

**Introduction to Christian History**  
**Pacific School of Religion**  
**July 6-23, 2010**

Instructor:

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**Course Description**

This course covers the History of Christianity from Late Antiquity to the present, taking a global perspective. It focuses on Christianity as culture rather than the church as institution. We will discuss, however, the institutional forms of Christianity as they develop over time. The course also serves to introduce basic theological concepts in contexts where significant developments and variations in Christian theology took place. This course prepares students for basic courses in theology, and for further studies in History of Christianity. The course design also takes into consideration that there may be a significant number of students who are not Christian. The lectures and reading plans are structured to show how the History of Christianity is relevant for both Christian and non-Christian students.

This course is open to those from within and beyond the GTU. It is a basic course in the History of Christianity for MDiv, MA and MTS students at the Pacific School of Religion, and an introductory course in History of Christianity for GTU students who need to fulfill this requirement. This is a summer intensive course. The syllabus is designed with the assumption that many or most students will be working outside of class. Workloads are adjusted accordingly.

**Objectives for Learning the History of Christianity**

At the end of the semester, students should be able to:

1. Articulate a narrative of the history of Christianity appropriate to their proposed ministry context or other work including the articulation of liberative trajectories in Christian history. This will be demonstrated in writing the final paper, due three weeks after the end of the course.
2. Think critically and historically about theology - i.e. be able to articulate the theological questions behind the Nicene Creed and articulate the political and cultural contexts in which these questions developed and which the creed tried to address.
3. Interpret the significance of an event or a person's life for understanding later developments in Christianity.
4. Read a primary source critically using basic exegetical methods and interpretive theories. This will be demonstrated in weekly discussion groups.

5. Read secondary sources critically. This will be demonstrated in weekly discussion groups.

**Textbooks:**

Justo Gonzáles, *Church History: An Essential Guide* (Abington Press, 1996)

<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/>

Selected Primary sources - available online. Links will be provided to specific documents for class reading. There are a few exceptions, mainly with the readings for the last class session. These will be made available via Moodle.

**Assignments:**

Readings: Read all assigned materials carefully. Take notes that will help you engage in class discussions. Active and informed participation in class is indispensable. Preparation for daily sessions includes critical reading of textbook material and exegesis of primary text for the day.

In-Class work:

- o Identify at least one important point that you learned from each of the readings.
- o Bring at least two questions for discussion based on the readings for each class.
- o Class sessions are work sessions in which students will be asked to respond to class presentations, contribute to the discussion, respond to questions, write short answers to questions, etc. All in class work will be open book. You will need your reading materials and notes for the day.

Papers

- o Weekly short papers (Due the beginning of the next week of class). Write an exegesis on one of the primary sources assigned during the week, making use of Gonzáles and one other secondary source to provide historical context. This other secondary source may be an encyclopedia or other reference work specializing in religion, theology, philosophy or cultural history. Wikipedia does not count as a valid secondary source for a paper. About 5-7 pages.
- o Final Paper (Due three weeks after the end of class). Construct an outline narrative of the history of Christianity, from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Century to the end of the Reformation, appropriate for use in a context of ministry in which you envision yourself working, or as a basis for discussing the history of Christianity in an academic context. In your narrative trace one or more liberative themes or movements in Christian life or thought during these centuries, being sure to define your sense of what constitutes liberation (for whom, from what, for what?). In addition - but not instead of the paper - you may also include a PowerPoint presentation or other materials you develop if you see yourself using this as an

educational piece. The paper should also demonstrate familiarity with the assigned readings and class discussions, critical engagement with the texts and traditions we discussed, ability to analyze the significance of context for understanding the history of Christianity. (20 pages)

#### Other Matters Affecting your Grade:

Attendance in class is an important part of your own learning as well as valuable for other students because each of you represents an important point of view and you come with important life experience. If you must miss class for some important reason - your own or a family member's health, accident or other unavoidable circumstance, please let me know (preferably before class begins). However, please do not make conflicting appointments for class time. Unexcused absences will result in the reduction of your grade by half a grade point each occurrence.

Please arrive on time to class. I give announcements at the beginning that are important for your participation in the class - sometimes a change of assignment, or instructions for completing an assignment.

PSR Plagiarism Policy will be enforced in this class. The policy is available at <http://www.psr.edu/plagiarism-policy>

Participation in Class Discussion: Class discussion is a part of the educational structure of this class. It is a place to learn to listen to and learn from the thoughts of others. It is also a place to learn to articulate your ideas in the course of conversation as a leader needs to be able to do. The attendance requirements stated above apply to discussion portions of the course as well.

