereas now there are approximately 2 million of them. Today, on any given Sunday, there are more Protestants attending religious services than Catholics. And yet the latter count approximately 10 million baptized members.” (Jordan, 338-339)

1. Why were the Protestants reluctant to begin mission work in the Roman Catholic countries of Latin America?

2. Latin American Protestant leaders have a strong sense of “territory,” i.e. if one church is already located in a certain neighborhood, it would be offensive for another church to move into that area. How do you feel about this way of thinking? Is there biblical basis for this attitude?

3. How might churches cooperate better, especially across denominational lines?

D. Revival Movements in the Americas

Two periods of tremendous church growth stand out in American church history. These movements are generally referred to as the first and second “great awakening.” We can discuss each awakening in terms of the prevailing societal conditions at the time, the important personalities involved in them, and their results.

The First Great Awakening

“The colonists which had emigrated into the vast new territories which comprise the United States following the declaration of independence had, for the most part, a desire for adventure and gain. Although Christian in background, they gave no place to Jesus Christ in their lives and their occupations. However, some emigrant communities held a radically different position. They had come into this new country with the sole desire of freely living in it according to their religious convictions, after leaving Europe where they had been persecuted. Such were the passengers of the 'Mayflower', the founders of Pennsylvania, etc. Despite the great spiritual influence they later exerted, they were only a minority in the beginning.

“The religious state of the United States was about to be radically transformed in the 18th and 19th centuries following a succession of Revivals, which led to an extraordinary evangelistic effort. The population of emigrants and pioneers was widely reached by the Gospel. Today, one of the striking characteristics of the United States remains a very wide diffusion of the Bible which influences part of the inhabitants of this country.

The “Great Awakening” with Jonathan Edwards.

“Edwards (1703-1758) was a Congregationalist pastor possessing a clear and logical spirit, holding to the Calvinist doctrine. He read his sermons without displaying any public speaking skills. But his deep conviction and his thought centered on the Bible struck his listeners. Jonathan Edwards’ sermons, which insisted both on God’s judgment and his sovereign grace, had a great impact and lead to many conversions. His town of Northampton was deeply moved by it. The movement spread to all of New England. It was later spurred on by the arrival of Whitefield who brought with him echoes of the Methodist Revival, which England was benefitting from during the same period with Wesley. It is estimated that approximately 20% of the population converted at that time. This resulted in social transformation similar to the one that happened with the British Methodist Revival. Many young people dedicated themselves to the offices of pastor, evangelist and missionary. As a result, American churches were able to survive autonomously, without need for pastors from Europe. A great missionary movement developed from it in favor of Indians. But more importantly, the ‘Great Awakening’ was the point where young American churches started to realize their responsibility to evangelize the emigrant and pioneer populations which poured into the United States throughout the 19th and beginning of the 20th century, achieving what has been called, ‘the conquest of the West.’

“This evangelism effort unfolded in the very typical setting of emigrants with their wagon trains and their rude and violent lifestyles. It was especially led by itinerant preachers sent by Methodist churches, who lived a life just as harsh as the pioneers, covering vast regions void of roads, swimming in order to cross rivers. Once more, the open-air meetings which had characterized the Methodist Revival gathered crowds of pioneers. They often lasted

several days or weeks. The emigrants would come with their whole family and set up camp. The spiritual atmosphere of these camps was one of extraordinary fervor, joy and prayer. The power of the Holy Spirit manifested itself in a poignant manner, convicting many participants of sin. Youth and adults alike came out from it transformed for life after completely turning to Jesus Christ, consecrating their life to him, confessing their sins, and resolving to live henceforth in obedience and faithfulness to his teachings.” (Jordan, 244-246)

1. What were the important elements of Jonathan Edwards’ preaching which impacted people, despite the fact that he lacked any special oratory ability?

2. What two activities were especially effective in reaching the masses of American pioneers during the First Great Awakening?

The Second Great Awakening

“Towards the end of the eighteenth century, a Second Great Awakening began in New England. This was not marked by great emotional outbursts, but rather by a sudden earnestness in Christian devotion and living. Attendance at worship increased noticeably, and many spoke of having had an experience of conversion. Nor did this awakening have at first the anti-intellectual overtones of other similar movements. On the contrary, it made headway among some of the most distinguished theologians of New England, and one of its foremost advocates was Timothy Dwight, president of Yale and a grandson of Jonathan Edwards.

“That first phase of the awakening resulted in the founding of several societies whose purpose was to make the gospel known. Most important among these were the American Bible Society, founded in 1816, and the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, founded six years later. The latter was the result of a covenant made by a group of students meeting on a haystack, who vowed to devote themselves to foreign missions. When Adoniram Judson, one of the first missionaries sent by the American Board, became a Baptist, many Baptists in the United States set aside some of their extreme Congregationalism in order to organize a General Convention whose purpose was to support Baptist missionaries throughout the world. In local churches, women's missionary societies appeared, and some of these would later develop into various feminine organizations. Other societies born during the Second Awakening took up various social causes, such as the abolition of slavery—the American Colonization Society... and the war against alcohol—the American Society for the Promotion of Temperance, founded in 1826. Women became leaders in the latter cause, to the point that in the second half of the century, under the leadership of Frances Willard, the Women’s Christian Temperance Union became the foremost defender of women’s rights. Thus, some of the roots of American feminism can be traced to the Second Great Awakening.

“Meanwhile, the awakening had moved beyond the limits of New England and of the educated elite, and had made great headway among people of less education and fewer

means. Many of these people were moving west, for one of the results of the War of Independence was that the European powers agreed to the expansion of the United States as far as the Mississippi. Many of those who traveled west carried with them the vibrant faith kindled by the Second Awakening. But, since conditions on the frontier were different, the awakening now became more emotional and less intellectual, to the point that it eventually became anti-intellectual.

