

# Introduction

## The What, Why, and How of Studying Church History

### Church History Survey

#### Class 1

*[T]he history of the church, while showing all the characteristics of human history, is much more than the history of an institution or of a movement. It is a history of the deeds of the Spirit in and through the men and women who have gone before in the faith.” (Justo L. Gonzalez, *The Story of Christianity*, xvi)*

#### I. What is Church History

*“Those who undertake to write histories, do not, I perceive, take that trouble on one and the same account, but for many reasons, and those such as are very different one from another; <sup>2</sup> for some of them apply themselves to this part of learning to show their skill in composition, and that they may therein acquire a reputation for speaking finely; others of them there are, who write histories in order to gratify those who happen to be concerned in them, and on that account have spared no pains, but rather gone beyond their own abilities in the performance; <sup>3</sup> but others there are, who, of necessity and by force, are driven to write history, because they are concerned in the facts, and so cannot excuse themselves from committing them to writing, for the advantage of posterity: nay, there are not a few who are induced to draw their historical facts out of darkness into light, and to produce them for the benefit of the public, on account of the great importance of the facts themselves with which they have been concerned. (Josephus (b. 37), *Antiquities of the Jews*, 1:1-3)*

- A. We look first to the *what?* and then we turn to the “*why, how, and so what*” of the events in church history (14).
- B. A definition: *the record of what God’s people have done and thought from the foundation of the church during the New Testament age to the present.*
- C. History can only be interpreted by the Bible

1. The Old Testament interprets the history of mankind from Creation to Christ.
  2. The New Testament interprets the history of mankind from Christ to the foundation of the Church.
  3. The Old and New Testaments interpret the history of mankind from Creation to Eternity.
- D. History is not simply about the decisions of men and women: it is the unfolding of the sovereign purposes of God.

*In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will. (Eph. 1:11)*

- E. History has a direction: it is a river and not a lake

*For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen. (Rom. 11:36)*

- F. History has 2 main characters—God and his church—and a lot of extras.

*Where kingdoms rise and fall, where modern and ancient super-powers appear and disappear, where Presidents live and then are forgotten, where athletes and actors have their fifteen minutes of celebrity and then become dusty photographs, God's people continue forever.*

- G. History had a beginning (Gen. 1:1) but has no ending (Rev. 21:1-8). It is the story of creation becoming the new creation.

- H. History is about God fulfilling his promises.

*Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. 2 And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. 3 I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed." (Gen. 12:1-3)*

*Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age." (Matt. 28:19-20)*

*But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." (Acts 1:8)*

## II. Why study church history?

- A. Church history reminds us that our faith is an historical one

*“In the first instance, studying the history of Christianity provides repeated, concrete demonstration concerning the irreducibly historical character of the Christian faith” (N, 15).*

*“From its very beginning, the Christian message was grafted onto human history. The Good news Christians have proclaimed through the ages is that in Jesus Christ, and for our salvation, God has entered human history in a unique way. History is crucial for understanding not only the life of Jesus, but also the entire biblical message. A good deal of the Old Testament is historical narrative. The Bible tells the story of God’s revelation in the life and history of the people of God. Without that story, it is impossible to know that revelation” (G-I, xv).*

B. Church history gives us perspective—on our beliefs and practices

*“Christians reveal a shocking capacity for spiritual pride, hubris. Without an adequate base for comparisons they spring to the defense of their way as the best way—their party as the superior party” (S, xv).*

*“A...contribution of church history is to provide perspective on the interpretation of Scripture....From the distance supplied by time, it is often quite easy to see that some biblical interpretations that once seemed utterly persuasive were in fact distortions of Scripture” (N, 16, 17).*

*“Without understanding [our] past, we are unable to understand ourselves, for in a sense the past still lives in us and influences who we are and how we understand the Christian message. When we read, for instance, that ‘the just shall live by faith,’ Martin Luther is whispering at our ear how we are to interpret those words—and this is true even for those of us who have never even heard of Martin Luther. When we hear that ‘Christ died for our sins,’ Anselm of Canterbury sits in the pew with us, even though we may not have the slightest idea who Anselm was. When we stand, sit, or kneel in church, when we sing a hymn, recited a creed, or refuse to recite one, when we build a church or preach a sermon, a past of which we may not be aware is one of the factors involved in our actions. The notion that we read the New Testament exactly as the early Christians did, without any weight of tradition coloring our interpretation, is an illusion. It is also a dangerous illusion, for it tends to absolutize our interpretation, confusing it with the Word of God.*

*“One way in which we can avoid this danger is to know the past that colors our vision. A person wearing tinted glasses can avoid the conclusion that the entire world is tinted only by being conscious of the glasses themselves. Likewise, if we are to break free from an undue weight of tradition, we must begin by understanding what that tradition is, how we came to be where we are and how particular elements in our past color our view of the present. It is then that we are free to choose which elements in the past—and in the present—we wish to reject, and which we will affirm” (G-I, xvii).*

C. Church history gives us understanding of our culture

*“The study of church history is also useful as a laboratory for examining Christian interactions with surrounding culture” (N, 17).*

*The idea here is that if there is “nothing new under the sun” (Ecc. 1:9), then what we are experiencing now has confronted the church in the past. It always helps to read about how earlier generations faced similar situations.*

D. Church history gives us encouragement

*For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. (Rom. 15:4)*

*“Church history also offers edification, inspiration, or enthusiasm that will stimulate high spiritual life. Paul believed that knowledge of the past would give hope to the Christian life (Rom 15:4). No one can study the brave stand of Ambrose of Milan—his refusing Emperor Theodosius the Communion until he repented of his massacre of the Thessalonian crowd—without being encouraged to stand for Christ against evil in high political or ecclesiastical circles. The industry and drive that enabled Wesley to preach over ten thousand sermons during his life and to travel thousands of miles on horseback is bound to be a rebuke and a challenge to Christians who have much better means for travel and study than Wesley had but who do not make adequate use of them.... The story of Carey’s life was and is an inspiration to missionary service. The biographical aspect of church history is bound to bring inspiration and challenge to the student” (C, 22).*

E. Church history gives us humility

*“This realization, which historical study fairly shouts out loud, that God sustains the church despite the church’s own frequent efforts to betray its Savior and its own high calling, points to another benefit from the history of Christianity. Study of the past can be useful, that is, in shaping proper Christian attitudes.... Again, if the church is always one generation from extinction, it also enjoys a peerless inheritance.... The heroes of the faith usually have feet of clay—sometimes thighs, hearts, and heads as well. The golden ages of the past usually turn out to be tarnished if they are examined closely enough... [W]hat it shows is a divine patience broader than any human impaction, a divine forgiveness more powerful than any human offense, and a divine grace deeper than our human sin” (N, 18-19).*

F. A Final Reason: Know Thyself

1. To see that you are:
  - a. Christian and not Pagan
  - b. Western and not Eastern
  - c. Protestant and not Catholic
  - d. Reformed and not Arminian

- e. Charismatic and not Cessationist
  - f. Part of the Sovereign Grace churches and not another denomination
  - g. Understand what it means that you are part of Sovereign Grace Church and not another local church (or the church you are a part of).
2. And to see what this means historically, theologically, practically

### III. Sources cited in the outline

- C Cairns, Earle E., *Christianity Through the Centuries: A History of the Christian Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1996).
- G-I, G-II Gonzalez, Justo L, *The Story of Christianity: Vols. 1-2* (San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1984).
- G-1-3 Gonzalez, Justo L, *A History of Christian Thought: Vols. 1-3, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1987).
- N Noll, Mark A, *Turning Points: Decisive Moments in the History of Christianity* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1997).
- S Shelley, Bruce L., *Church History in Plain Language*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition (Dallas: Word Publishing, 1995).

# Christ, the Church, Judaism, and Rome

## Church History Survey

### Lecture 2

*“Christians are no different from the rest in their nationality, language or customs....They live in their own countries, but as sojourners. They fulfill all their duties as citizens, but they suffer as foreigners. They find their homeland wherever they are, but their homeland is not in any one place....They are in the flesh, but do not live according to the flesh. They live on earth, but are citizens of heaven. They obey all laws, but they live at a higher level than that required by law. They love all, but all persecute them.”*

*(“To Diognetus,” 5.1-11, anonymous, cited in G, 57)*

#### I. The Spread of the Early Church

- A. Christianity went from a few followers of Jesus in Galilee at the beginning of Jesus’ life, to tens of thousands of converts from many nations all throughout the Mediterranean region *by the end of Acts*.
- B. Spread among Jews and “God-fearers” (Gentiles who converted to Judaism)
- C. Spread as the apostles went throughout areas surrounding Jerusalem.
- D. Spread even further as the apostle Paul took the gospel throughout the Roman Empire.
- E. Spread among key cities through strong leaders: Jerusalem → Antioch → Rome → Carthage
- F. Spread because of the gospel itself
  - 1. The conviction of having the message of salvation
  - 2. The impact as it changed lives
  - 3. The power of Christian love and mercy to the poor and unfortunate
- G. The fires of evangelism continue to burn throughout the globe!

## II. Judaism and the Early Church

*“Jesus was a Jew. He came from a Jewish family, he studied the Jewish law, he observed the Jewish religion” (S, 3-4).*

*“For if you believed Moses, you would believe me; for he wrote of me” (John 5:46).*

*“But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it” (Rom. 3:21).*

- A. Judaism the source of Christianity in the way that a seed and roots are connected to the tree that we see.
  - 1. Judaism the source, root, foundation, and beginning of Christianity. Christianity is the fulfillment of Jewish hope, anticipation, promise, and type. Jesus is the Jewish Messiah, unrecognized as he was by many 1<sup>st</sup> century Jews.
- B. The early church
  - 1. Pentecost: Peter preached that this was the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy.
  - 2. Apostolic church: their initial gospel was that Jesus was the longed-for Messiah. They saw Christianity as nothing other than the fulfillment of Judaism.
- C. Judaism increasingly antagonistic toward Christianity
  - 1. Same antagonism Jesus experienced by Pharisees, the early church by Jewish leaders, would spread to the entire church.
  - 2. The earliest persecution of Christians was by Jews—e.g., crucifixion, stoning of Stephen, arrest of Paul.
  - 3. Gonzalez notes that Jewish-Christian relations had much to do with the status of **Gentiles**, even more so than Christology. Thus, it is Stephen who is martyred for his attitude toward the temple, while Peter and John are merely beaten for their Christology (G, 19).
  - 4. As relations with Judaism grew more hostile, the real center of Christianity would spread further and further away from Jerusalem, first to Pella under James and then Simeon (60s), and then to Gentile peoples and cities. Eventually the Christian-Jerusalem connection would only be a memory (G, 21-22).

#### D. The Fall of Jerusalem

1. Background of the Conflict: Jewish resentment of Roman occupation

*“All the children of Abraham despised their [Roman] overlords; they simply disagreed about how to resist them” (S, 5).*

- a. Three responses to Roman occupation
  - 1) Pharisees: religion to be a matter of personal and rigorous application of Mosaic Law.
  - 2) Sadducees: Jewish aristocracy that saw opportunity in Roman culture and power, and held chief positions of authority in the temple.

*“A man like Jesus presented a real danger to the Sadducees, because they held their privileged position with the support of the Roman authorities. Anyone who aroused talk of a messiah undermined the people’s allegiance to the established political order and endangered the relationship the Sadducees had with the Romans” (S, 9).*

- 3) Zealots: combined religion and guerrilla warfare to oppose Roman rule (think Iraq?).
  - 4) Essenes: saw best approach was to separate radically into the Judean wilderness and live a strict ascetic life (S, 5-6).
2. Jewish revolt against Roman oppression succeeded during Vespasian, but his son Titus brought worsening of the conflict.
3. Siege in April 70 and in September rebels made last stand in temple.
4. Differing views about why Rome destroyed temple.
  - a. Josephus said Titus wanted to save temple “as a gesture of Roman moderation” (N, 25).
  - b. Sulpicius Sevrus said Titus “eager to destroy the temple...for he wanted to eradicate the temple ‘in order that the Jewish and Christian religions might more completely be abolished; for although these religions were mutually hostile, they had nevertheless sprung from the same founders; the Christians were an offshoot of the Jews, and if the root were taken away the stock would easily perish” (N, 25). Of course: the Jews and Christians still remain; it is Rome that has long since fallen.