1. Always bring your textbook and other readings to class with you.
2. Always bring notes related to the topic for the day.
3. Always bring at least two questions that the reading raised for you.

#### **Criteria For Grading**

- o Grading will follow PSR Grading Policy attached to this syllabus.
- o The relative weight of each criterion in the final grade will be:  

|                      |          |
|----------------------|----------|
| In Class discussions | 25%      |
| Weekly short papers  | 20% each |
| Final paper          | 35%      |

#### Grading Criteria for Writing Assignments

- o Content (60%)
- o Clarity and Style (20%)
- o Grammar and Mechanics (20%) In other words, the student at least used the word processor's spelling and grammar checking mechanism.
  - Sentences are complete and correct
  - Uses correct spelling and punctuation

- Bibliography is accurate and correct; all sources are cited; follows a Turabian format consistently.

Class discussion participation should be concise, to the point, and show sensitivity to other people's participation.

## I. Late Antiquity and Early Middle Ages

### Class 1: Christianity in Late Antiquity: A New Religious Movement in Search of an Identity

- (a) Review of the syllabus: course goals, lesson plans, and deadlines.
- (b) Why study the history of Christianity? How is it relevant for both Christians and non-Christians? How is it relevant for "religious professionals" (pastors, chaplains, etc) and community and political activists? How is it relevant for theology?
- (c) Two paradigms for the study of early Christianity: a movement centered in the Roman Empire, or a global religious movement (Africa, Asia and Europe)?
- (d) The struggle for formation of Christian identity: engagements with Judaism, "paganism" and "gnosticism."

Readings: *The Passion of Saints Perpetua and Felicity*, 203 CE

(<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/perpetua.html>)

Eusebius Pamphilius, *Church History*, Book III, Chs 1,2, and 4

(<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf201.toc.html>)

Acts of Thomas (1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> acts)

(<http://www.earlychristianwritings.com/text/actsthomas.html>)

### Class 2: Trinitarian theologies and controversies in the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> centuries

- (a) The Trinity: Why understanding this doctrine is important today; challenges to understanding it; and how studying the history of its development makes it easier to understand.
- (b) The beginnings of Trinitarian theology: Key writers in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century (Justin Martyr, Irenaeus of Lyons, Tertullian, Origen).
- (c) Arius and Alexander. The Council of Nicea. Athanasius and the struggle over the meaning and validity of Nicea.
- (d) The Cappadocians (Basil the Great, Gregory of Nazianzen, Gregory of Nyssa). The First Council of Constantinople (381) and Theodosius. The survival of Arianism among Germanic tribes.
- (e) Review of key terms: *ecumenical*, *ousia*, *hypostasis*, *substance*, *person*, *nature*, etc.

Readings:

Athanasius, “Two Senses of the Word ‘Son’,” ch. 3  
of *In Defence of the Nicene Definition*

<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf204.xiv.ii.iii.html>

Gregory the Theologian (Gregory Nazianzen), *Third Theological Oration*

<http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/310229.htm>

Gregory of Nyssa, *Letter to his brother Peter on “ousia” and “hypostasis”*

<http://ixoyc.net/data/Fathers/102.pdf>

### **Class 3: Christological theologies and controversies in the 5<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> centuries**

- (a) Why weren't Nicea and Constantinople enough? They focused on the relationship between Jesus and God the Father. This left open the question: How is Jesus related to us?
- (b) Constantinople vs Alexandria: John Chrysostom, Cyril of Alexandria and Nestorius.
- (c) Nestorius and “Nestorianism.”
- (d) Cyril of Alexandria and the Council of Ephesus.
- (e) Pope Leo I and the Council of Chalcedon.
- (f) The legacy of these seemingly abstract controversies on contemporary politics: Lebanon, Iraq, the Coptic Church in Egypt, Ethiopia and Rastafarianism in Jamaica.

Readings: Extracts from the Council of Ephesus (431 CE)

<http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/3810.htm>

*The Book of Marganitha* (Church of the East treatise on theology), Book III, ch. 4 “On the Different Sects”

[http://www.nestorian.org/book\\_of\\_marganitha\\_part\\_iii.html#part3chap4](http://www.nestorian.org/book_of_marganitha_part_iii.html#part3chap4)

### **Class 4: Empire and Silk Road: Social and political developments of the 3<sup>rd</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> centuries**

- (a) Empires and trade routes: the “scaffolding” for the spread of Christianity
- (b) The Church of the East: the geographically largest church
- (c) The “Monophysite” or “Oriental Orthodox Churches” (Egypt, Ethiopia, Syria, Armenia, India)
- (d) From Constantine to Justinian: the establishment of an imperial Church
- (e) The changing status of women in the Church
- (f) The “avenging flames”: Roman law (Constantine, Theodosius, and Justinian) and the beginnings of homophobia