“The Cane Ridge Revival of 1801, in Cane Ridge, Kentucky, marked a significant step in that process. It was originally organized by the local Presbyterian pastor, who announced a great assembly or ‘camp meeting’ for the promotion of a deeper faith. On the appointed date, thousands gathered. In an area where there were few opportunities to gather and celebrate, the pastor's announcement had a resounding success. Many went to Cane Ridge for religious reasons. Others made it an opportunity to gamble and carouse. Besides the pastor who had issued the original invitation, there were several Baptist and Methodist preachers. While some played and others drank, the pastors preached. A critic of the awakening later declared that, at Cane Ridge, as many souls were conceived as were saved. In any case, the response to the call to repentance was surprising and overwhelming. While some wept and others laughed uncontrollably, others trembled, some ran about, and some even barked. The meeting lasted a week, and since then many have been convinced that such gatherings were the best way to proclaim the gospel. After that time, when the words ‘evangelism’ and ‘revival’ were used, they evoked images of Cane Ridge.

“Although the gathering at Cane Ridge had been organized by a Presbyterian, that denomination did not favor the unbridled emotional response that was becoming part of the movement. Soon Presbyterians began taking action against ministers who participated in events such as Cane Ridge. But the Methodists and Baptists took up the idea of celebrating ‘camp meetings,’ and these eventually developed into periodic ‘revivals.’ Since such revivals became an important part of social life on the frontier, both Methodists and Baptists achieved rapid growth. Another reason for their growth was that they were willing to present the message as simply as possible, and to use preachers with little or no education. While other denominations lacked personnel because they had no educational facilities on the frontier, Methodists and Baptists were willing to use whoever felt called by the Lord. The Methodist vanguard were lay preachers, many of them serving an entire ‘circuit,’ always under the supervision of the ‘Connection’ and its bishops. The Baptists made use of farmers or others who made a living from their trade, and who also served as pastors of the local church. When a new area was opened for settlement, there usually was among the settlers a devout Baptist willing to take up the ministry of preaching. Thus, both Methodists and Baptists became strong in the new territories, and by the middle of the century they were the largest Protestant denominations of the country.

“Another important consequence of the Second Great Awakening was that it helped break down the strict correspondence between ethnic origin and religious affiliation. Among the new Baptists and Methodists there were German ex-Lutherans, Scottish ex-Presbyterians, and Irish ex-Catholics. Although it was still generally true that denominational allegiance coincided with ethnic origin, after the Second Great Awakening, and especially on the frontier, such correspondence could no longer be taken for granted.” (González, 244-246)

3. Protestant Christians have long been divided over the proper role of strong emotional responses during spiritual awakenings. What evidence can you find in Scripture that the following reactions did or did not take place in the Old or New Testament:

- a. Falling over:
- b. Weeping loudly:
- c. Laughing uncontrollably:
- d. Trembling:
- e. Running energetically:
- f. Barking like a dog:

4. Should anything not mentioned specifically in Scripture be forbidden? Support your answer with verses from Scripture or examples from history.

5. The Second Great Awakening spread in part because preachers without any formal Bible training were used to preach and act as pastors in remote areas. Read Acts 14:23 and Titus 1:4-9. What level of training is mentioned in Titus 1:9 as being necessary for someone to become an elder in any congregation?

"At the same time, great preachers were succeeding each other in the former states of the east preaching repentance, conversion, and new life in Jesus Christ. Among these, we should mention Charles Finney (1792-1875) in greater detail. Finney was born in Warren, Connecticut. He was a powerful man in the Revival in America and England. He quit his job as a lawyer in order to preach the Gospel. After initiating the Revival in several cities, he taught young generations of pastors, evangelists and missionaries as a pastoral theology professor for forty years at Oberlin College, Ohio. His 'Reflections on Revival' are well known. "There also was the great evangelist Dwight L. Moody (1837-1899). After being a shoe salesman in Chicago, he became a preacher. He became the president of the Christian Union of Young People of Chicago. His sermons were simple and filled with the power of the Holy Spirit. He traveled throughout the United States and England organizing great evangelistic meetings in working class neighborhoods with the help of Sankey, a marvelous singer. He too sparked a lot of opposition from traditional churches. The father of the famous missionary Charles Studd was converted during one of his gatherings in England. He had attended to see why so much was being said against this evangelist.

"Billy Sunday (1863-1936) was a former athletic champion. He also gathered crowds and saw many conversions.

"This line of popular evangelists is carried on today (1991) by Billy Graham, born in 1919, who gathers tremendous audiences in the United States and throughout the whole world. His simple and clear sermons bring students together with laborers, and youth as well as adults, to conversion. His literary works, *Peace with God*, *World Aflame*, etc., have been translated into many languages." (Jordan, 246-249) Billy Graham has been retired for several years now (2006). His son, Franklin, has taken over much of the ministry his father once led, although he doesn't hold large evangelistic rallies like his father used to do.

6. List below some of the lessons which can be learned from these “Great Awakenings” about reaching the masses and discipling them afterwards.

Open Answer. For example: Although church leaders need to know the Bible well, demanding that pastors receive seminary training before allowing them to lead a church slows and limits church growth. When different denominations cooperate, they can reach the lost with the gospel more effectively. We should not fear certain manifestations of the Holy Spirit's conviction of sin and descent upon people (crying, trembling, shouting, fainting, laughing). On the other hand, not every manifestation or experience should be assumed to be a move of the Holy Spirit. Large meetings can be an effective way of reaching dozens or even hundreds of people at once where there is freedom to have such meetings. Evangelists and pastors should always be willing to live where the people live and live under the same conditions as they do.

Lesson 9: Leading Missionary Movements

A. From 30 to 325 B.C. – The First Missionaries of the Church

A missionary is someone called out or sent by God to minister to people with a culture and/or language unlike that of the missionary. The ministry of missionaries can take on different forms according to the task which God has assigned them. These tasks consist of one or more of the following: 1) the salvation of unbelievers, 2) the discipling of believers in the faith, 3) establishment or strengthening of the local church, 4) translation of Scripture, 5) helping people in practical ways through medicine, technology, education, etc.

We have already covered the missionary activity of the first century, which is found in the book of Acts. In fact, not a great deal is known about the missionary endeavor from the time of Jesus' resurrection until the first ecumenical council beyond what is found in the New Testament. According to certain traditions, many of the apostles and leaders of the early church are purported to have traveled far and wide to spread the gospel, although the truth of these stories is difficult to establish.

Peter is said to have gone to Rome where he was martyred. Paul is thought to have preached the gospel in Spain, which was his expressed desire (Rm. 15:22-25). The Coptic Church in Egypt claims Mark was its founder. Spain not only lays claim to Paul, but also has an ancient tradition concerning a visit by James. In the *Acts of Thomas*, probably written in the latter part of the second century, that apostle is supposed to have gone all the way to India to evangelize. Indeed, the church there has quite early roots.