*“The great turning point represented by the destruction of Jerusalem was to move Christianity outward, to transform it from a religion shaped in nearly every particular by its early Jewish environment into a religion advancing toward universal significance in the broader reaches of the Mediterranean world, and then beyond” (N, 27).*

5. The fall of Jerusalem was horrific, inhuman, and brought about some of the worst human suffering the world has ever seen. A siege is a slow death that progressively destroys your respect for human life, human dignity, and all normal human relationships. Over a million people were slaughtered (or killed each other in attempts to survive). The destruction of the temple was indeed God's judgment on a rebellious nation, but we shouldn't fail to be compassionate when we consider the actual suffering.

### III. Pax and a Pox: Rome and the Early Church

#### A. The good of life under Rome: *pax Romana*

1. Protection as a Jewish sect: Judaism a *religio licita* (“legal religion”), and Christianity because of its association with Judaism also regarded as such.
2. At earliest stages Rome provided stability that enabled a great spreading of Christianity. Seeing Christians as legal, law-abiding citizens is one of the themes of Acts. Can see this in chapter 19:

*“And when the town clerk had quieted the crowd, he said, “Men of Ephesus, who is there who does not know that the city of the Ephesians is temple keeper of the great Artemis, and of the sacred stone that fell from the sky? <sup>36</sup> Seeing then that these things cannot be denied, you ought to be quiet and do nothing rash. <sup>37</sup> For you have brought these men here who are neither sacrilegious nor blasphemers of our goddess. <sup>38</sup> If therefore Demetrius and the craftsmen with him have a complaint against anyone, the courts are open, and there are proconsuls. Let them bring charges against one another. <sup>39</sup> But if you seek anything further, it shall be settled in the regular assembly. <sup>40</sup> For we really are in danger of being charged with rioting today, since there is no cause that we can give to justify this commotion.” (Acts 19:35-40)*

3. The *pax Romana* (Roman peace) meant easy trafficking of people and ideas (N).
 

*“The political unity wrought by the Roman Empire allowed the early Christians to travel without having to fear bandits or local wars” (G, 14).*
4. Common language (koine Greek) meant a linguistic stability as well.

- B. The bitter life under Rome: persecution (Rome is a pox!)
1. Eventually Roman oppression would create a very different environment for the early church, challenging it to become more established internally and externally (N, 30).
  2. Reasons for persecution:
    - a. Anti-social: their distinctive life-style which was seen as anti-social because almost every aspect of Roman culture was connected to idol worship: "One simply could not reject the gods without arousing scorn as a social misfit" (S, 39): e.g., avoided feasts and certain social meals, avoided gladiatorial contests, rejected pagan worship.
    - b. Slanders, rumors: They called the Lord's Supper a "love feast"; we call each other "brother" and "sister"; we "eat the body and blood of Jesus", etc.
    - c. Charge of atheism because Christians rejected polytheism.
    - d. Refusal to call Caesar "Lord."

*"In order to achieve greater unity, imperial policy sought religious uniformity by following two routes: religions syncretism—the indiscriminate mixing of elements from various religions—and emperor worship....In that atmosphere, Jews and Christians were seen as unbending fanatics who insisted on the sole worship of their One God—an alien cyst that must be removed for the good of society....Roman authorities saw [emperor worship] as a means of unity and a test of loyalty. To refuse to burn incense before the emperor's image was a sign of treason or at least of disloyalty" (G, 14, 15, 16).*

#### IV. Sources cited in the outlines

- C Cairns, Earle E., *Christianity Through the Centuries: A History of the Christian Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1996).
- G, GII Gonzalez, Justo L, *The Story of Christianity: Vols. 1-2* (San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1984).
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# Attacks from Without and Within

## Church History Survey

### Class 3

#### I. Attacks from Without and Within

- A. Jesus said, "If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you" (John 15:18).
- B. Attacks from within: Christological Heresies
  - 1. Docetism says Jesus only appeared to be human (so sometimes called "seemism").
  - 2. Ebionitism says Jesus only human, became Messiah through his obedience.
  - 3. Adoptionism says Jesus became Messiah at his baptism when Father said, "This is my beloved Son" (Matt. 3:17).
- C. Attacks from without
  - 1. Gnosticism (1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> centuries)
    - a. Emphasis on the *gnosis*, "knowledge" revealed to the sage.
    - b. Typically includes *dualistic* universe (good and evil battling).
    - c. Matter is evil and is to be "escaped."
    - d. Creation a kind of accident by a foolish god who didn't realize the evil of matter and messed up.
  - 2. Cultured Despisers
    - a. Elite Romans felt Christians were to be despised.
    - b. Celsus, an early critic of the church, mocked,  
  
*Far from us, say the Christians, be any man possessed of any culture or wisdom or judgment; their aim is to convince only worthless and contemptible people, idiots, slaves, poor women, and children....These are the only ones whom they manage to turn into believers (S, 33).*
  - 3. Persecution by the Roman Empire.
- D. The Church's Response: Apologists, Bishops, Canon, and Creeds.

## II. Response #1: The Apologists

- A. Apologists offer a defense (*apologia*) for the gospel, and helped establish Christianity as both respectable and reasonable.

*In your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense (Grk. apologian) to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you. (1 Peter 3:15)*

- B. Justin Martyr (ca. 100-165)

1. Born in what is now Israel to unbelieving parents. He was a wandering philosopher exploring Stoics, Plato, and Aristotle, who was told to read the biblical prophets and was converted when he did. Shortly after 150, he addressed his *First Apology* to Emperor Antoninus Pius and his adopted sons.
2. His approach: Christianity is the highest and best of all philosophies.

*Reason directs those who are truly pious and philosophical to honour and love only what is true, declining to follow traditional opinions, if these be worthless. For not only does sound reason direct us to refuse the guidance of those who did or taught anything wrong, but it is incumbent on the lover of truth, by all means, and if death be threatened, even before his own life, to choose to do and say what is right. (Justin, First Apology)*

3. Martyred by beheading during the reign of Marcus Aurelius.

- C. Tertullian (ca. 160-220)

1. Born in N. Africa (Carthage). "Father of Latin Theology" who also defined God as a "Trinity." He also wrote against Marcion.
2. His approach: "What do Athens and Jerusalem have in common?"

*What do Athens and Jerusalem have in common? Away with all attempts to produce a mottled Christianity of Stoic, Platonic, and dialectic composition! We have no need of curiosity reaching beyond Christ Jesus. When we believe, we need nothing further than to believe. Search that you may believe; then stop!*

- D. Origen (ca. 185-254)

1. Student of Clement of Alexandria (N. Africa), wedded Christianity and philosophy, but preserved the kernel of Christianity. Did much work in biblical studies, especially in Greek and Hebrew texts. Also worked to integrate the testaments. *First Principles* an early work of systematic theology. Unfortunately, an unorthodox view of hell (said

all would eventually be saved). Died in 254, three years after his release from torture under Emperor Decius.

2. His approach: All truth is God's truth.

*If we see some admirable work of human art, we are at once eager to investigate the nature, the manner, the end of its production; and the contemplation of the works of God stirs us with an incomparably greater longing to learn the principles, the method, the purpose of creation. This desire, this passion, has without doubt been implanted in us by God. And as the eye seeks light, as our body craves food, so our mind is impressed with the...natural desire to know the truth of God and the causes of what we observe (cited in S, 89).*

### III. Response #2: Episcopacy

- A. A significant and controversial development in the early church: Seen by some as devolution from NT Christianity (Protestants), as others as Spirit-led development (Catholics) (S, 71-72).
- B. The evolution: Gifted and influential pastors became pastors to other pastors. Later called "bishops" and typically there was one bishop per city. Brought strength and unity to an oppressed church.
- C. By the early 2<sup>nd</sup> century, the bishops were seen as central to the church:

*Follow the bishop as Jesus Christ followed the Father....Wherever the bishop appears, there let the people be, just as, wheresoever Christ Jesus is, there is the Catholic Church. It is not permitted either to baptize or hold a love-feast apart from the bishop. But whatever he may approve, that is well-pleasing to God, that everything which you do may be sound and valid. (Ignatius of Antioch near end of his life (35-108 A.D.), cited in N)*

- D. The downside is that the influence and dominance of these bishops was not defined by biblical categories like "elder" or "apostle." Eventually this government would become codified in the Roman Catholic Church as the Roman bishop asserted that he was the greatest among equals.

### IV. Response #3: Canon

- A. Marcion the heretic in around A.D. 140 began to teach that the God of anger of the Old Testament should be rejected in favor of the God of grace of the New Testament. In fact, he reduced even the New Testament inspired books to Luke and 10 letters of Paul. The church responded by formalizing what we now call the "canon."
- B. The term originally referred to "the series of gradations found on measuring rods (hence multiple individual items gathered for one purpose) and, even more important, to the function of such measures as rules or

norms (hence the sense of 'canon' as a standard)" (N, 35). First used by Athanasius of the Bible in 367.

C. The process

1. God gives revelation to his people (e.g., Gen. 2:17).
2. His people keep and pass along this revelation (e.g., Moses and the book of Genesis).
3. Later generations preserve these documents as "Scripture."
4. Jesus taught his apostles, who later recorded his revelation in many of our New Testament documents. Other documents were added to their revelation (Mark, Luke-Acts, Hebrews, Jude, James).
5. These documents were passed around the early church and quickly combined into collections (four gospels, letters of Paul, etc.).
6. Certain documents were quickly believed to be "inspired," while others took longer to be recognized as such. Yet, while "there was no consensus until a much later date; but there also was little debate" (G, 63).

D. Basis for canonicity:

1. Apostolic: A book was accepted as inspired if it was (1) written by an apostle (John), (2) was essentially dictated by an apostle (Mark), or (3) reflected apostolic teaching (Hebrews).
2. Widespread usage: A book was recognized as inspired if it was accepted as such by many cultures, languages, and locations.
3. But these cannot be separated from the Bible being "self-attesting" and "Spirit-attesting":
  - a. Self-Attesting: We get our view of the Bible from the Bible itself. It is "self-attesting." It means that the Bible itself claims to be written by God (2 Tim. 3:16; "Thus says the LORD," in OT).
  - b. Further it is also "Spirit-attesting." The Holy Spirit inside believers testifies that the Bible is the true Word of God. The "self-attesting" words of the Bible resonate with the Holy Spirit in believers.
  - c. Because of the Bible being "self-attesting" and "Spirit-attesting," we can never **prove** it to be the Word of God, only recognize that it is. God must reveal this to people (1 Cor. 2:11, "No one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God").
4. God gave us the canon; the church merely recognized it. The Catholic wrongfully asserts that the church gave us the canon.

- E. Early canons:
1. 190 A.D. - Muratorian Canon included all except 1-2 Peter, James, Hebrews. Others considered helpful but not Scripture.
  2. 200s A.D. - Origen used all the New Testament books but noted "lingering disputes" over Heb, James, 2 Peter, 2-3 John, Rev. (N, 36-37).
  3. 367 A.D. - Athanasius in an Easter letter lists all 27 NT books and says they are to be "included in the Canon" (cited N, 37).

## V. Response #4: The Apostles Creed

- A. The Apostles Creed was from Rome in around 150, and though not written by apostles it was to reflect the teaching of the apostles. It was a summary of sound doctrine and true belief. It was also to be a standard by which to measure heresies of the day. (G, 63)

*I believe in God, the Father Almighty,  
the Maker of heaven and earth,  
and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord:  
Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost,  
born of the virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, dead, and buried;  
He descended into hell. (likely not original)  
The third day He arose again from the dead;  
He ascended into heaven,  
and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty;  
from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.  
I believe in the Holy Ghost;  
the holy catholic church;  
the communion of saints;  
the forgiveness of sins;  
the resurrection of the body;  
and the life everlasting.  
Amen.*

- B. The creeds were used for baptismal professions of faith, teaching aids, worship, and as protection against heresy.