Readings: Eusebius Pamphilus, *Oration in Praise of Constantine*, Ch. 1

(<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf201.iv.viii.ii.html>)

The “Nestorian” stele, 781 CE:

([http://www.nestorian.org/the\\_nestorians\\_in\\_china\\_the.html](http://www.nestorian.org/the_nestorians_in_china_the.html))

Justinian (c.482-565 CE), *Code of Civil Law*

Prologues to the *Digests* and the *Institutes*:

(<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/corpus1.html>)

*Institutes*, Book I, chs 1-10

([http://www.nestorian.org/the\\_nestorians\\_in\\_china\\_the.html](http://www.nestorian.org/the_nestorians_in_china_the.html))

Roman and Byzantine laws against same-sex marriage:

(<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/pwh/just-novels.html>)

### **Class 5: Muhammad and Charlemagne**

- (a) The life of Muhammad and the rise of Islam
- (b) The Umayyad and Abbasid caliphates, and their political impact on Christianity
- (c) Jews and Christians in the development of Islamic civilization
- (d) The life of Charlemagne and the Holy Roman Empire
- (e) The controversy over iconoclasm: its impact on Byzantium, and its connections with Charlemagne and Islam

Readings: Selections from the Qur’an, to be provided by J. van Boom

The constitution of Medina (622 CE)

<http://mail.google.com/a/ses.gtu.edu/?fs=1&source=ig&tf=1#inbox/1264419910bdf48>

Different versions of the Covenant of Umar, to be provided by J. van Boom

Letter of ‘Ali ibn Abi Taleb, 3<sup>rd</sup> Caliph and first Imam, to Malik of Ashtar, governor of Egypt:

<http://www.nahjulbalagha.org/LetterDetail.php?Letter=53>

Sermon of ‘Ali ibn Abi Taleb on the creation of the world and world history:

<http://www.nahjulbalagha.org/SermonDetail.php?Sermon=1>

Einhart: The Life of Charlemagne:

<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/basis/einhard.html#Charlemagne%20Crowned%20Emperor>

## **II. The Middle Ages and Early Modernity**

### **Class 6: Blood and Honor: The Crusades and Theologies of Atonement**

- (a) Controlling violence: Christian and Islamic military ethics in the Middle Ages
- (b) Urban II, the First Crusade and the Kingdom of Jerusalem

- (c) The Third Crusade (Richard Lionheart and Saladin) and Fourth Crusade (the sacking of Constantinople, and the final split between West and East)
- (d) Anselm of Canterbury's Theology of Atonement
- (e) Peter Abelard's Response

Readings: Five versions of the sermon of Urban II (r.1088-1095) at the Council of Clermont (1095):

<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/urban2-5vers.html>

Anselm of Canterbury, *Cur Deus Homo* (Why God became a Human Being)

Book I, ch. 12; Book II, chs. 6, 7, 18b

<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/basis/anselm-curdeus.html>

Peter Abelard, Selections from *Commentary on the Letter to the Romans*, to be provided by J. van Boom

### **Class 7: The Quest for Form: Mendicant Preachers, Innocent III, and Scholastic Theology**

- (a) The revival of urban life and commerce in medieval Europe
- (b) The rise of dissident movements ("Albigensians" and "Waldensians") and mendicant orders (Dominicans and Franciscans)
- (c) Innocent III and the Fourth Lateran Council: The vision of universal church discipline
- (d) Scholastic theology:
  - (1) Prepared by Anselm of Canterbury, Peter Abelard and Peter Lombard
  - (2) Non-Christian influences: Avicenna, Averroes, and Maimonides
  - (3) The "four greats" of the 13<sup>th</sup> century: Bonaventure, Albertus Magnus, Thomas Aquinas, and John Duns Scotus
  - (4) Proving God's existence: a *very brief* comparison of Anselm's ontological argument (a "Platonic" method), Aquinas' five ways, and Duns Scotus' *De primo principio* (the last two are Aristotelian-Platonic methods)

Readings: Anselm of Canterbury, *Proslogium*, Preface and ch.3

<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/basis/anselm-proslogium.html>

Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, Part I, Questio 2, article 3:

<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/aquinas1.html>

John Duns Scotus, *A Treatise on God as First Principle*, chs. 1 and 3

<http://www.ewtn.com/library/THEOLOGY/GODASFIR.HTM>

**Class 8: Christian Humanism, Women Prophets and the Rethinking of Orthodoxy**

- (a) The Renaissance in Italy
- (b) Dante, Petrarch, Lorenzo Valla, Pico della Mirandola
- (c) Woman Visionaries: Anticipated by Hildegard of Bingen, a great movement in the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries (Joan of Arc, Bridget of Sweden, Catherine of Sienna)
- (d) The Babylonian Captivity and Conciliarism
- (e) Demands for a new spirituality: *Devotio moderna*, Brethren of the Common Life, Beghards, and Beguines.