What cannot be denied is that the church spread rapidly throughout the whole Roman Empire. Most of this expansion took place through the quiet testimony of thousands of Christians who, for one reason or another, traveled to the most distant points of the Empire and did not hide the hope that was within them. The reasons for their travels include escape from persecution, specific calling to go to other lands, commerce, slavery, etc.

Archeological evidence for expansion during this period consists mainly of Christian symbols found on tombs or in hidden meeting places. Until recently, the earliest Christian church building identified by archeologists was found in Dura-Europos, Syria, dating to about the year 250. In the late 1990's, another church building was discovered in the area of Megiddo. This one dates to around the year 230 and has beautifully preserved mosaics, one of which bears a dedication in Greek "to God Jesus Christ." (Tzaferis, 38-49) This scarcity of physical remains is due mainly to the persecution of Christians during the first three centuries. The church met primarily in private homes or in deserted places, such as cemeteries, where the likelihood of being discovered and attacked was minimal.

Though not covered specifically in the course, there were many missionaries who lived in the period from 325 to 1483. One such person was Saint Columba (521-597), born in Donegal, Ireland, also known as Colomcille. He "founded several monasteries in Ireland and made the island of Iona, off western Scotland, a center for missionary work. Columba settled on Iona in 563 with 12 companions. He founded a monastery on Iona and spent 34 years in missionary work on the neighboring islands and on the Scottish mainland. In 574, the Scottish king Aidan visited him for his blessing." (World Book)

1. Read Acts 2:1-11. Tell how this event may have caused the gospel to spread quickly around the Mediterranean Sea.

B. From 1483 to 2005 – Catholic Missionaries

Introduction

A period of rapid expansion of the Roman Catholic Church took place after Ignatius de Loyola (1491-1556) founded the “Society of Jesus”, the Jesuit order, in 1540. After a serious wound in battle, Loyola spent time in contemplation which eventually led him to dedicate his life to the propagation of the Catholic religion in “a curious mixture of soldier, mystic and monk... The Jesuits’ work centered on three main tasks: education, counteracting the Protestants, and missionary expansion in new areas... Increasingly, Jesuit priests traveled in the ships of Spain and Portugal as they sailed the seven seas in search of new colonies and new riches. Jesuit missionaries traveled to America, Africa and Asia in search of converts. As they went, they helped counterbalance the greedy imperialism of the European merchants and soldiers. They also produced scholarly accounts of the history and geography of the new places they visited. But most of all they left their converts with a fanatical brand of Catholicism and produced devout, tough Catholics, on their own model. The Jesuits played a leading role in the conversion of Brazil and Paraguay. They were not as successful in Africa, where native peoples often resisted their efforts...

“The Jesuits, together with the Dominicans, Franciscans and Augustinians, led the church of Rome in a new period of rapid overseas expansion between 1550 and 1650. By this means nearly all of Mexico, Central America and South America, along with a large part of the population of the Philippines and smaller numbers of people in Africa, India, the East Indies and the Far East, became adherents of the church of Rome.” (Dowley, 411-416)

Bartolomé de las Casas

“Bartolomé de las Casas (1474-1566) was born in Seville, Spain. In 1502, he went to the Caribbean island of Hispaniola, and he was ordained there as a priest in 1507. Several years after his profound conversion to Jesus Christ in 1514, he became a champion of the American Indians, seeking to end their slavery, to encourage their conversion, and to further their humane treatment. Even after returning to Spain in 1547, he worked tirelessly to improve the Indians’ quality of life. He was a pioneer in the cause of human rights.” (Rusten, 213)

Francis Xavier

“Francis Xavier (1506-1552), the son of a Spanish high official, became a Jesuit priest after meeting Ignatius of Loyola (1491-1556). After working with Ignatius in the Society of Jesus, he sailed from Lisbon on April 7, 1541, to start his missionary career, reaching Goa on the west coast of India in 1542. He remained there for three years, preaching and ministering to the sick. He next found great success evangelizing pearl divers along the coast of southwestern India, baptizing thousands of them. By 1549, he had gone on to Japan. Pope Pius X named him the ‘Patron of Foreign Missions’ and he was canonized in 1622.” (Rusten, 230)

Francis Solanus

The Spanish born Francis Solanus (1549-1610) worked as a Catholic missionary in Latin America with the Franciscan order.

Matteo Ricci

“Matteo Ricci (1552-1610) was the founder of modern-times Roman Catholic missions to China. The Italian Jesuit arrived at the Portuguese trading settlement of Macao on the coast of China in 1582, and began avidly studying Chinese language and culture. He gained admittance to China the following year, but encountered significant popular resistance. He gained acceptance by embracing Chinese dress, culture, and language – and because his maps, books, and mechanical instruments were of interest to the educated Chinese. Ricci eventually settled in Peking among the Chinese literati and never left, dying there in 1610. In Peking he made several influential converts, including some among high court officials, and the Catholic Church began to grow. He opposed Buddhism and Taoism, but embraced classical Confucianism, making him a controversial missionary figure.” (Rusten, 248)

“Ricci believed that the Chinese worshiped the true God in their own way; consequently, Jesuit missionaries usually tolerated indigenous rites in honor of ancestors and Confucius. The Dominican and Franciscan orders eventually joined the Jesuits in China, and by the late sixteenth century the Jesuits’ lenient practices sparked heated debate... In 1704, Pope Clement XI (1649-1721) issued a decree condemning the Chinese rites. Despite the pope’s condemnation, the Jesuit method of accommodation survived as a missionary strategy.” (Rusten, 291)

Robert de Nobili

The Italian born de Nobili (1577-1656) served as a missionary in India with the Jesuits, the same order as his predecessor in that country, Francis Xavier. Like Ricci, he chose to adopt native dress and customs. He also studied local beliefs and literature in an attempt to blend into the setting.

Johann Adam Schall von Bell

Von Bell (1591-1666) was from Germany and went as a missionary to China with the Jesuits. He followed in the steps of Matteo Ricci’s work there. Because he and the other Jesuits were admired for their skills in the sciences (e.g. mathematics, map-making, astronomy), the rulers of China made von Bell head of the group responsible for the Chinese calendar after the Ming dynasty came to an end in 1662. (Dowley, 465)

Gugulielmo Massaja

Massaja (1809-1889), from Italy, was an important figure in the Catholic missionary endeavor in the country of Ethiopia. He was a member of the Capuchin order.