## VI. Sources cited in the outlines

- A. C Cairns, Earle E., Christianity Through the Centuries: A History of the Christian Church (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1996).
- B. G, GII Gonzalez, Justo L, The Story of Christianity: Vols. 1-2 (San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1984).
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# The Creeds and Constantine

## Church History Survey

### Class 4

#### I. Constantine

##### A. The Rise of Constantine

1. The 3<sup>rd</sup> century saw 30 emperors sit on Romans' throne for at least some period of time. Almost all of them ruthlessly killed off their rivals immediately after ascending to the throne.
2. Diocletian (ruled A.D. 284-305)
  - a. He divided the realm into four administrative districts with Constantine's father, Constantius Chlorus, overseeing the western district, which included Britain.
  - b. Diocletian had a Christian wife and Christians in his court, but he inexplicably began a brutal persecution of Christians near the end of his life (A.D. 303).
3. Galerius (ruled A.D. 305-311)
  - a. Galerius followed him and continued the persecutions, but on his death-bed he repented of the brutality, seeing the inhumanity of it and also sensing that popular opinion was turning against his policies. His "edict of toleration" brought an end to the final persecution of the Roman Empire.
  - b. Once Galerius died, there was a vacuum of power and men vied to become emperor.
4. Constantine (ruled A.D. 306-337)
  - a. Constantine defeated his main rival Maxentius en route to capturing Rome.
  - b. Famously, in 312, at "the battle of Milvian Bridge," Constantine had a dream where he heard a voice say, "Conquer by This," and saw a picture of a cross. He had it engraved on all of their shields.

##### B. The Rise of Christianity

1. Because of his victory, Constantine enacted policies that were extremely pro-Christianity. He legalized the religion with the "Edict of Milan" in AD 313. Ministers were protected, persecutions were

halted, Sundays were holidays, and he even donated money for churches to be built. He also saw Christianity as “a way to God and a way to unite the empire” (N, 51).

2. As the Christology debates escalated, he was concerned and said “division in the church was worse than war” (S, 101). Thus, he called for the first council at Nicaea in AD 325 to resolve the issues.
3. Emperors vs. excommunication: The church’s rise to power is especially visible in a scene like Ambrose's denial of the Lord's Supper to emperor Theodosius (ruled A.D. 379-395). For centuries the threat of excommunication would be a powerful tool to force emperors and kings to do the will of the church (and sometimes even of God).

## II. "Who Do You Say that I Am?": Christological Debates

- A. Jesus' question continues to be asked to each one of us:

*He asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?"<sup>14</sup> And they said, "Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets."<sup>15</sup> He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?"<sup>16</sup> Simon Peter replied, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." (Matt. 16:13-16)*

- B. He is Fully God

*Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am."<sup>59</sup> So they picked up stones to throw at him, but Jesus hid himself and went out of the temple. (John 8:58-59)*

- C. He is Fully Man

*"But concerning that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only. (Matt. 24:36)*

- D. He is the Word made Flesh

*And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. (John 1:14)*

- E. It's all right there, crystal-clear, but it took centuries to articulate it.

## III. The Council of Nicaea (AD 325) – The 1<sup>st</sup> Ecumenical Council

- A. Each ecumenical council was instituted to respond to various heresies rampant at the time. Nicaea was the first major clarification on Christ.
- B. It was called in 325 by Constantine to resolve the flurry of Christological debates. Held in Nicaea of Bithynia (Iznik in Turkey).

- C. 230 bishops gathered, including representatives from Rome, bishops from Carthage, Gaul, Persia, even *St. Nicholas of Myra in Lycia (St. Nick!)*

*"In order to understand that event as those present saw it, it is necessary to remember that several of those attending the great assembly had recently been imprisoned, tortured, or exiled, and that some bore on their bodies the physical marks of their faithfulness" (G, 162).*

- D. The bad guys:

1. Subordinationism/Arianism: the Son is greater than man, but is not God (Arius, ca. 250-336)
2. "Monarchianists": God is not three persons, but only appears that way.
3. Adoptionism: Jesus was a person and yet specially *adopted* by the Father. He was special, but not God.

- E. The good guys:

1. Alexander from Alexandria condemned Arius.
2. Athanasius was Alexander's assistant and not a voting delegate, but his contributions to the discussion were critical.
  - a. He was called "the black dwarf" because of his skin color and stature, and was a key voice for orthodoxy. He was 27 at the time of the Council, and while his fame would spread rapidly because of it, he would also face five exiles as emperors came to power who sided with the Arians and other views of Christ. Rightly earned his nickname: *Athanasius contra mundum* ("Athanasius against the world")
  - b. Gonzalez writes, "His monastic discipline, his roots among the people, his fiery spirit, and his profound and unshakable conviction made him invincible" (174).
  - c. Athanasius' *On the Incarnation* became a powerful text:

*If Christ were not truly God, then he could not bestow life upon the repentant and free them from sin and death....It was precisely in order to be able to die that He had taken a body.*

- F. The Key Christology in the Nicene Creed

*We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,  
the only Son of God,  
**eternally begotten**<sup>1</sup> of the Father,  
God from God, Light from Light,  
true God from true God,<sup>2</sup>*

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<sup>1</sup> Against Arius, who said there was a time when the Son was not.

<sup>2</sup> In other words, there is no distinction between the Father and the Son in terms of their divine essence. Both are "true God."

*begotten, not made,<sup>3</sup>  
of one Being with the Father.<sup>4</sup>  
Through him all things were made.  
For us and for our salvation  
he came down from heaven:  
by the power of the Holy Spirit  
he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,  
and was made man...*

#### **IV. The Council of Chalcedon (AD 451) – 4<sup>th</sup> Ecumenical Council**

##### **A. Background of Chalcedon**

1. The politics of it all: east vs. west
  - a. As the power of bishops rose in the empire, theological controversies often meant political intrigue. Thus, the Christology debates were also political debates.
  - b. Cities were pitted against each other, each of them vying for power: Rome and Alexandria (West) vs. Antioch and Constantinople (East).
  - c. This divide eventually became the Roman Catholic Church and the Eastern Orthodox Church in 1054, "the great schism."
2. Heresies still in the air, recently dealt with:
  - a. 2<sup>nd</sup> Ecumenical Council: Council of Constantinople in 381 rejected Apollinarius, who said that Jesus is one person with one nature.
  - b. 3<sup>rd</sup> Ecumenical Council: Council of Ephesus in 431 rejected Nestorius, who said that Jesus is two natures in one person, but he was accused of seeing too much separation of these two natures.
3. The specific heresy that brought about Chalcedon was taught by Eutyches. He was a spiritual leader from a monastery near Constantinople. He basically let the divine nature of Christ wash out the human nature.
4. Emperor Marcian/Pulcheria called the council in response.

##### **B. The Council of Chalcedon**

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<sup>3</sup> "Made" implies he is a creature like other creatures; "begotten" is what the Bible describes of the Son in Psalm 2:7.

<sup>4</sup> Jesus is the "same substance" (homoousios) as the Father, not of a "similar substance" (homoiousios). The western church sided with "same" while the eastern church wanted it to be "similar." Historians sometimes mock that "Christians fought over a diphthong," but as Shelley said, "that diphthong carried an immense meaning" (104).

1. On May 23, 451, 520 bishops met in Chalcedon, near Constantinople.
2. Key figures are Pope Leo I (western church, standing for orthodoxy) and Eutyches (eastern church, arguing for essentially one nature in Jesus).
3. Leo's Christology: Leo saw clearly two natures united in one person, "so that certain things could be attributed to the one and certain things to the other. He also said that one person with two natures was essential for our salvation, for without the Son becoming a man there could be no death for sin since God cannot die. He also addressed the issue of whether we can rightly say, "God died" on the cross. Truthfully, Jesus died, but God did not, his divine nature being eternal even while his human nature was mortal.

C. Excerpt of The Chalcedonian Creed on Christ:

*One and the same Christ, Son, Lord, Only-begotten, made known in two natures [which exist] without confusion, without change, without division, without separation; the difference of the natures having been in no wise taken away by reason of the union, but rather the properties of each being preserved, and [both] concurring into one person (prosopon) and one hypostasis—not parted or divided into two persons (prosopa), but one and the same Son and Only-begotten, the divine Logos, the Lord Jesus Christ.*

# Monasticism and Augustine

## Church History Survey

### Lecture 5

#### I. Monasticism

##### A. Contributing factors

1. Increasing wealth of the church dramatic contrast to early days of persecution and martyrdom.

*“How is one to witness to the Crucified Lord, to the One who had nowhere to lay his head, at a time when many leaders of the church live in costly homes, and when the ultimate witness of martyrdom is no longer possible?” (G, 137).*

2. Philosophical background: the spiritual/intellectual as the ideal in bondage to physical prison of the body/this life (G)

##### B. Desert Fathers

1. Anthony: To Egyptian desert in 270, inheriting a family fortune but challenged by Jesus’ words to rich young ruler to sell all and follow Jesus (G, 140).
2. Simeon Stylites – famously lived on the top of a pillar for 30 yrs!

##### C. Benedict (480-550) and his *Rule*

1. Desert monks eventually grouped together and monasticism born – poverty, celibacy, obedience, asceticism, prayer
2. His rule became widespread model for monasticism

*“Benedict was no scholar, but he had the Roman genius for administration, an earnest belief in monasticism as the ideal Christian life, and a profound knowledge of people” (Williston Walker, cited in S, 121).*

##### 3. Benedict’s Rule

- a. The threefold vows of “poverty, chastity, and obedience.”
- b. Obedience to the rule and the abbot (leader not a tyrant).
- c. Basic schedule
  - 1) Midnight prayers for an hour

- 2) 6am prayers for half-hour, followed by breakfast, work or reading
- 3) 9am Mass (mostly given to reading Psalms and other Scriptures: "As a result, most monks came to know the entire Psalter by heart, as well as other portions of Scripture," G, 241).
- 4) 10am Chapter Meeting
- 5) 11am High mass
- 6) 12pm Dinner and nap
- 7) 2pm Prayers for half-hour, followed by work
- 8) 4pm Prayers for half-hour, followed by work
- 9) 6pm Supper
- 10) 7pm Prayers for half-hour, bed (later in summer than winter)

D. Benefits of and Questions about Monasticism

1. Benefits of Monasticism: Bible translation and scholarship, theology, missions, evils of worldliness
2. Questions about Monasticism: They inspired a justification by works, a sanctification through self-injury, and denied the fundamental goodness of God's creation.

## II. Augustine

A. The Man Augustine: "A Tortuous Path to Faith"<sup>5</sup>

1. Early years
  - a. Born November 13, 354 in Tagaste, North Africa, to father, Patricius, a "minor Roman official" and pagan, and mother, Monica, a fervent Christian. Father has no role in writings, but Monica significant.
  - b. Seeing his gifts, his parents worked to educate him well.
  - c. By his own confession, he was given to immorality. Had a son out of wedlock.
2. Manicheism: Embraced and rejected
  - a. His search for truth led him to Manicheism, teachings of Mani of 3<sup>rd</sup> century. Goal was to rid ourselves of the darkness within, largely connected to the material world. Deliverance was in the spiritual.
  - b. Eventually rejected it because it had no good explanation for evil.

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<sup>5</sup> G, 208.

3. Rome/Milan: Went to Rome as a tutor, but ultimately to Milan, Italy (northern).
4. Neoplatonism: There he discovered Neoplatonism, which “through a combination of study, discipline, and mystical contemplation, it sought to reach the ineffable One, the source of all being” (G, 210). Evil was not an opposing force but the result of turning away from the One.
5. Ambrose: His interest in rhetoric led to hearing Ambrose, a preacher in Milan known as a powerful preacher. He listened, often, and ultimately began to be persuaded by his gospel. His concerns about the Bible’s crudeness were resolved by Ambrose’s allegorical interpretation. Ultimately, it was the realization that could not be a Christian *and* maintain his sinful lifestyle that prevented his repentance.
6. Conversion: Convicted while hearing about the self-denial of the monks. In his garden heard a voice saying, “Take it and read it.” Opened to Romans 13:13-14, “Not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying; but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof.” He was baptized by Ambrose, along with his son Easter, 387.
7. Return to N. Africa: Finally converted and returned to N. Africa to give himself to a life of “devotions, study, and meditation,” maintaining as few possessions as possible to assist this. Also at this time his mother died—though not before experiencing the profound fruit of a lifetime of prayers!
8. Bishop: In 391 (at age 37) visited Hippo and became bishop.
9. Death: At 76, Hippo itself was coming under siege by “the barbarian Vandals,” his death immediately prior to siege. This catastrophe saw the death of most of the city to hunger (S, 131).