Readings: Council of Constance, the Decree *Sacrosancta*, 1415  
<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/constance1.html>

Petrarch, The Ascent of Mount Ventoux

<http://history.hanover.edu/texts/petrarch/pet17.html>

Pico della Mirandola, *Oration on Human Dignity*

(usually translated *Oration on the Dignity of Man*)

[http://www.wsu.edu/~wldciv/world\\_civ\\_reader/world\\_civ\\_reader\\_1/pico.html](http://www.wsu.edu/~wldciv/world_civ_reader/world_civ_reader_1/pico.html)

The Trial of Joan of Arc, 1431 (extracts)

<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/1431joantrial.html>

**Class 9: Reformations: Catholic, Magisterial, and Radical**

- (a) The Invention of the Reformation in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century—and why we often now talk about several “reformations”
- (b) The Protestant or “Magisterial” Reformation: Luther, Zwingli, Calvin, Bucer, Melancthon
- (c) The Catholic Reformation: Pre-Protestant beginnings in Spain (John of the Cross, Teresa de Avila, Cardinal Ximenes); the Council of Trent; the Jesuits and other new orders
- (d) The “Radical” Reformation: the Anabaptist movement
- (e) “Socinianism” and the beginnings of Unitarianism

Readings: Martin Luther, *Concerning Christian Liberty* (selections)

[http://www.ccel.org/ccel/luther/first\\_prin.v.ii.ii.html](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/luther/first_prin.v.ii.ii.html)

Ignatius of Loyola, *Spiritual Exercises* (selections)

<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/ignatius/exercises.xii.ii.html>

The Schleitheim Confession, 1527

<http://www.anabaptists.org/history/schleith.html>

**Class 10: Witches, Heretics, “Moors”, “Sodomites” and Wars of Religion: Western Christianity’s Inner Conflicts and the Beginnings of Modernity**

- (a) Two concepts: “The Other” and “Persecuting Society”
- (b) Jews and “Moors” in the Spanish *reconquista*
- (c) The Black Plague in the 14<sup>th</sup> century and the search for scapegoats
- (d) The Witch Trials (ca. 1400-ca.1700)
- (e) Wars of Religion (mainly or partially driven by religious differences): French Wars of Religion (1562-1598), Eighty Years’ War between the Netherlands and Spain (1568-1648), The Thirty Years’ War (1618-1648), English Civil Wars (1641-1651), and others.

Readings: Giovanni Bocaccio (1313-1375), description of the Black Death from the *Decameron*

<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/boccacio2.html>

Selections from witch trial documents: Innocent VIII, *Summi desiderantes*, 1484; Johannes Nider *The Ant Hill*, ca. 1437; Heinrich Institoris and Jacob Sprenger, *Malleus Maleficarum*, 1486

<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/witches1.html>

Bernard Gui, Inquisitorial Technique (ca. 1307-1323)

<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/heresy2.html>

Expulsion of the Jews from Spain, 1492

<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/jewish/1492-jews-spain1.html>

Summary History of the Thirty Years’ War

<http://www.pipeline.com/~cwa/TYWHome.htm>

### III. Modernity and Post-Modernity

#### **Class 11: The Rise of Trans-Atlantic Capitalism and Colonialism**

- (a) Crusade ideology, and the transformation of African slavery
- (b) The image of “The Moor” and the ideological conflicts over Spanish and Portuguese colonialism.
- (c) The rise of British, French and Dutch mercantile capitalism.
- (d) The transformation of Christian missiology
- (e) Jesuit and Franciscan missions in the Americas, Ethiopia, India, China and Japan

Readings: Bull of Pope Nicholas V, *Romanus Pontifex*, January 8, 1455  
(<http://www.nativeweb.org/pages/legal/indig-romanus-pontifex.html>)

*Requerimiento* (1510) by Palacios Rubios, Council of Castille  
(<http://users.dickinson.edu/~borges/Resources-Requerimiento.htm>)

Franciscus de Victoria (1480-1546), Section 3 of his *On the Indies Recently Discovered*

([http://www.constitution.org/victoria/victoria\\_4.htm](http://www.constitution.org/victoria/victoria_4.htm))