Theophile Verbist

Verbist (1823-1868) was born in Belgium and carried out his missionary service in Mongolia. He is best known as the founder of the order of the Scheutveld Fathers.

Charles M. A. Lavigerie

A native of France, Charles Lavigerie (1825-1892) went to North Africa as a Catholic missionary where he founded the order of the White Fathers in 1868, a well known and respected group who have served the poor and the expatriate Catholic communities in these Muslim lands for more than 100 years. He became archbishop of Algiers in 1867, and later of Carthage in 1884. In addition, he held the office of cardinal from 1882 until his death. He fought against slave trafficking and suggested, in vain, that Muslims be evangelized, but the French government blocked evangelism based on the treaty made with the Dey of Algiers, signed around 1831.

Joseph Damien de Veuster

“Joseph Damien de Veuster (1840-1889), was a Roman Catholic priest who gave his life to the care of lepers in a colony at Molokai, Hawaii. Father Damien was born in Belgium and became a member of the Fathers of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary. He asked to be sent to Molokai as resident priest. But because of the difficulty in getting doctors, Father Damien was obliged to serve as a doctor as well. He was stricken with leprosy in 1885. Hawaii has placed a statue of Father Damien in the United States Capitol in Washington, D.C.” (World Book 2000)

Charles Eugene de Foucauld

Foucauld (1858-1916) was also a missionary to Algeria. Serving there during the French Protectorate, he belonged to the Trappist monks. Previously an officer in the French army, he became a monk in 1901 and served in southern Algeria, moving to Tamanrasset in 1905. There he studied the Tuareg language but was eventually killed during a pillaging raid in 1916.

Frances Xavier Cabrini

Cabrini (1850-1917) “was the first United States citizen to be made a saint by the Roman Catholic Church. She was canonized (declared a saint) in 1946. In 1950, Pope Pius XII named her patron saint of emigrants. She was born Maria Francesca Cabrini in Lombardy, Italy, the 13th and youngest child of a farmer. Early in her life, she wanted to be a missionary in China. She was trained to be a schoolteacher. When she was 30, she established the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart, an order originally formed for the instruction of poor children. In 1889, the nun came to the United States, where she immediately displayed the courage, hope, vision, and endurance of a pioneer. She lived in New York City and Chicago, and traveled in Latin America. She and her followers opened many charitable institutions, including orphanages, schools, and free clinics. She founded Columbus Hospital in New York City in 1892 and Columbus Hospital in Chicago in 1905. In 1909, she became a U.S. citizen.” (World Book)

Agnes Gonxha Bojaxhiu (Mother Teresa)

Mother Teresa (1910-1997), “was a Roman Catholic nun who received the 1979 Nobel Peace Prize for her work with the poor. She became known as the saint of the gutters. In 1950, Mother Teresa founded a religious order in Calcutta, India, called the Missionaries of Charity. The order provides food for the needy and operates hospitals, schools, orphanages, youth

centers, and shelters for lepers and the dying poor. It has branches in about 50 Indian cities and about 30 other countries.

“Mother Teresa, whose original name was Agnes Gonxha Bojaxhiu, was born in what is now Skopje, Macedonia. In 1928, she joined a religious order, which sent her to India... Mother Teresa received many awards for her work with the needy.” (World Book)

1. Which practices employed by Matteo Ricci and his Jesuit colleagues are not compatible with the teachings of Scripture (circle the letter to identify your choices):

- | | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| A. Wearing Chinese clothing | B. Adapting to the Chinese culture |
| C. Allowing ancestor worship | D. Learning the language well |
| E. Accepting a government job | F. Veneration of Confucius |
| G. Outreach to the literati and the upper class | |

2. For as many as you are able, cite biblical verses or passages which support or disapprove of the practices mentioned in question 1:

A.	B.
C.	D.
E.	F.
G.	

3. List the names and dates of the Catholic priests who served in North Africa.

C. From 1607 to 1910 – Protestant Missionaries

John Eliot

In the early years of the settling of North America by European colonists, a minority saw a need to evangelize the American Indian tribes. One such visionary was John Eliot (1604-1690) who began work among the Mohicans in 1646. “He was convinced that the Indians were the ten lost tribes of Israel, and that their conversion would bring about the fulfillment of ancient prophecies. He therefore gathered his converts in villages that were ruled according to the Law of Moses. There he taught them European agricultural methods and mechanical arts, so that they could sustain themselves. Great stress was also laid on the reading and study of the Bible, which Eliot translated into Mohican after having laboriously learned that language and devised a method for writing it. Eliot himself founded fourteen such villages, and those who followed his inspiration founded many more.” However, conflict arose between the colonists and the native Indians which led to the decimation, enslavement, and scattering of both Christian and non-Christian Indians. As a result, by the time of Eliot’s death, little remained of the work that he had begun among them. (González, 223-224)

Bartholomaeus Ziegenbalg and Heinrich Plutschau

“In 1707, the King of Denmark, an admirer of the Pietists, decided to send missionaries to his colonies in India. He could find no one in his own possessions to undertake this task, and asked that August H. Francke send him two of his most promising disciples at the University of Halle. These two, Bartholomaeus Ziegenbalg (1684-1719) and Heinrich Plutschau, founded in India the mission of Tranquebar. Their letters and reports, circulated in Germany, awakened great interest among the Pietists. Soon, under Francke’s direction, the University of Halle became a center for the training of missionaries.” (González, 208)

The Moravians

“The Pietists had also made an impact on the young Count Nikolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf, whose godfather was (Philipp J.) Spener... It was at Dresden that Zinzendorf first met a group of Moravians who would change the course of his life. These were Hussites who had been forced to leave their native Moravia fleeing persecution, and whom Zinzendorf offered asylum in his lands... In 1731, while in Denmark, Zinzendorf met a group of Eskimos who had been converted by the Lutheran missionary Hans Egede, and this kindled in him an interest in missions that would dominate the rest of his life. Soon the (Moravian) community at Herrnhut burned with the same zeal, and in 1732 its first missionaries left for the Caribbean. In a few years, there were Moravian missionaries also in Africa, India, South America, and North America – where they founded the communities of Bethlehem and Nazareth in Pennsylvania, and Salem in North Carolina. Thus, a movement that had begun with two hundred refugees had over a hundred missionaries overseas... Although the Moravian church never had a large membership, and soon was unable to continue sending and supporting such a high number of missionaries, its example contributed to the great missionary awakening of the nineteenth century.” (Gonzalez, 208-209)