#### B. His Writings

1. Against the Manichees: upheld the authority of Scripture, origin of evil, free will, the latter because the Manichees felt everything ordained. Augustine said will must be free and this was his argument for the origin of evil.
2. Against the Donatists: many of these works centered on the sacraments/rites of the church, and how they possessed a power and significance entirely apart from the basic worthiness of the minister. Rejected their view of a “pure church” in this realm, or a pure episcopate. Church at best a mixture until heaven. Against them he developed his just war theory: purpose must be just, waged by “properly instituted authority”, motive of love must remain central. Used centuries later to justify the Inquisition (S, 128).

3. Against Pelagius: Pelagius, the British monk that insisted on an absolutely free will and the ability to will ourselves free of sin. Augustine knew from experience (and Paul) that this was not true and wrote of our bondage to sin, though with nuances. Pre-fall we were free not to sin. Post-fall we were free only to sin. Post-redemption we can sin or not sin. Post-glorification we are free from sin and do not sin.

4. *Confessions*, a spiritual autobiography, unique as a genre of the ancient world, and noteworthy for its psychological and spiritual insight.

*“Thou madest us for Thyself, and our heart is restless, until it repose in Thee” (1.1)*

5. *The City of God*, written in response to those witnessing the fall of Rome and claiming that it was because they had abandoned their pagan gods. He was 56 when Rome was sacked, and the fall resulted in hordes of refugees into his city. Their struggling prompted Augustine’s response, which he developed over a period of sixteen years. Augustine wrote this history of creation as the story of “the city of God...built on love of God,” and “the earthly city...built on love of self.” Human history sees these two pitted against each other and intermingled, but ultimately it is the “city of God” that will prevail.

*“The Heavenly City outshines Rome, beyond comparison. There, instead of victory, is truth; instead of high rank, holiness; instead of peace, felicity; instead of life, eternity.”*

#### C. Augustine’s Influence

1. While a bishop/pastor, Augustine “wrote most of the works that made him the most influential theologian in the entire Latin-speaking church since New Testament times” (N, 212).

2. “Roman Catholicism draws upon Augustine’s doctrine of the church and Protestants upon his views of sin and grace” (S, 125).

3. His work widely quoted by both Catholic and Protestant scholars/theologians and thus he is the “most influential theologian in the entire Western church” (N, 216).

# Buildup to the Reformation

## Church History

### Lecture 6

#### I. The Roman Catholic Church and the Pope

##### A. Introduction

1. Estimates now are that there are approximately 1.2 billion Catholics, about 40% in South America, 24% in Europe, 7% or 85 million in North America. A lot of growth in Africa and South America, largest decline in Europe.
2. Cannot understand the Reformation without understanding the Roman Catholic Church.
3. With such a massive group you have to talk in broad categories. There are large numbers of godly, gospel-believing Catholics. Yet, to evaluate it we must look at its government and doctrine. In the end, they preach a different gospel than we do and define Christianity different than we do. Important to see that.
4. We begin with the Pope, because there is no Roman Catholic Church without the Pope.

B. Term: "Papas" was a common term for high church officials. Used of many bishops, but eventually it became connected with the Roman bishop and by the 11<sup>th</sup> century it would be used only of the Roman bishop.

##### C. Significant developments of the Papacy

1. Rome was a dominant city politically, and the connection of Peter and Paul gave to that city a real prominence in the church as well.
2. The Rise of the Roman Bishop: Strong and influential pastors in cities began to have an implicit leadership position in their respective cities. These called bishops. Rome had several powerful bishops (like Clement). Roman bishops eventually claimed for themselves a "greater among equals" status.

- D. Theological support for the Roman Bishop's Supremacy
1. Bishop Stephen (A.D. 255) used Matthew 16:18 to defend his own supremacy: "You are Peter....On this rock I will build my church." Peter is the rock, and Peter was based in Rome later in his life. Thus, all Roman bishops stand on his shoulders in a unique way.
  2. This argument is a terrible one. It elevates Peter far beyond anything the Bible does (notice after Acts 15 how little Peter is mentioned...at all). Also misses that there is absolutely no sense of a pope, especially a Roman pope, *anywhere* in NT epistles. Bible speaks of apostles, pastors, and deacons—never popes.
  3. Popes like Leo I at Chalcedon and Gregory I (590-604) continued to assert the primacy of the Roman bishop(s).
  4. The doctrine of **Papal Infallibility** was assumed for centuries and became canon law in the 1800s as part of the First Vatican Council:

*Therefore, faithfully adhering to the tradition received from the beginning of the christian faith, to the glory of God our saviour, for the exaltation of the catholic religion and for the salvation of the christian people, with the approval of the sacred council, we teach and define as a divinely revealed dogma that when the Roman pontiff speaks EX CATHEDRA, that is, when, in the exercise of his office as shepherd and teacher of all Christians, in virtue of his supreme apostolic authority, he defines a doctrine concerning faith or morals to be held by the whole church, he possesses, by the divine assistance promised to him in blessed Peter, that infallibility which the divine Redeemer willed his church to enjoy in defining doctrine concerning faith or morals. Therefore, such definitions of the Roman pontiff are of themselves, and not by the consent of the church, irreformable. So then, should anyone, which God forbid, have the temerity to reject this definition of ours: let him be anathema.*

## II. The Roman Catholic Church Leading Up to Reformation

- A. We are called Protestants because we protested against the Roman Catholic Church. What was it like in the centuries leading up to Martin Luther's 95 Theses?
- B. The Crusades: Directed at Islam: Muhammad (b. 570) said at 40 yrs old he was visited by an angel who recited to him the Quran ("quran" means "to recite"). Quickly became a militant group that took Jerusalem, Damascus, and Cairo. The Crusades were the Pope's attempt to squash this growing threat. These were sanctioned bloodshed for the cause of Christ. 1095 was the first, continued for 200 years (about a dozen in total, seven major ones).

*Christianity's highest satisfactions are not guaranteed by possession of special places, and the sword is never God's way to extend Christ's church. (S, 192).*

- C. Politics and Popes: Two tools to keep nations under their thumb. (1) Excommunication – brought civil leaders into line (connection to transubstantiation the theological foundation). (2) “The interdict,” which was excommunication in mass.
- D. The Inquisition: The tyranny of the papacy in 11<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> centuries can be seen in the Inquisition. Early 13<sup>th</sup> century went from concern about heretics to sanctioned torture of the accused (Innocent III). Based in a horrible logic that says any bodily suffering now worth it to avoid spiritual suffering later—Augustine himself said this.
- E. Theology
  - 1. Salvation by works (Catholic) or grace (Protestant)
    - a. Lots of differences between Catholics and Protestants, but one way to think of it is that we both believe, "salvation is by grace through faith," we mean different things by it.
    - b. Catholics believe that grace gives us the power to obey, and this obedience is how we are righteous. God judges at the end as "righteous," and this is how we are saved. Thus, we are MADE righteous and saved.
    - c. Protestants believe that grace means we are DECLARED righteous because of the righteousness of Christ. His righteousness is given to us and credited to our account. Because of that righteousness we are saved.
    - d. This is why conversations with Catholics can be difficult. We say they believe in a salvation by works, but we believe in a salvation by grace. They say we just don't understand them. The truth is, we do, and they believe in a salvation by works.
    - e. There is no true assurance or peace for a Roman Catholic. At best they can only hope they will be saved.
  - 2. Other differences:
    - a. Sacraments, not the Bible: Salvation through sacraments in the church, not faith and repentance as defined in the New Testament. Priests administered the sacraments, not charged to “preach the word” as Protestant pastors were (are).

- b. Indulgences, not the atonement: The guilty go to hell, the few righteous go to heaven, but a great many go to Purgatory. This is where God purifies us by fire of remaining sin so we can be fit for heaven. Indulgences reduced our time in Purgatory—for us or others. A direct rejection of the finished work of Christ, which was "once for all" (Hebrews 10:1-18).
  - c. Mary and the Saints, not Christ our Mediator: Individually we lack sufficient merit to be saved, but we can tap into the excess merit of the saints for assistance. Nothing rivals the merits of Mary. She is seen as sinless (literally) and as an advocate to God on our behalf. Eventually even her mother was declared to be sinless, in order to protect Mary's sinlessness.
  - d. Catholic teachers, not Scripture: The Roman Catholic Church said that the Bible had authority, but that the Bible could not be interpreted individually. We needed the church for the definitive understanding. Therefore the interpretations of the church came to functionally have a greater authority than the Bible.
- F. Signs of Spiritual Life in the Catholic Church in these centuries
- 1. Attempts to reform the Catholic Church: Franciscans, Waldensians, Franciscans in 12<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> centuries all committed to poverty, teaching the poor, even teaching the Bible to an extent.
  - 2. Scholasticism: This was a method of studying theology and all topics that was rooted in reason and centered around gifted teachers and eventually universities. Peter Abelard (1079-1142) and Thomas Aquinas (1224-274) were two giants in this movement. Aquinas rivals only Augustine in terms of his theological ability and influence. These men would combine brilliance and biblical insight with heretical Catholic dogma.

### III. The Buildup to the Reformation

- A. An Early Reformer: John Wyclif (1328-1384)
1. 14<sup>th</sup> century predecessor to the Reformers
  2. Born in northern England, educated at Oxford (doctoral degree in 1372).
  3. Began rethinking the church's historic idea of its own authority as supreme over all others, especially civil authorities. He said civil authorities could hold spiritual authorities accountable for their actions.
  4. His critique of the Catholic Church was connected to the disreputable lives of the clergy and especially the pope. He appealed for the model of the poor apostle that he saw in the Bible.

*"The pope should be the shepherd of the flock and the preacher who brings men to Christ" (S, 226).*

5. As his critiques intensified, Catholic Church's reaction to him intensified. He had protectors in England so remained active still.
6. Eventually he began to argue for the supremacy of the Bible over all teaching of men. Not clear to me how this idea developed in his thinking.
7. His emphasis on Scripture inspired him to translate Latin Bible into the vernacular.

*"Neither the testimony of Augustine nor Jerome, nor any other saint should be accepted except in so far as it was based upon Scripture" (cited S, 229).*

*"The New Testament is of full authority, and open to the understanding of simple men, as to the points that be most needful of salvation....He that keepeth meekness and charity hath the true understanding and perfection of all Holy Writ, [for] Christ did not write His laws on tables, or on skins of animals, but in the hearts of men....The Holy Ghost teaches us the meaning of Scripture as Christ opened its sense to His Apostles" (cited S, 229).*

- B. Factors that Facilitated an International Reformation (not Local)
1. New National Independence: England, Spain, and Germany growing into the modern "nation-state" and ending the feudal organization prevalent for so long. New nation-states did not appreciate Pope tyrants.
  2. New Wealth: Black Death (plague) of 14<sup>th</sup> century also destroyed economic growth, but a century later economic expansion was everywhere. New wealth brought new greed and new resistance to Roman Church taxes.
  3. New Technology: Gutenberg's printing press of mid-1450s brought a dissemination of information not unlike the internet of the 1990s. Facilitated the Reformation ideals being dispersed internationally and abundantly.
  4. New Direction in Scholarship: New passion for "authentic ancient texts," whether Latin, Greek philosophers, or the Bible in Hebrew and Greek. Erasmus of Rotterdam (1469-1536) arose in this setting, whose eclectic Greek New Testament did much to set the stage for the Reformer's passion for *sola Scriptura*.