#### **Class 12: Enlightenment and Pietist Movements, from New England to Russia**

- (a) The myth of a single “Enlightenment”

- (b) Diversity of Enlightenment movements: France, England and New England, Scotland, Germany
- (c) Jansenism
- (d) Methodism and other pietist movements
- (e) Swedenborgianism
- (f) 18<sup>th</sup> century Unitarianism

Readings: Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), *What is Enlightenment?*

(<http://www.english.upenn.edu/~mgamer/Etexts/kant.html>)

Phillis Wheatley (c.1753-1784), *On the Death of George Whitefield* (poem)

(<http://gbgm-umc.org/umw/wesley/quiz/2a.stm#wheatley>)

Jarena Lee (b.1783), "My Call to Preach the Gospel," from "Religious Experience and Journal of Mrs. Jarena Lee

([http://digilib.nypl.org/dynaweb/digs/wwm9716/@Generic\\_BookView](http://digilib.nypl.org/dynaweb/digs/wwm9716/@Generic_BookView))

### **Class 13: The French Revolution and Its Effects: Idealism, Liberalism and Nationalism**

- (a) The concepts of "*ancien régime*" and modernity
- (b) The French Revolution: The First Challenge to "the Constantinian Project"
- (c) The emergence of three ideological directions: liberalism, the Left, and conservatism (distinct, but often blending)
- (d) Kant and Schelermacher
- (e) Hegel and Feuerbach
- (f) Blake, Coleridge, and Romantic critiques of modern rationalism

Readings: *Declaration of the Rights of the Human Being and the Citizen* (*Déclaration des droits de l'Homme et du citoyen*, usually translated as *Declaration of the Rights of Man*), 1789

([http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th\\_century/rightsof.asp](http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/rightsof.asp))

*Civil Constitution of the Clergy*, July 12, 1790

(<http://history.hanover.edu/texts/civilcon.html>)

*Ça ira!* ("We Will Win!"- Most popular song of the French Revolution) (<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/caira.html>)

Article entry on Friedrich Daniel Ernst Schleiermacher (1768-1834), from the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*

(<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/schleiermacher>)

John Stuart Mill (1806-1873), "On Individuality, As One of the Elements of Well-Being", Chapter III of *On Liberty* (1869)

(<http://www.bartelby.com/130/3.html>)

### **Class 14: Industrialization and Its Discontents: From the Franco-Prussian War to the Cold War**

- (a) The effects of industrialization on Christianity

- (b) Responses to industrial capitalism: Communism, Social Democracy, the Social Gospel, and Catholic social teachings
- (c) The traumatic effects of World Wars I and II
- (d) Barth and Neo-Orthodoxy
- (e) Tillich and existentialism
- (f) The Holocaust, the Cold War and critiques of totalitarian ideologies

Readings: Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party* (1848) (Preface and conclusion only)

(<http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1848/communist-manifesto/ch01.htm>)

Fyodor Dostoyevsky (1821-1881) “Grand Inquisitor,” from *Brothers Karamazov*

(<http://www.webster.edu/~corbetre/philosophy/existentialism/dostoevsky/grand.html>)

*Theological Declaration of Barmen* (1934)

(<http://www.sacred-texts.com/chr/barmen.htm>)

Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906-1945) “A Wedding Sermon from a Prison Cell” May, 1943

(<http://www.archive.org/stream/prisonerforgodle009969mbp#page/n33/mode/2up>)

### **Class 15: Postcolonialism, Theologies of Liberation and the Challenge of Fundamentalisms**

- (a) National independence movements and the rise of postcolonial methods and orientations
- (b) The Civil Rights movement in America
- (c) Latin American Liberation Theology
- (d) The expansion of liberative theologies to all marginalized groups (concepts of “the Other,” “subaltern,” etc.).
- (e) Feminist theologies
- (f) Queer theologies
- (g) The rise of “fundamentalisms”: the United States, the Middle East, and South Asia.

Assignments: Edward Said talks about “orientalism”:

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xwCOSkXR\\_Cw](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xwCOSkXR_Cw),  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DU4GB5fPXdY&feature=related>,  
[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G4cnavt8\\_OHU&feature=related](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G4cnavt8_OHU&feature=related),  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1AYIQmgH9Ko&feature=related>

Selections from: Gustavo Gutiérrez, *A Theology of Liberation: History, Politics and Salvation* (Orbis Books, 1988)

Rosemary Radford Ruether, *Sexism and God-Talk: Toward a Feminist Theology* (Beacon Press, 1993)  
Mark Jordan, *The Silence of Sodom: Homosexuality in Modern Catholicism* (University of Chicago Press, 2000)