David Brainerd

“Born in Haddam, Connecticut, David Brainerd (1718-1747) experienced a profound conversion at the age of twenty-one. Desiring to go into the ministry, he studied at Yale and was first in his class, but he was expelled for an offhand remark he made (questioning the salvation of a faculty member) that reflected his involvement in the Great Awakening. In November 1742, Brainerd was commissioned as a missionary to the Indians. Serving in Massachusetts, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania, Brainerd saw more than 130 Indians put their faith in Christ within four years. Becoming terminally ill with tuberculosis, Brainerd spent a short while studying at the College of New Jersey and then accepted the invitation to spend his last days at the home of his friend Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758). Following Brainerd’s death in October 1747, Edwards published Brainerd’s diary, which became a devotional classic and a source of great inspiration for the cause of cross-cultural missions.” (Rusten, 304, 306, 307)

William Carey

“The Methodist revival shook and stimulated Baptist churches. It is within these that the famous missionary William Carey (1761-1834) originated. He was baptized in a river on October 5th, 1783, by the pastor of a small Particular Baptist church in Moulton, south of England, called Ryland, who observed: ‘Today I baptized a poor cobbler who works by day.’ Ten years later, Carey, having studied geography, botany, Latin, Greek, Hebrew, French and

Dutch with passion during his scant moments of leisure, became a voluntary pastor and then the pastor of Moulton church. He sailed to the Indies accompanied by a missionary doctor sent by the Particular Baptist Society for Propagating the Gospel amongst the Heathen, which he had helped to establish.” (Jordan, 229)

In India, Carey established 26 churches with the help of his fellow missionaries, translated the Bible into 35 Indian languages, personally baptized some 800 converts, opened a hospital, and founded the first school for girls in the country, amidst many other accomplishments. He is often called the father of modern missions.

Robert Morrison

“Robert Morrison (1782-1834), the youngest son of Scottish Presbyterian parents, felt called to missions in his early twenties. While attending a Congregationalist seminary near London, Morrison heard the London Missionary Society call for missionaries to China. Morrison responded, and after two more years training in medicine and Mandarin Chinese and a sea voyage of nine months, landed in Macao on September 4, 1807. Locating in Canton, Morrison immersed himself in language and culture study, becoming fluent in Cantonese, Mandarin, and written Chinese. In 1810, Morrison completed translating the book of Acts, and in 1819, the entire Bible. With the Bible translation as a text, Morrison helped found an English-Chinese College that trained Chinese in evangelism. Morrison, the father of Protestant missions in China, died in Canton in 1834.” (Rusten, 334)

Adoniram Judson

“While attending Andover Seminary, Adoniram Judson (1788-1850) played a significant role in establishing the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Mission (ABCFM). The inaugural mission to India in 1812 included Judson and his wife, Ann (1789-1826), who became missionaries to Burma. Judson was convinced that to be effective, he needed to master the local language and religion, which was Theravada Buddhism. In addition to devoting his time to preaching and training pastors and evangelists, Judson created a Burman dictionary and translated Scripture into their native language. Returning to America only once, Judson spent most of his life in Burma. In 2000, there were 2 million Christian believers in Myanmar (formerly Burma), and 40 percent of the Karen people, the tribe to whom Judson directed his ministry, were Christians.” (Rusten, 337)

Robert Moffat

“While apprenticing as a gardener at high Leigh, Cheshire, England, Robert Moffat (1795-1883) was converted through the Methodists and, while attending a missionary meeting, he decided to devote his life to foreign mission. With little education and the somewhat hesitant support of the London Missionary Society, Moffat set sail for South Africa in 1816. He served for more than fifty years, mostly in Great Namaqualand (West Namibia) and in Kuruman, Bechuanaland (Botswana). He was a proficient translator of Bechuana, completing translations of the Bible, various hymns, *The Pilgrim’s Progress*, and textbooks in their native language. In addition, his evangelistic efforts along with those of his son-in-law, David Livingstone (1813-1873), saw the establishment of many churches with trained African pastors. Known as the father of South African mission, Moffat was awarded an honorary doctorate by Edinburgh University in 1872.” (Rusten, 341-342)

Alexander Duff

A successor of the work begun in India by William Carey, Alexander Duff (1806-1878), a Presbyterian from the Church of Scotland, “became famous for his work in education, for he was convinced that the best way for Christianity to enter India was through education. As a result of his work and that of others, by the time India gained its independence a century later many of the leaders of the new nation were either Christians or people profoundly influenced by the Christian faith.” (González, 311)

Samuel Crowther

“Samuel Ajayi Crowther (1806-1891) was born in Yoruba land (present-day Nigeria). Captured by slave traders at fifteen and then freed by the British navy, he was taken to Sierra Leone. There, he put his faith in Christ and took his English name, Samuel. Excelling in school, he became a teacher for the Church Missionary Society and traveled to London in 1843, for ordination as an Anglican priest. Convinced that Africa’s greatest need was native African missionaries, he returned home to preach the gospel. Among his first converts were his long-lost mother and sister. In 1864, Crowther became the first African Anglican bishop when he was made bishop of Western Africa. With an all-African staff energized by his unflagging vision, Crowther strengthened the Anglican Church and evangelized the tribes of the Niger territories.” (Rusten, 381)

David Livingstone

“In 1840, David Livingstone (1813-1873) received his medical degree from the University of Glasgow and sailed for Africa the same year. There he married Mary, the daughter of missionary pioneer Robert Moffat (1795-1883). He fixed his goals on taking Christianity to Africa and exploring the land, as well as fighting to end the slave trade. Due in large measure to Livingstone’s reports on the scourge of slavery, it soon was outlawed in the civilized world. When Livingstone had not been heard from in quite some time, a New York Herald correspondent named Henry Stanley (1841-1904) traveled to the heart of Africa to search for him. When he finally found him, Stanley uttered the now-famous words, ‘Dr. Livingstone, I presume.’” (Rusten, 361, 363)