# Martin Luther

## His Life and Thought

### Church History

#### Lecture 7

#### I. Pre-conversion (1483-1515)

- A. Born in Eisleben in 1483 (remember, Columbus in 1492) to Margaret and Hans Luder (local pronunciation).
- B. Hans Luder was an upwardly mobile miner who lacked an education. He attempted to position Martin in a more significant manner. Law seemed the best alternative.
- C. Luther a skilled lawyer and earned the nickname, "The Philosopher."
- D. While traveling in 1505, however, when lightning struck near him, he cried out, "Help me, St. Anne! I will become a monk!"
- E. A man of conviction always, he was rescued and fulfilled his vow. He became an Augustinian monk to the great disappointment of his father. Carl Trueman surmises that their strained relationship affected Luther till his own death.
- F. His monastic disciplinary are legendary:

*He went to confession as often as possible. But such practices did not allay his fear of damnation. If for sins to be forgiven they had to be confessed, there was always the horrifying possibility that he might forget some sin, and thus lose the reward after which he was so diligently striving. He therefore spent hours listing and examining all his thoughts and actions, and the more he studied them the more sin he found in them. There were times when, at the very moment of leaving the confessional, he realized that there was some sin that he had not confessed. He would then grow anxious and even desperate, for sin was clearly more than conscious actions or thoughts. It was a condition, a way of being, something that went far beyond the individual sins one could confess to a priest. Thus, the very sacrament of penance, which was supposed to bring relief to his sense of sinfulness, actually exacerbated it, leaving him in a state of despair (GII, 17).*

- G. Johann Staupitz his adviser was exasperated and challenged the young monk to spend his time in study of the Scriptures, enabling him to get an advanced degree in theology (already had his doctorate in 1512) and then to serve as instructor at the University of Wittenburg. These studies, especially his work in the Psalms and Romans, would serve as the backdrop of his own breakthrough in his spiritual life.
- H. As a monk, he would have known the Psalms by heart, yet it was lecturing on the Bible that "opened the door to paradise."

## II. His Conversion in His Own Words (1515)

*Meanwhile, I had already during that year [1515], returned to interpret the Psalter anew. I had confidence in the fact that I was more skilful, after I had lectured in the university on St. Paul's epistles to the Romans, to the Galatians, and the one to the Hebrews. I had indeed been captivated with an extraordinary ardor for understanding Paul in the Epistle to the Romans. But up till then it was not the cold blood around my heart, but a single word in Chapter 1, "In it the righteousness of God is revealed," that had stood in my way. For I hated that word "righteousness of God," which, according to the use and custom of all the teachers, I had been taught to understand philosophically regarding the formal or active righteousness, as they call it, with which God is righteous and punishes the unrighteous sinner.*

*Though I lived as a monk without reproach, I felt that I was a sinner before God with an extremely disturbed conscience. I could not believe that he was placated by my satisfaction. I did not love, yes, I hated the righteous God who punishes sinners, and secretly, if not blasphemously, certainly murmuring greatly, I was angry with God, and said, "As if, indeed, it is not enough, that miserable sinners, eternally lost through original sin, are crushed by every kind of calamity by the law of the decalogue, without having God add pain to pain by the gospel and also by the gospel threatening us with his righteousness and wrath!" Thus I raged with a fierce and troubled conscience. Nevertheless, I beat importunately upon Paul at that place, most ardently desiring to know what St. Paul wanted.*

*At last, by the mercy of God, meditating day and night, I gave heed to the context of the words, namely, "In it the righteousness of God is revealed, as it is written, 'He who through faith is righteous shall live.'" There I began to understand that the righteousness of God is that by which the righteous lives by a gift of God, namely by faith. And this is the meaning: the righteousness of God is revealed by the gospel, namely, the passive righteousness with which merciful God justifies us by faith, as it is written, "He who through faith is righteous shall live." Here I felt that I was altogether born again and had entered paradise itself through open gates. There a totally other face of the entire Scripture showed itself to me. Thereupon I ran through the Scripture from memory. I also found in other terms an analogy, as, the work of God, that is what God does in us, the power of God, with which he makes us wise, the strength of God, the salvation of God, the glory of God.*

*And I extolled this sweetest word of mine, "the righteousness of God," with a love as great as the hatred with which I had before hated the word. Thus that place in Paul was for me truly the gate to paradise.<sup>6</sup>*

### III. Luther vs. The Pope (1517)

- A. In response to this new understanding of the gospel, he persuaded his Wittenburg colleagues and even posted a set of 97 theses in Wittenburg, which attacked medieval scholasticism at a number of points, and were "received with little more than a great yawn" (GII, 20).
- B. Pope Leo X changed all that. Desiring to complete the great Basilica of Saint Peter (The Vatican) and to assist Albert of Brandenburg's desire to buy another archbishopric in Germany (he already possessed two), the sale of indulgences was authorized anew.
- C. Enter John Tetzel.
- D. Tetzel's ends of selling indulgences warranted compromises of all sorts, even making claims that purchasing great quantities of them could make one "cleaner than Adam before the Fall," and that, "the cross of the seller of indulgences has as much power as the cross of Christ," or his most quoted saying, "as soon as the coin in the coffer rings, a soul from purgatory heavenward springs!" (GII, 21).
- E. In response to this practice, Luther published his 95 Theses on October 31, 1517. Because of the invention of the printing press a century earlier, copies of the theses in both German and Latin spread throughout the country and beyond.
- F. The conflict with Rome would escalate, leading to his excommunication in 1521, and it would not lessen throughout his life.
- G. He continued his work as a teacher and lectured on various books of the Bible—Psalms, Galatians, Romans, Hebrews.
- H. He published his commentary on Galatians and a brief one on the Psalms.
- I. 1520 would see the publication of three of his most famous works.

### IV. Three Key Writings of 1520

- A. *Address to the Nobility of the German Nation* → The work affirmed a place for secular authority apart the church's authority, a revolutionary thought in a world dominated by "The Holy Roman Empire."

<sup>6</sup> Cited from The Preface to the Complete Edition Of Luther's Latin Works, 1545, available at <http://www.iclnet.org/pub/resources/text/wittenberg/luther/preflat-eng.txt>.

- B. *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church* → A radical re-working of the nature of the church. It said we need no mediator except for Christ (i.e., no Catholic priest), only two sacraments (Lord's Supper and Baptism) and not the seven identified by Roman Catholic Church. Argued from the Scriptures and not canon law.
- C. *The Freedom of the Christian Man* → We are justified exclusively by faith and never is that impacted by our works. We have everything in Christ. Out of the security and safety of this position, we happily do good works to avoid sins and to bless our neighbor. Never are these earning God's favor—which is fully ours in Christ!—but always these are joyful, free works. Representative quotes:
- "A Christian man is a perfectly free lord of all, subject to none. A Christian is a perfectly dutiful servant of all, subject to all."*<sup>7</sup>  
*"Good works do not make a man good, but a good man does good works."*<sup>8</sup>  
*"Our faith in Christ does not free us from works but from false opinions concerning works, that is, from the foolish presumption that justification is acquired by works."*<sup>9</sup>
- D. Carl Truemann says these three writings were the foundations of his thought throughout the Reformation.

## V. The Diet of Worms (April, 1521)

- A. The Pope sent the bull *Exsurge Domine*, saying "a wild boar had entered the Lord's vineyard," and Luther was given 60 days to recant his writings. The opportunity to do that was the Diet of Worms in April, 1521.
- B. Setting: April, 1521 in Worms, Germany. Charles V presided.
- C. The Trial (*Diet*) Itself
1. On April 17<sup>th</sup>, 1521, he was asked to recant his prior writings.
  2. He responded that he needed a day to consider this.
  3. On April 18<sup>th</sup>, he returned and explained that his works were of three kinds: (1) simple piety that no one would reject; (2) works against the Pope and papists that no one would want to reject because of the evils detailed in them; and (3) a third kind of writing

<sup>7</sup> Martin Luther, *Luther's Works: Career of the Reformer 1*, Vol. 31 (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1957), 344.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 361.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 372-373.

where he was willing to acknowledge sinful attitudes and tones, provided that he be shown from Scripture where his errors lie.

4. The imperial court was not satisfied. They wanted a straight answer.
5. Luther responded, famously:

*“Since then your serene majesty and your lordship seeks a simple answer, I will give it in this manner, neither horned nor toothed: Unless I am convinced by the testimony of the Scriptures or by clear reason (for I do not trust either in the pope or in councils alone, since it is well known that they have often erred and contradicted themselves), I am bound by the Scriptures I have quoted and my conscience is captive to the Word of God. I cannot and I will not retract anything, since it is neither safe nor right to go against conscience” (N, 154).*

D. The aftermath

1. Johann Eck, the Catholic opponent of Luther's, responded that allowing for individual interpretation of the church's ideas “will have nothing in Christianity that is certain or decided” (N, 155).
2. Charles V responded that he was descended from great defenders of the faith and could not allow this mistaken friar to upset the foundations of an established church that had endured for a thousand years.
3. Luther upon leaving the diet would fall “victim” to a staged kidnapping for his own protection, and taken to the Castle Wartburg by Frederick the Wise of Saxony.
4. During that six month retreat he produced a German translation of the New Testament (1522). The world would never be the same, a work that would inspire men like William Tyndale and others.
5. Germany received the Bible *and a vernacular language* in one swoop.
6. Then, in his own words, “While I slept or drank Wittenberg beer with my friends Philipp [Melancthon] and [Nicholas] Amsdorf, the Word so greatly weakened the papacy that no prince or emperor ever inflicted such losses upon it” (cited in N, 165).

## VI. His Later Life (1521-1546)

- A. Marriage to Katherine von Bora in 1525 – suddenly marriage and the pastorate were not separated. Pastors were in every way among the people. The priest/monk was no longer the ideal.
- B. A Vernacular Bible – New Testament (1522), entire Bible (1534)
- C. Worship – Not in Latin but German, reformed the liturgy, added hymns ("A Mighty Fortress is our God," etc.)
- D. Training – Short and Long Catechisms, inspired The Augsburg Confession (1530), though barred from the meetings.
- E. Wrote against the Jews as responsible for crucifying Jesus. Seemed connected to their refusal to become Christians.
- F. Also wrote against peasants rising up against their masters, even justifying violence against them. Cost him much loss of reputation.
- G. He died on February 18, 1546.

## VII. Summarizing Martin Luther

- A. A Theology of the Cross

*The crucial element in Luther's idea of God was again a paradox: to understand the power that made heaven and earth, it was necessary to know the powerlessness that hung on a Roman gibbet. To conceive the moral perfection of deity, it was necessary to understand the scandal, the shame, the pain, and the sordidness of a criminal's execution. For Luther, in short, to find God was to find the cross.*

*Mark Noll, 167*

- B. Good summary of Luther's contribution by Bruce Shelley:

*Luther's greatest contribution to history, however, was not political. It was religious. He took four basic Catholic concerns and offered invigorating new answers. To the question, how is a person saved? Luther replied, "not by works but by faith alone." To the question, where does religious authority lie? he answered, "not in the visible institution called the Roman church but in the Word of God found in the Bible." To the question, what is the church? he responded, "the whole community of Christian believers, since all are priests before God." And to the question, what is the essence of Christian living? he replied, "serving God in any useful calling, whether ordained or lay." To this day any classical description of Protestantism must echo these central truths.*

*Bruce Shelley, 257*

# John Calvin

## His Life and Thought

### Church History

### Lecture 8

#### I. John Calvin (July 1509-May 1564) vs. Martin Luther (Nov. 1483-Feb. 1546)

- A. Both are bulldogs when they need to be.
- B. Both are brilliant and ferocious in letting the Bible speak authoritatively.
- C. But Luther is the revolutionary warrior where Calvin is the next generation builder of a Christian theology and even a Christian culture.
- D. Comparing them to US history, we could say that Luther gave us the Declaration of Independence but Calvin gave us a Constitution.

#### II. Birth to Scholar (1509-1533)

- A. 1509 → Born in July in Noyon, France—which means Luther is 26 when Calvin is born, Calvin is 8 years old when Luther nails 95 Theses to Wittenberg door, 12 years old during the Diet of Worms.
- B. Calvin's father was employed by the local cathedral and intended sons for priesthood.
- C. Calvin eventually entered University of Orleans (France) to study law.
- D. 1528 → Received Master of Arts in Noyon, France.
- E. After his father's death he switched to the classics to become a professional scholar.
- F. 1533 → Around this time (24 years old) he was converted—almost no details on this, he never talked about it in any detail in any context. Utter contrast to Luther in how much we know of his inner life and personal life—hardly anything. Looking back about 20 years later in his *Preface to the Psalms* (July, 1557) he gives us a small glimpse:

*"When I was as yet a very little boy, my father had destined me for the study of theology. But afterwards when he considered that the legal profession*

commonly raised those who followed it to wealth this prospect induced him suddenly to change his purpose.