William C. Burns

The son of William H. Burns, William Chalmers Burns (1815-1868) experienced great success during many weeks of preaching at Kilsyth, Scotland. “Although pleased with the revival he was witnessing, young Burns’ true longing was to bring the gospel to unreached people. Therefore, at the peak of his ministry in Scotland, young Burns departed to join Hudson Taylor (1832-1905) in bringing the gospel to inland China.” (Rusten, 361)

John G. Paton

“John Gibson Paton (1824-1907), son of a devout Christian man, left home to devote his life to mission work. Having applied for a post as a tract distributor, Paton began training at the Free Church Normal Seminary in Glasgow, Scotland. While preparing for foreign mission work, he continued his studies in medicine and theology, and worked for the Glasgow City Mission for ten years. On April 16, 1858, following his ordination as a Reformed Presbyterian minister, Paton sailed with his wife to New Hebrides (present-day Vanuatu). Following the

deaths of his wife and infant son, Paton left the islands to regroup. In 1866, he returned to the island of Aniwa, and over the next fifteen years he saw the majority of the native people put their faith in Jesus Christ.” (Rusten, 372, 374)

J. Hudson Taylor

“In 1854, James Hudson Taylor (1832-1905) became the first foreign missionary to enter inland China. He originally was backed by the Chinese Evangelization Society, but quickly severed his ties with them because of his displeasure with their fund-raising methods. Instead, he worked on his own, depending solely on God for support. When Taylor had to return to England because of illness, his burden for inland China grew stronger, and he tried in vain to find a mission to back his return. Therefore, in 1865, Taylor founded the interdenominational China Inland Mission, which in 1866, fulfilled his dream of sending missionaries to all twelve unreached provinces of inland China. The CIM missionaries, known for wearing Chinese dress and depending on God alone for support, numbered 641 by 1895. By 1914, the China Inland Mission was the largest missionary organization in the world, reaching its peak in 1934 with 1,368 missionaries.” (Rusten, 382)

François Coillard

The French missionary François Coillard (1834-1905) explored the province of Lesotho and the south of Rhodesia; he founded a mission in Zambezi.

Emile Rolland

Emile Rolland founded the “French Evangelical Mission in Kabila” in 1908 in Tizi Ouzou. He also created carpet weaving workshops and artisanal wood sculpting for the Kabyles, so that they could provide for their own financial needs.

Mary Slessor

“Mary Slessor (1848-1915) was converted to Christ as a teenager in Scotland. While helping young people in Dundee, Scotland, she became interested in the United Presbyterian Church’s mission to Nigeria. In 1876, Slessor set sail for Nigeria where she worked among the Ibo tribe. She personally cared for multiple babies in the fight against twin killing. Slessor, affectionately known as ‘the White Queen’, established fifty locally run churches and schools, and when British rule was established in Nigeria she became the first female magistrate in 1892. In addition to encouraging trade between inland regions and the coast, Slessor established the Hope Weddell Institute, where Africans were instructed in medicine and other trades. As a result of her work, the Ibo tribe became one of the most Christian peoples of Africa.” (Rusten, 389-390)

1. What do John Eliot, William Carey, Robert Morrison, Adoniram Judson, and Robert Moffat have in common (besides all being English speaking missionaries)?

2. Without writing anyone’s name, describe how you heard enough about Christ to believe and follow him.

3. Was your conversion a direct or indirect result of missionary activities? If so, in what way?

4. Some mission strategists believe that people, money, and resources should only be invested in places receptive to the gospel. “Don’t preach to people who won’t listen.” Do you agree with this? Support your answer with evidence from Scripture and/or from the history of missionary work.

D. From 1910 to 2005 – New Horizons

Introduction

The commandment Jesus Christ gave to his disciples around the year 30 has never ceased to be valid (Mat. 28:19-20). The Church has the continual task of evangelizing the world and the training of disciples.

Following the model and vision laid down by the 18th and 19th century missionaries, the drive to see the whole world reached with the gospel of Christ continued to grow and the missionary endeavor to expand. Many of the mission organizations, such as the China Inland Mission and the London Missionary Society, founded during the preceding centuries, continued to send out workers, while still other sending agencies were created. Today there are literally hundreds of mission agencies sending missionaries from every country with a large enough Christian population to do so. Probably the greatest and most positive development during the 20th century was when countries, which had been the “mission fields” for decades or even centuries, became “sending countries.” Although English speaking countries still have greater numbers of missionaries on foreign fields (in the year 2007), countries such as Brazil and Korea are rapidly catching up. Even countries with comparatively small Christian populations, such as Morocco and Algeria, are represented among the missionary labor forces. These are indeed exciting times, with the promise of even greater things for the future!

Rapid worldwide expansion of the gospel message

“The 1910 World Missionary Conference held in Edinburgh, Scotland, was a pivotal event in the history of foreign missions for mainline denominations. Present for the ten-day conference were 1,355 delegates from missionary societies representing major Protestant denominations. At this conference the International Missionary Council was born as well as the movement that culminated in the formation of the World Council of Churches in 1948.” (Rusten, 410)

Although the World Council of Churches was a result of renewed desires to see the whole world reached with the gospel, it eventually fell out of favor with the Evangelical Protestant churches because of its ties with the Catholic Church, and more specifically, with “liberation theology”. Liberation theology is an ideology originating among Latin American theologians who denounced the abuses of industrialized nations, such as the United States, who were

exploiting the developing countries. However, it turned into an essentially political movement which frequently resorted to violence to achieve its goals. It was branded “Marxist theology” and has since been perceived as a vehicle for secretly promoting communist ideology.

“The missionary enterprise has always declared that its purpose is to found indigenous and mature churches in various parts of the world. In Roman Catholic circles, this has traditionally meant the planting of a church with its own hierarchy- and eventually a native one. Among Protestants, the goal has often been expressed in terms of the ‘three selves’: self-government, self-support, and self-propagation... While, in 1900, 49.9 percent of all Christians lived in Europe, by 1985 that number is estimated to be 27.2 percent. And, while in 1900 81.1 percent of all Christians were white, projections [were] that by the year 2000 that number [would be] reduced to 39.8 percent.” (Gonzalez, 394-397)

“The majority of significant missionary societies are British and American. To mention a few: the Overseas Missionary Fellowship, formerly called the China Inland Mission founded by Hudson Taylor in 1855, serves almost 1,000 missionaries. The Christian and Missionary Alliance, established in 1887 by the Canadian pastor A. Simpson is at work in 31 countries and has about 960 missionaries. The SIM International Mission was birthed on January 1st, 1989, from the merger of the S.I.M. and International Christian Fellowship, and it serves 1,650 missionaries at work in Africa, South America and in Asia. The North Africa Mission and the Africa Inland Mission (approximately 800 missionaries), and so forth. The influence of American missions is significant on a global scale. In 1986, out of the 90,000 Protestant missionaries at work in the world, 45,000 originated from North America; that is 54 percent of the world total.

“It is important to note that the majority of American Protestant Missionaries are sent by missions or churches who are not affiliated with the Ecumenical Council of Churches...

“Missionary planes are used by the Missionary Aviation Society. Runways are built to enable speedy transportation from one field to the next. Also, radio stations are employed to proclaim the Gospel in the whole world: The voice of the Indies, in the Equator; Radio Elwa in Liberia; Trans World Radio broadcasts in scores of languages from Monte-Carlo (Monaco); Radio Bonaire (Indies). The broadcasts in French are transmitted under the name of Radio-Gospel...

“In the middle of the 20th century, Catholic missionaries were just about as numerous as all the missionaries of other churches put together. Since then, and especially in recent years, the decline in vocational clergy has increased.

“The workforce of evangelical missions on the other hand, has considerably increased since 1945. If we are to mention only the missions originating in North America, the number of missionaries has gone from approximately 10,000 to over 45,000 in 1987. Similar growth has been observed among the French-speaking evangelical missionaries. In this regard, the missionaries of the Biblical Mission in Ivory Coast grew from 9 to 53. As for the Franco-Swiss Mission of Chad which was created after the World War II, it has now reached 22 members.

“Missionary societies have applied themselves first and foremost to the distribution of the Bible, to having it read and understood by the peoples of all continents. Therefore, they were assisted in a powerful way by the translation and transmission effort carried out by the Bible societies mentioned above. The verifiable pattern from a missionary standpoint has been the following: ‘a Bible, then a Christian, then a church.’

“Missionary work emphasized medical work and teaching. Great work has been accomplished in this respect. We can mention, among many other examples, that of Dr. Albert Schweitzer who left his pastoral, teaching and musical activities in Strasbourg in order to study medicine and establish a well-known hospital in Lambaréné (Gabon). We may emphasize once more that, when former colonies became independent states, many of their executives owed their training to Christian missions.

“Through an effort which continued in like manner throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, the missionary effort labored to organize numerous and diverse indigenous churches in every country of the world. The history of missions is particularly edifying, because as valiant soldiers of Christ, many missionaries sacrificed everything, including their lives, to obey the commission of spreading the gospel.

“Today, the churches of countries formerly targeted by missions have had a tendency to reach sufficient maturity to become autonomous, and continue in turn the evangelization of their countries’ population. However, the Christians of churches who have sufficient manpower and financial resources must still support the less fortunate churches. Missionary exchanges, bearing the name of ‘fellow workers,’ are still necessary. Missionary societies accordingly modify their work methods and even down to their names, which is how the Society of Evangelical Missions of Paris became the Evangelical Community of Apostolic Action. Missionary action no longer takes place only one way, and in the last few years, we have witnessed African pastors come to the aid of French churches, and Asian missionaries carry out evangelistic campaigns in Europe.

“In 1968, the Federation of French-speaking Evangelical Missions was created. It assists the collaboration between several evangelical missions.” (Jordan, 305-306)

“The Wycliffe Association for the translation of the Bible, founded around 1930 by Cameron Townsend, works in parts of the world where the Bible has not yet been translated and where languages are only spoken (not written), particularly in America, the Indies, Indonesia, Africa, as well as Australia. The Association’s linguists create the alphabet, determine the language, translate the Bible, and teach reading and writing. In this way, they become leaders in cultural work.

“Statistically speaking, these various efforts carried out by Bible Societies throughout the world has resulted in the translation of the Bible, in part or in full, in over 1,884 languages, and new translations are accomplished every year. The Bible in its entirety has been translated into 303 languages. Currently, over 2,500 translators are at work under the supervision of the United Bible Societies. In addition to these translators, one should add those of Bible societies and missions which are not a part of the United Bible Societies, as well as the Scriptural work which is carried out within the framework of the Roman Catholic Church. The distribution of the Bible and its printing by Bible societies is currently reaching a substantial level. The quantity of whole Bibles, New Testaments, portions or selections of the Bible per year is constantly on the rise. In twenty years, it has gone from about one hundred million to currently over five hundred million copies, which demonstrates the astonishing expansion of the printing and distribution work of the Bible throughout the world. The numbers quoted here result from statistics gathered in the year 1987.” (Jordan, 295)

1. List the “three selves” which are the goal of founding indigenous and mature churches in various parts of the world:

a.	b.	c.
----	----	----

2. How has the focus of sending missionaries and the definition of their task changed during the latter half of the 20th century?

3. Read Galatians 2:1-9. How does this passage relate to the idea of being called or sent to a specific group of people in the world?

Various Missiological Approaches of the 20th and 21st Centuries

“The Lausanne Congress on World Evangelization was held July 16-25, 1974, in Lausanne, Switzerland. Assembled by 142 evangelical leaders from around the globe, the council consisted of nearly four thousand participants from 150 nations and was chaired by Billy Graham (1918-). The conference theme was ‘Let the Earth Hear His Voice.’ The congress maintained that Western missionaries should continue work in Third World developing countries, countering suggestions that Third World missions should be suspended. The congress adopted the Lausanne covenant, drafted by John R.W. Stott (1921-) which is a document that emphasizes the authority of the Bible and its call to missions.” (Rusten, 474)

Until the mid 20th century, much mission work followed what can be termed “the classic model.” Missionaries frequently lived in compounds for their own protection and to allow them a slightly higher standard of living than could be had among the nationals. Many missionaries felt that the nationals were uncivilized (even inferior) and that the gospel transformation would not only include salvation in Christ, but also would mean the adoption of European type clothing, European languages, European customs, etc. Sometimes the missionaries introduced changes into the national societies which could have devastating effects. For example, a missionary in Australia began to give metal axes to the women in an aborigine tribe to lighten the difficulty of laboriously chopping with stone axes borrowed from the men. However, because the religious and social connotations attached to the stone axes were lost, women began to rule the tribe, families broke down, men became alcoholics, and the tribe disappeared! Secular anthropologists have used extreme examples like this to attack the whole concept of Christian missions because of the mistakes made by well-meaning missionaries of the past.