“Thus it came to pass, that I was withdrawn from the study of philosophy, and was put to the study of law. To this pursuit I endeavored faithfully to apply myself in obedience to the will of my father; but God, by the secret guidance of his providence, at length gave a different direction to my course. And first, since I was too obstinately devoted to the superstitions of Popery to be easily extricated from so profound an abyss of mire, God by **a sudden conversion** subdued and brought my mind to a teachable frame, which was more hardened in such matters than might have been expected from one at my early period of life.

“Having thus received some **taste and knowledge of true godliness** I was immediately inflamed with so intense a desire to make progress therein, that although I did not altogether leave off other studies, I yet pursued them with less ardor. I was quite surprised to find that before a year had elapsed, all who had any desire after purer doctrine were continually coming to me to learn, although I myself was as yet but a mere novice and tyro.

- G. Becoming a Reformer → After his friend and fellow-Reformer at the university, Nicolas Cop, gave a strong defense for the Reformation doctrines, Cop was exiled with Calvin to follow shortly thereafter.
- H. They ended up in Basel, Switzerland, a place scholars wanted to become a center of thought, study, and Reformation doctrine.
- I. 1536 → During this stay in Basel he published the first edition of his *Institutes of the Christian Religion*—as was his custom first in Latin with a French translation following.
- J. He took a temporary job in Italy and then returned briefly to France, but it was clear at the time that the Roman Catholic Church would make life there unbearable (and maybe deadly).
- K. So, left for Strassburg, Switzerland.

### III. Leader in Geneva to Death (1536-1564)

- A. En route to Strassburg, he passed through Geneva, Switzerland.
- B. While trying to retreat to a life of scholarship and study, William Farel urged his younger protégé to remain in the fight:

“Being of a disposition somewhat unpolished and bashful, which led me always to love the shade and retirement, I then began to **seek some secluded corner** where I might be withdrawn from the public view; but so far from being able to accomplish the object of my desire, all my retreats were like public schools. In short, whilst my one great object was to live in seclusion without being known, God so led me about through different turnings and changes, that he never permitted me to rest in any place, until, in spite of my natural disposition, he brought me forth to public notice. Leaving my native country, France, I in fact retired into Germany, expressly for the purpose of being able there to enjoy in some obscure corner the repose which I had always desired, and which had been so long denied me.

“Then an individual who now basely apostasized and returned to the Papists, discovered me and made me known to others. Upon this, **Farel**, who burned with an extraordinary zeal to advance the gospel, immediately strained every nerve to detain me. And after having learned that my heart was set upon devoting myself to private studies for which I wished to keep myself free from other pursuits, and finding that he gained nothing by entreaties, he proceeded to utter an imprecation that **God would curse my retirement**, and the tranquility of the studies which I sought, if I should withdraw and refuse to give assistance, when the necessity seems so urgent. By this imprecation I was so stricken with terror, that I desisted from the journey which I had undertaken.”  
*Preface to the Psalms, dated July 1557*

- C. 1536 (27 years old) → He submits to Faurel’s appeals and settles in Geneva. He desired to make the city a place of Christian learning and Christian obedience. His zeal was appreciated for a while, but then he ran into the city magistrates.
- D. 1538-1541 → Forced to leave Geneva because the city magistrates did not want to submit their civil authority to him. Goes to Strassburg and writes several Latin editions of the *Institutes*.
- E. 1541 → Asked to return to Geneva by the city, who give him even more authority. He famously returned and picked up exact verse in Romans where he left off three years prior.
  - 1. Calvin is so connected to Geneva that even the (blasphemous young adult fiction) novel *The Golden Compass* has a “Pope John Calvin” ruling from his Vatican in Geneva.
- F. Leadership in Geneva:
  - 1. Liturgical Reform: He commissioned hundreds of psalms and hymns; perhaps most of all established expository preaching as the hallmark of Reformed churches.
  - 2. Pastoral Reform: The church was governed by “the Consistory,” which included pastors and twelve lay elders, the latter outnumbering the former. Also included deacons in caring for the city’s church.
  - 3. Calvin’s routine: His days were spent in lecturing on the Bible (now his commentaries), giving numerous sermons per week, writing voluminous letters, training pastors to return to France as martyrs, and providing the theological balance for Luther’s zeal.
- G. 1553 → The unfortunate affair of Michael Servetus
  - 1. Servetus was a heretic renowned in many cities, already condemned by the Catholic Church—but he escaped.
  - 2. He came to Geneva, but was condemned there as well for being a heretic. He was not just anti-Catholic, but he was anti-Christian. Before this he had already exchanged 30 letters giving full

expression to his views. He is denounced in the *Institutes* as well for his views on the Trinity (I, xiii:22).

3. City council condemned him after receiving advice from neighboring cities. He was burned at the stake over a stack of his books—killing being the common way to deal with “heretics” (which could include Anabaptists and sometimes Catholics who also returned the favor).
  4. For many Calvin is, “the guy who burned Servetus at the stake.” This is true, but we also need to judge him in light of the times. A pastor doing this today would be guilty of a far greater evil than a pastor in the 1500s, though the basic problem is the same: *We appeal to heretics and we use church discipline. We do not kill them.*
- H. 1559 → Created the Genevan Academy run by Theodore Beza. Institution to train pastors to return to France for evangelism and to spread Reformation teaching. Many would be martyred as they did this.
- I. Latter part of his life (last decade or so) saw him enjoy sustained approval in the city, his role as reformer and civil leader being firmly established.
- J. He died in 1564 tormented by countless bodily ailments treated in the horrible methods of the day. Also likely died prematurely from a life lived according to his motto, “Eat little, sleep little, study much.”

#### IV. Two Largest Contributions

- A. His Commentaries<sup>10</sup>
1. *Institutes* seen as the interpretive guide for the commentaries—the summary opinion on all matters. Commentaries themselves can feel contradictory to his *Institutes* because he lets complexities remain.
  2. His commentaries possess some of the most remarkable scholarship of any era.
    - a. Because of the sheer number – all except the OT histories (Judges to Esther) and Revelation
    - b. Because of their profound restraint. Goal was to let the text speak—as simply as it does, as complex as it does.
    - c. Because they maintained a healthy balance between theological interpretation and practical application.
  3. On 1 Corinthians 12:12 (paraphrase: *just as a body is one with many members, so is the body of Christ*) he writes:

<sup>10</sup> Available for free at <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/calvin/commentaries.i.html> and for purchase at [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com), etc.

*It is usual, however, for any society of men, or congregation, to be called a body, as one city constitutes a body, and so, in like manner, one senate, and one people. Monenius Agrippa, too, in ancient times, when desirous to conciliate the Roman people, when at variance with the senate, made use of an apologue, not very unlike the doctrine of Paul here. Among Christians, however, the case is very different; for they do not constitute a mere political body, but are the spiritual and mystical body of Christ, as Paul himself afterwards adds. (1 Corinthians 12:27.) The meaning therefore is — “Though the members of the body are various, and have different functions, they are, nevertheless, linked together in such a manner that they coalesce in one. We, accordingly, who are members of Christ, although we are endowed with various gifts, ought, notwithstanding, to have an eye to that connection which we have in Christ.”*

## B. *The Institutes of the Christian Religion*<sup>11</sup>

1. Purpose of the first edition (1536, Basel, Switzerland): To show to the world that those recently branded as heretics and martyred in France were far from it. They were biblical Christians with a faith rooted in traditional Christianity. That’s why the organization around the Apostles Creed and the Ten Commandments.
2. He published first the scholar’s tongue of Latin, but he followed these editions with ones in French, the language of the people he longed to reach.
  - a. Latin editions: 1536 (Basel), 1539 & 1543 (Strassburg), 1550 & 1559 (Geneva)
  - b. French editions (all written from Geneva): 1541, 1545, 1551, 1553, 1554, 1560
3. General Thoughts
  - a. Each edition grew in size (first was 200 pages, last was over a thousand) and each was influenced by the commentaries he wrote in the meantime.
  - b. The final edition had four books:
    - 1) The Knowledge of God the Creator (To know ourselves, we must know God; Scripture; Trinity; Creation)
    - 2) The Knowledge of God the Redeemer in Christ (fall of man, loss of free will in man, moral law of the OT, person and work of Christ)
    - 3) Obtaining Grace in Christ—How we obtain his grace and the benefits it brings us (faith, regeneration, obedience, justification by faith, prayer and sanctification, election, final resurrection)

<sup>11</sup> Available at <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/calvin/institutes.i.html> and for purchase at [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com), etc.

- 4) The Church (True vs. false church, lies/errors within Catholicism, church discipline, sacraments—true and false, civil government)
- c. Written as companion and foundation to his commentaries:

*Moreover, it has been my purpose in this labor to prepare and instruct candidates in sacred theology for the reading of the divine Word, in order that they may be able both to have easy access to it and to advance in it without stumbling.  
Preface to the final edition of the Institutes*

4. Key Contributions—though all of it worthy of reference

- a. Knowledge begins with God—not us, not reason—and therefore true knowledge begins with God’s revelation.

*Again, it is certain that man never achieves a clear knowledge of himself unless he has first looked upon God’s face, and then descends from contemplating him to scrutinize himself (I, i:2).*

- b. The Word of God is our source for all true knowledge about all topics—yet the Word only speaks if the Spirit confirms it.

*It is therefore clear that God has provided the assistance of the Word for the sake of all those to whom he has been pleased to give useful instruction....Hence, we must strive onward by this straight path if we seriously aspire to the pure contemplation of God. We must come, I say, to the Word, where God is truly and vividly described to us from his works, while these very works [of Creation] are appraised not by our depraved judgment but by the rule of eternal truth. If we turn aside from the Word, as I have just now said, though we may strive with strenuous haste, yet, since we have got off the track, we shall never reach the goal (I, vi:3)  
We ought to remember what I said a bit ago: credibility of doctrine is not established until we are persuaded beyond doubt that God is its Author. Thus, the highest proof of Scripture derives in general from the fact that God in person speaks in it. (I, vii:4)  
But I reply: the testimony of the Spirit is more excellent than all reason. For as God alone is a fit witness of himself in his Word, so also the Word will not find acceptance in men’s hearts before it is sealed by the inward testimony of the Spirit. The same Spirit, therefore, who has spoken through the mouths of the prophets must penetrate into our hearts to persuade us that they faithfully proclaimed what had been divinely commanded. (I, vii:4)*

- c. The Sovereignty of God (Providence he connects with God as Creator and so is found in Book 1, chapter 16; Election is more thorny and thus placed in Book 3, chapters 21-24,

sandwiched between prayer in chapter 20 and final resurrection in chapter 25)

*And truly God claims, and would have us grant him, omnipotence — not the empty, idle, and almost unconscious sort that the Sophists imagine, but a watchful, effective, active sort, engaged in ceaseless activity. Not, indeed, an omnipotence that is only a general principle of confused motion, as if he were to command a river to flow through its once-appointed channels, but one that is directed toward individual and particular motions. (I, xvi:3)*

5. Where we disagree with Calvin:
  - a. Paedobaptism: Calvin says they should be baptized, we say that New Testament baptism is only for believers who have professed faith (Matt. 28:16-20).
  - b. Holy Spirit: Calvin's generation equated the miraculous and spectacular with the Catholic Church and a threat to the Bible's authority. We say, no, it is the Bible that commands and explains spiritual gifts, so how could gifts be a threat to the Bible's authority? (1 Cor. 12-14).
  - c. Lord's Supper: Our differences here are subtle. Calvin's position is not opposed to the Bible (as we would say his position on baptism and the gifts is), just not ours. Calvin stood against Catholic transubstantiation and Luther's consubstantiation and said we, through the Spirit by faith, eat Christ's body that is now in heaven. We side with Zwingli that it is a communion, participation, and remembrance, but no one is eating Christ's actual body through the Supper.

# Tyndale, Anglicanism, Trent, Westminster

## Church History Survey Lecture 9

### I. England: William Tyndale

#### A. Biographical Information

1. 1494-1546
2. Younger than Luther (1483-1546), older than Calvin (1509-1564)
3. Educated at Oxford, taking the normal track of immersion in secular humanities and only then taking the biblical-theological courses (a pattern he greatly condemned, for obvious reasons).
4. Powerful combination of immersion in language and literature, and then adding a passion for Greek and Hebrew.
5. Seized by the biblical languages, especially Greek, and this with Erasmus' Greek New Testament.