As a result of a long learning process, missionary sending agencies and the schools which trained them began to examine different methods which might avoid certain errors, as well as have a greater impact on the groups being reached. One of these is the “social gospel” approach. This line of thought places the main emphasis on the material and social help that the missionary will provide for the national, such as schools, hospitals, technical instruction in appropriate technologies, etc. The idea is that the nationals will see these unselfish acts of kindness and be attracted to Christ. Unfortunately, experience has shown that without the addition of written and spoken testimony, this method has little impact on bringing people to faith in Christ.

Another missiological approach which became popular in the late 1980's is called "contextualization". This philosophy advocates adapting the gospel as nearly as possible to the local customs and beliefs. This, in fact, was the approach taken by many Catholic and Protestant missionaries to the Far East, as we read earlier in this chapter. The inherent difficulty with this method is twofold: 1. Many have gone too far in conforming to the local customs and beliefs, eventually nullifying the gospel message (for example, repeating the Islamic witness, shahada). 2. Sometimes the nationals feel that the Christians are trying to trick them into becoming Christians by cleverly disguising their true intentions.

Other mission strategists have taught that missionaries should aim at starting "people movements," that is, introducing the gospel message in such a way that not just individuals, but entire extended families are converted more or less at the same time. This will lead then to the conversion of entire communities, which will extend into entire towns, and eventually cover large regions where people of a similar ethnic or linguistic background are located. This has actually taken place in some areas of the world.

Another approach which is similar, yet different, is the idea of "church planting movements." Those who advocate this approach are aiming at training churches how to grow and multiply fairly rapidly within a region or country. As each church grows, it will simultaneously be looking for ways to establish other churches by training and sending out its members into neighboring towns and communities. As soon as these new churches become stable, they begin the same process of looking for new points of mission. It is envisioned that the network of churches will quickly expand from only a few to number in the hundreds, even thousands.

"The AD 2000 and Beyond Movement, begun in 1989, was the most global and focused missionary movement of all time. Its goal was "the gospel for every person and a church for every people by the year 2000. Missiologists have identified approximately twelve thousand different people groups in the world, and the goal was to establish a self-propagating church in each of them. The goals were not reached by 2000, but great strides were made. The movement focused on the sixteen hundred people groups with a population of more than ten thousand but with less than 2 percent professing evangelical Christians. By the end of 2000, church planting teams existed in 1,084 people groups, and 487 of these had a congregation of more than one hundred. In 2000, Christian radio reached 99 percent of the world's population in their own language, and only 6.3 percent of the world's population lived in a culture without a witnessing church." (Rusten, 485)

4. In your opinion, are the missionaries you have met making serious mistakes in their ministry? Please give some examples (no personal names or places).

5. Which of the mission strategies mentioned above seems the most likely to succeed in your area or country? Why?

6. What do we learn about the success of mission work from these two passages: John 6:37-47 and 1 Corinthians 2:1-7?

Thankfully there have been hundreds of missionaries from every continent of the world, and too numerous to mention here, who have sacrificed their time, their ambitions and even their lives to serve the Lord throughout the world. If it were not for their commitment and effort, millions of people would still remain in spiritual darkness, without any testimony of what Christ has accomplished to save mankind from its sins and eternal death.

On another hand, the task is far from finished. True believers are in need of a unified and diversified effort to face the magnitude of the task. God has given us the command to go and preach the gospel to the very ends of the earth (Mat. 28:18-20), but over half of the world's inhabitants have no permanent witness. It will take thousands of missionaries stepping out of their regions to reach non-believers. It will take hundreds of thousands of believers to provide for the economic needs of those who go. And, most importantly, it will take millions of believers who commit themselves to praying for what the Lord wants to accomplish. We have been chosen to fill these roles!

May the church of the Lord Jesus Christ continue to live up to this high calling of bringing the good news of salvation to ever greater numbers of people all over the world, by every means and method which the Holy Spirit initiates and controls. Amen!

Review questions to prepare for the exam

For the exam, you will be given four essay questions chosen from the list below. You will be asked to write a paragraph about each one of approximately 100-200 words per answer. You will be allowed to use a Bible during the exam.

1. Show how the book of Acts is structured in such a way as to follow the outward expansion of the church from Jerusalem to the “ends of the earth”.
2. Describe the socio-political environment of the Mediterranean Sea and how this affected the growth and persecution of the church from the end of the first century to the beginning of the fourth century.
3. Name three church fathers or apologists of the early church and tell about them and their influence on Christianity.
4. How did Emperor Constantine’s conversion adversely affect the Christian faith?
5. Briefly point out the major differences between the Catholic Church, the Orthodox Church, the Coptic Church, and the Protestant churches.
6. Chose one of the following controversies and describe how they differ:
Calvinism vs. Arminianism, Dispensational vs. Covenant Theology, Liberalism vs. Conservatism
7. Briefly describe the development of any one of the major Protestant denominations.
8. Why are the Jehovah’s Witnesses and Mormons considered heretical sects by all other Christian denominations and branches?
9. What are the major developments of the church in North Africa? What historical events eventually led to its disappearance around the 12th century?
10. Discuss the growth of the church in the Middle East and Gulf.
11. What major conflicts shaped the European church in its different expressions and confessions?
12. Describe the impact of Catholicism on Latin America before the beginning of the Protestant missionary efforts which began in the 19th century.
13. How and when did the Pentecostal movement begin?
14. Name three prominent Protestant missionaries. Discuss the mission philosophy and activities of each one.
15. In missions, what do the terms “social gospel,” “contextualization,” and “people movements” refer to?

GLOSSARY

- the Sanhedrim
- the fathers
- Predestination
- The reformed church
- Congregation
- Denomination
- Monarchism /Monophysite /nestorian