#### B. His Life's Ambition—a vernacular Bible translated from the original languages (Wyclif's was from the Latin)

1. Purposed to translate the Greek New Testament into English, which at the time was a capital crime, and the crime for which he was martyred.
2. The stranglehold of the Roman Catholic Church was so strong at this point that any Bible other than the Vulgate—the Catholic Latin Bible—was seen as heretical and condemnable.
3. Part of the power of Tyndale's translation is that he was thoroughly schooled in the elitest rhetorical training of his day (a famous example is the exercise of translating 'Your letter has delighted me very much' into 150 English equivalents) while at Oxford, and yet his passionate pursuit was to make the Bible sing in English to the ploughboy.

*"John Foxe tells us that one day an exasperated Catholic scholar at dinner with Tyndale said, 'We were better be without God's law than the pope's.' In response Tyndale spoke his famous words, 'I defy the Pope and all his laws....If God spare my life ere many years, I will cause a boy*

*that driveth the plow, shall know more of the Scripture than thou dost”*  
(Piper, “Always Singing”).

4. Thomas More was his nemesis throughout life, writing against Tyndale (hundreds of thousands of words), pursuing Tyndale, eventually paying off someone to betray Tyndale, capturing him and then having him killed.
5. In the mystery and providence of God, fortunes would change quickly after his death, and the King James Version of 1611, followed closely after his death, being almost entirely the work of Tyndale, who by his death had translated the NT (1534), the Pentateuch, most of the history books, and most of the prophets. John Piper makes the comment that 80% of the ESV is the words of Tyndale (coming via the KJV—ASV—RSV).

*“The question arises: How did William Tyndale accomplish this historic achievement? We can answer this in Tyndale’s case by remembering two ways that a pastor must die in the ministry. We must die to the notion that we do not have to think hard or work hard to achieve spiritual goals. And we must die to the notion that our thinking and our working is decisive in achieving spiritual goals”* (John Piper, “Always Singing One Note”).

6. Excerpts from Tyndale’s Bible

*“Let there be light”* (Genesis 1:3).

*“Am I my brother’s keeper?”* (Genesis 4:9)

*“The Lord bless thee and keep thee. The Lord make his face to shine upon thee and be merciful unto thee. The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace”* (Numbers 6:24-26).

*“In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God”* (John 1:1).

- C. His prologue to the book of Romans from his 1534 New Testament

*“A Prologue to the Epistle of Paul to the Romans is thirty-six pages long, as long as Paul’s epistle. Like the rest of the prologues to the Epistles, it is almost, but not quite, pure Luther, translated from the latter’s complete Bible published in Wittenberg some weeks before.... Yet the prologues to the Epistles (after Romans they are usually just over a page long) are not quite pure Luther. They are subtly reconstructed. Without any signal in the text or margin, five paragraphs from the end of the Romans prologue, from a sentence beginning ‘the sum and whole cause of the writings of this epistle is...’ Tyndale leaves Luther and writes on his own”* (Daniell, *William Tyndale: A Biography*, 327).

- D. Piper’s excellent biography:

[http://www.desiringgod.org/ResourceLibrary/Biographies/1840 Always Singing One NoteA Vernacular Bible/](http://www.desiringgod.org/ResourceLibrary/Biographies/1840_Always_Singing_One_NoteA_Vernacular_Bible/)

## II. England: Anglicanism (The Church of England)

- A. The social, political, and religious background: *he likes her, she likes him, but he's married to someone else*
  - 1. King Henry VIII of England married to Catherine of Aragon (also Charles V's aunt!), which is a problem since Anne Boleyn is pregnant and Henry's heir.
  - 2. Henry wanted an official divorce so heir could be legitimate.
  - 3. Pope unsympathetic to Henry's plight because of pope's allegiance to Charles V in France.
  - 4. Henry takes his bat and his ball and goes home, and severs England from the Church of Rome.
  - 5. Thomas Cranmer willing to ratify the divorce (why?) and marriage to Anne Boleyn.
  - 6. Meanwhile, seeds of Reformation sown in the English Parliament and they prohibited appeals to Rome and then taxes to be paid to Rome.
  - 7. Final action was the *Act of Supremacy*.
- B. The Act of Supremacy (1534)
  - 1. The King is now head of the church in England: "...the King our Sovereign Lord, his heirs and successors, kings of this realm, shall be taken, accepted, and reputed the only Supreme Head on earth of the Church of England..."
  - 2. Established the Anglican Church: "...the Church of England, called *Anglicana Ecclesia*..." ("English Church," a phrase first used by the Roman Catholic Church to designate the church within England, [www.newadvent.org](http://www.newadvent.org)).
  - 3. King now entrusted with the authority, honor, and responsibilities connected with this charge.

## III. The Council of Trent (1545-47, 1551-52, 1562-63)

- A. One of the longest lasting effects of the Catholic "Counter-Reformation" is the Council of Trent, a theological response to the rising tide of Protestantism.
- B. Popes generally opposed to councils because of their authority and power. Under Paul III in 1540s, the battle lines between Catholic and Protestant were such that a council in response to the Reformation was required. Convened in Trent with 31 members at first, growing to 213 later. Discussions were held over many years on a number of topics. The

dominant doctrinal statement of Rome until “Vatican Council” in 1868, though Trent remains a reliable source of Catholic belief.<sup>12</sup>

C. Doctrine of Trent

1. Self-proclaimed purpose was “the extirpation of heresies and the reform of morals” (1546).
2. Scripture (1546): Affirmed OT and NT, but also Apocrypha (books of Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Maccabees, etc.); interpretation could only be in accordance with “the holy Mother Church” (i.e., Catholic priests, popes)
3. Original Sin (1546): paedobaptism forgives the guilt and even power of original sin.
4. Justification (1547)

*If anyone says that man can be justified before God by his own works, whether done by his own natural powers or through the teaching of the law, without divine grace through Jesus Christ, let him be anathema. (Canon 1)*

*If anyone says that the sinner is justified by faith alone, meaning that nothing else is required to co-operate in order to obtain the grace of justification, and that it is not in any way necessary that he be prepared and disposed by the action of his own will, let him be anathema. (Canon 9)*

*If anyone says that men are justified either by the sole imputation of the justice of Christ or by the sole remission of sins, to the exclusion of the grace and the charity which is poured forth in the hearts by the Holy Ghost, and remains in them, or also that the grace by which we are justified is only the good will of God, let him be anathema. (Canon 11)*

*If anyone says that after the reception of the grace of justification the guilt is so remitted and the debt of eternal punishment so blotted out to every repentant sinner, that no debt of temporal punishment remains to be discharged either in this world or in purgatory before the gates of heaven can be opened, let him be anathema. (Canon 30)*

5. Sacraments (1547 et al)

*Transubstantiation: “By the consecration of the bread and wine a change is brought about of the whole substance of the bread into the substance of the body of Christ our Lord, and of the whole substance of the wine into the substance of His blood. This change the holy Catholic Church properly and appropriately calls transubstantiation.” (chp 4)*

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<sup>12</sup> Most of this is from Gonzalez, Vol. 2, 119-121

*“And inasmuch as in this divine sacrifice which is celebrated in the mass is contained and immolated in an unbloody manner the same Christ who once offered Himself in a bloody manner on the altar of the cross, the holy council teaches that this is truly propitiatory and has this effect, that if we, contrite and penitent, with sincere heart and upright faith, with fear and reverence, draw nigh to God, we obtain mercy and find grace in seasonable aid.... The fruits of that blood sacrifice, it is well understood, are received most abundantly through this unbloody one, so far is the latter from derogating in any way from the former.” (chp 2)*

#### **IV. The Westminster Assembly (1642-1649)**

- A. The Five Solas of the Reformation (“Reformation Essentials” by Michael Horton<sup>13</sup>) that can be said to unite Lutherans, Calvinists, and the Reformed of all varieties:
1. *Sola Scriptura* (Scripture Alone): Our Only Foundation
  2. *Solus Christus* (Christ Alone): Our Only Mediator
  3. *Sola Gratia* (Grace Alone): Our Only Method
  4. *Sola Fide* (Faith Alone): Our Only Means
  5. *Soli Deo Gloria* (For the Glory of God Alone): Our Only Ambition
- B. Background
1. 100 years after Trent, almost 150 years after 95 Theses
  2. During reign of Elizabeth I.
  3. Birthed in a passion for the Bible, such that Miles Coverdale produced the first complete English Bible in 1535 (built atop Tyndale’s work extensively)
  4. The Geneva Bible with its well-developed translation, marginal notes, book introductions, the staple until KJV (1611).
  5. Second to this was John Foxe’s, *The Book of Martyrs*, which crystallized the view that Puritans were a pilgrim people in a strange land.
  6. James I (who was first James VI of Scotland) became king in 1603. Adopted none of Puritan desires with the exception of allowing for a new translation of the Bible, *The King James Version* of 1611.
  7. Charles I began his reign in 1625, who forcefully re-established state’s rule by bishops. Puritans fled in mass to America, numbering into the tens of thousands.

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<sup>13</sup> [http://www.monergism.com/updates/reformation\\_essentials\\_by\\_mich.php](http://www.monergism.com/updates/reformation_essentials_by_mich.php)

8. Emotions ran hot and eventually England faced a civil war between Puritans under Oliver Cromwell (1599-1658) and supporters of Charles.
9. During his lifetime that the Westminster Assembly was held in 1642-1649.
10. These 151 Puritan clergy and laymen from various parts of the English speaking world established the shape of Presbyterianism that remains to this day in much of the Reformed community.
11. Assembly produced the Westminster Confession of Faith, the Westminster Longer Catechism, and the Westminster Shorter Catechism
  - a. The Confession of Faith is a fairly complete doctrinal statement, though it does not speak to specifics about some things such as church government. Its statements about a church's worship are also famously under-stated.
  - b. The Longer Catechism was originally designed to be the version used for pastors, the Shorter for typical congregant, but over time Shorter Catechism used by all.

C. The Westminster Confession of Faith

1. Emphatically roots all truth in the Bible:

*The whole counsel of God, concerning all things necessary for His own glory, man's salvation, faith and life, is either expressly set down in Scripture, or by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from Scripture: unto which nothing at any time is to be added, whether by new revelations of the Spirit, or traditions of men. Nevertheless, we acknowledge the inward illumination of the Spirit of God to be necessary for the saving understanding of such things as are revealed in the word; and that there are some circumstances concerning the worship of God, and government of the Church, common to human actions and societies, which are to be ordered by the light of nature, and Christian prudence, according to the general rules of the word, which are always to be observed. (WCF 1:6)*

2. Famously affirms what is now called the "Regulative Principle":

*The light of nature showeth that there is a God, who hath lordship and sovereignty over all; is good, and doth good unto all; and is therefore to be feared, loved, praised, called upon, trusted in, and served, with all the heart, and with all the soul, and with all the might. But the acceptable way of worshipping the true God is instituted by Himself, and so limited by His own revealed will, that He may not be worshipped according to the imaginations and devices of men, or the suggestions of Satan, under any visible representation, or any other way not prescribed in the Holy Scripture. (WCF 21:1)*

D. The Westminster Shorter Catechism (there is a Larger Catechism, but it never achieved the same fame and widespread usage)

1. Produced by the Westminster Assembly in 1648.
2. Opens with a statement of our overall purpose (see below) and a look at God as Creator and Lord. Explains the law, sacraments, and the Lord's Prayer.
3. T.F. Torrance calls it, "one of the greatest and most remarkable documents in the whole history of the Christian theology.... Its power arises from the logical progression of its thought and the brief but extraordinarily precise answers to the questions." (*New Dictionary of Theology*, 1988, 131).
4. Contents

*Q1. What is the chief end of man?*

*A1. Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever.*

*Q2. What rule hath God given to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy him?*

*A2. The Word of God, which is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, is the only rule to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy him.*

*Q3. What do the Scriptures principally teach?*

*A3. The Scriptures principally teach, what man is to believe concerning God, and what duty God requires of man*

*--The Westminster Shorter Catechism, Edinburgh, July, 1648.*

# The Age of Enlightenment

## Church History Survey

### Lecture 10

#### I. The Enlightenment wasn't so Enlightened

- A. The Enlightenment was an era from mid-1600's to late-1700's that elevated the place of reason and minimized the place of faith.
- B. *Reason is using your brain to figure stuff out, but the question is which comes first, reason or the Bible?*
- C. The Biblical Paradigm: Bible first, Reason second (for the Christian faith is always matched to reason)
  1. Sin destroys knowledge - Romans 1:18-25, but note especially,  
*<sup>19</sup> For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. <sup>20</sup> For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. <sup>21</sup> **For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. <sup>22</sup> Claiming to be wise, they became fools, <sup>23</sup> and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.** (Romans 1:19-23)*
  2. The Spirit provides knowledge - 1 Cor. 2:6-16, but note especially,  
***Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God. 13 And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual. (1 Cor. 2:12-13)***
- D. Therefore...
  1. Truth begins with God, so we start with the Scriptures.
  2. Where God speaks, that defines truth on the issue.
  3. Truth is built on foundational truths (presuppositions) that often go assumed and not discussed.

4. Not a question of choosing between science and the Bible, it is submitting our science to the Bible.

## II. Examples of Reason Without Faith

- A. Rene Descartes (1596-1650) – *cogito, ergo sum* – “I think, therefore I am.” All knowledge begins with knowledge of the self, then proceeds outward to God and all things.
- B. John Locke (1632-1705) wrote an *Essay on Human Understanding* (1690), which held that knowledge derived from experience. Christianity to him was the most reasonable religion, but as often happened in this era, the attempts by some to use reason to establish Christianity (and not the Bible) led to the dismantling of the Christian religion by many of their followers.
- C. David Hume (1711-1776): He said our knowledge is much more limited than we can expect and thus, true knowledge extremely limited. Even cause and effect is questionable. How do we know that this effect came from that cause?
- D. Immanuel Kant (1724-1804): *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781) discarded “innate ideas” but held that mind has structures that are undeniable (time, space, causality, existence, substance, etc.). Pushed knowledge away from objective reality to the subjective know-er. Pure reason can’t find God, but practical reason with moral categories can.

*“Kant’s significance for religion and theology, however, goes far beyond his rather uninspired attempts to ground religion on morality. His philosophical work dealt a deathblow to the easy rationalism of his predecessors, and to the notion that it is possible to speak in purely rational and objective terms of matters such as the existence of God and the future life. After him theologians dealing with the relationship between faith and reason had to take his work into account” (GII, 195).*

## III. Other Enlightenment Minds: <sup>14</sup>

- A. Friedrich Schleiermacher, *Speeches on Religion to the Cultured among Its Despisers* (1799) – religion is the subjective sense of dependence and not matters of doctrine.
- B. G.W.F. Hegel (1770-1831) – thesis, antithesis, synthesis; “what is rational exists, and what exists is rational.” The universal reason—the Spirit—“is the whole of reality.”
- C. F.C. Bauer (1792-1860) – Higher criticism - saw internal conflicts between Peter’s Judaizers (synthesis) and Paul’s Hellenistic gospel (antithesis), that

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Gonzalez, Volume 2, and Noll.

resolved into John's gospel (synthesis). Long and extensive biblical arguments.

- D. Soren Kierkegaard (1813-1855) – “leap of faith”; “although reason is unable to penetrate ultimate truth, faith can....Christianity is a matter of faith; of faith in the God whose revelation comes to us in the Scriptures and in Jesus Christ” (GII, 289).
- E. Karl Marx, *Communist Manifesto* (1848)
- F. Adolf von Harnack (1851-1930): part of the progression of Christian liberalism and espoused “the fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of man, and the infinite value of the human soul” (N, 262).
- G. Charles Darwin's *The Origin of Species* (1859) – Bombshell with continuing effects. Yet, see *Darwin's Black Box* and numerous Christian responses.

#### IV. Blaise Pascal: Reason With Faith

- A. 1623-1662
- B. French intellectual known as a mathematician, scientist, but also a philosopher and a theologian. Converted some time late in life and devoted much energy to arguing for the Christian faith.
- C. His *Pensees* ("Thoughts") contain many of his reflections on this, 233 below being the famous "Pascal's Wager":

*168. Diversion. -- As men are not able to fight against death, misery, ignorance, they have taken it into their heads, in order to be happy, not to think of them at all.*

*233. Let us say: 'Either God is or he is not.' But to which view shall we be inclined? Reason cannot decide this question. Infinite chaos separates us. At the far end of this infinite distance a coin is being spun which will come down heads or tails. How will you wager? Reason cannot make you choose either, reason cannot prove either wrong. . . Yes, but you must wager. There is no choice, you are already committed. Which will you choose then? . . . Let us weigh up the gain and the loss involved in calling heads that God exists. Let us assess the two cases: if you win you win everything, if you lose you lose nothing. Do not hesitate then; wager that he does exist. . . . And thus, since you are obliged to play, you must be renouncing reason if you hoard your life rather than risk it for an infinite gain, just as likely to occur as a loss amounting to nothing... Thus our argument carries infinite weight, when the stakes are finite in a game where there are even chances of winning and losing and an infinite prize to be won.*

*289. Proof. -- 1. The Christian religion, by its establishment, having established itself so strongly, so gently, whilst so contrary to nature. 2. The sanctity, the dignity, and the humility of a Christian soul. 3. The*

*miracles of Holy Scripture. 4. Jesus Christ in particular. 5. The apostles in particular. 6. Moses and the prophets in particular. 7. The Jewish people. 8. The prophecies. 9. Perpetuity; no religion has perpetuity. 10. The doctrine which gives a reason for everything. 11. The sanctity of this law. 12. By the course of the world.*

## V. Reason and Politics: The French Revolution (1789)

- A. A distinctly anti-religious revolution.
- B. A time of great financial hardship—wars, economy devastated by weather-destroying crops, and luxurious nobility. These left the poor desperate, angry, and resentful of nobility.
- C. Louis XVI of France (1754-1793) in power at the time and was trying to retain hold on power while seeds of revolution being sown everywhere.
- D. Eventually the populists formed a government against the clergy and against the nobility.
- E. Escalated until Events progressed and took the Bastille where King's prisoners kept (July 14, 1789).
- F. Church "reformed" under this Declaration so that Reason became the new god, even to the extent that "temples of Reason" were built, a new calendar was created (built around nature), a new ten-day week: "All this would have been merely ridiculous, were it not for the suffering and bloodshed it cost" (Gonzalez Vol. 2, 266).
  - 1. 2-5,000 priests died on the guillotine (not for being priests but so-called counter-revolutionaries).
  - 2. Protestant church ill-equipped to handle the challenge; Roman church did better.
  - 3. King XVI and his queen (Marie Antoinette) were executed in 1793. Their execution shocked the world and yet were only two of tens of thousands.

*"In the Revolution a sinister ancient religion which had been dormant suddenly re-erupted with elemental violence. This revenant [i.e., ghost of dead person returned] was the fanatical worship of collective human power. The Terror was only the first of the mass-crimes that have been committed [since the Revolution] in this evil religion's name" (Noll, 251, citing Arnold Toynbee).*

- G. Ironically, Napoleon Bonaparte would become "master of France" (1799) and then "Emperor" (1804)—note, all the while George Washington refusing such a title, even resisting any changes to the presidency because of his own ability and integrity.

- H. French “Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen” (July 14, 1789)
1. Speaks of “the natural, unalienable, and sacred rights of man” but never mentions a Creator or God.
  2. The stranglehold of the Catholic Church and the Monarchy, each benefitting by their cooperation.
  3. Massive hierarchical society and oppressive structures eventually produce revolutions.
  4. 5 of the points from the “Declaration” in France:
    - a. Men are born and remain free and equal in rights. Social distinctions may be founded only upon the general good.
    - b. The aim of all political association is the preservation of the natural and imprescriptible rights of man. These rights are liberty, property, security, and resistance to oppression.
    - c. The principle of all sovereignty resides essentially in the nation. No body nor individual may exercise any authority which does not proceed directly from the nation.
    - d. Liberty consists in the freedom to do everything which injures no one else; hence the exercise of the natural rights of each man has no limits except those which assure to the other members of the society the enjoyment of the same rights. These limits can only be determined by law.
    - e. Law can only prohibit such actions as are hurtful to society. Nothing may be prevented which is not forbidden by law, and no one may be forced to do anything not provided for by law.
  5. Motto: “Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity”
    - a. Liberty: “individual freedoms in the political and economic arenas”
    - b. Equality: Middle class rights, not bound by birth or class, but ability and performance
    - c. Fraternity: nationalism and working class solidarity massive
- I. Summary thoughts
1. It was a dramatic revolution with no religious foundation (unlike American):
  2. Note the contrast of the French Revolution when compared to the American as seen in two critical documents:

*We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are **endowed by their Creator** with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.*

*Declaration of Independence (1776)*

**Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof;** or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

*The First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution (1789)*

# Revival and Missions

## Church History Survey

### Lecture 11

#### I. John Wesley (1703-1791)

- A. One of nineteen children with a mother passionate in her love for God and desire to disciple her children. Yet, John unconverted until he was a pastor.
- B. Brilliant, Oxford educated, Anglican clergyman, just under 5' tall.
- C. Converted by a reading of the preface to Luther's commentary on the book of Romans:

*"He said, 'My brother, I must first ask you one or two questions. Have you the witness within yourself? Does the Spirit of God bear witness with your spirit, that you are a child of God?' I was surprised, and knew not what to answer. He observed it, and asked, 'Do you know Jesus Christ?' I paused, and said, 'I know he is the Saviour of the world.' 'True,' replied he; 'but do you know he has saved you?' I answered, 'I hope he has died to save me.' He only added, 'Do you know yourself?' I said, 'I do'....But I fear they were vain words."*  
 --The journal of John Wesley, February 7, 1736, GII, 210

And then a short time later, May 24, 1738:

*"In the evening I went very unwillingly to a society [meeting] in Aldersgate Street, where one was reading Luther's preface to the Epistle of the Romans. About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone, for my salvation; and an assurance was given me that He had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death" (from his journals).*

- D. As an evangelist he would prove tireless and almost unbelievable.
  - 1. Would ride on horseback 250,000 miles and preach 40,000 sermons—leaving a horse for his carriage only in his seventies, giving up preaching only in his mid-eighties.
  - 2. His work was based in the English speaking world of the UK and the US.
- E. Innovator—open-air preaching because of the influence of George Whitefield. Aggressive in social activism even before he was a Christian.

- F. Organizer—not separatist from Anglican Church, but sought to introduce new “methods” for spiritual life.
  - 1. Societies/Classes: weekly to read Scripture, pray, discuss religious matters, collect funds.
  - 2. Several societies were a “circuit” governed by a “superintendent.”
  - 3. Annual Conference of those governing circuits.
  - 4. Still never intended to break from anyone’s church—naïve and obviously a new denomination would start. “Methodists” were their name given derogatively, but they then adopted that—only after Wesley’s lifetime, however.
- G. Brother Charles Wesley wrote nearly 10,000 hymns.

**II. ARMINIANISM VS. CALVINISM**

- A. Wesley was an Arminian: the world’s most famous?
  - 1. Jacobus Arminius lived 1560-1609, so the generation after Calvin.
  - 2. Can see the two by comparing them with Calvinism's T-U-L-I-P

CALVINISM (TULIP)	ARMINIANISM
<p>T → Total depravity. Adam’s fall made our wills bound to sin.</p> <p>No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day. (John 6:44)</p> <p>As it is written: "None is righteous, no, not one; <sup>11</sup> no one understands; no one seeks for God. <sup>12</sup> All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one." (Rom. 3:10-12)</p>	<p>Man has free will to choose Christ or not. God gives us a "prevenient grace" that provides enough ability to choose or reject him.</p> <p><i>"God doesn't want robots. He wants a real relationship."</i></p> <p>My response: Adam and Eve had free will, but this was lost with the fall. The Bible nowhere mentions "free will." This is man's response to his own sense of Christianity, not the Bible's teaching.</p>
<p>U → Unconditional election. God elects us from before foundation of the earth and this is why we are saved.</p> <p>Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, <sup>4</sup> even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love <sup>5</sup> he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, <sup>6</sup> to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. (Eph. 1:3-6)</p>	<p>God sees our faith and <i>then</i> chooses us.</p> <p><i>"God looks down the tunnel of time and sees who will choose him. These are the ones elect in Christ."</i></p> <p>My response: God doesn't choose us because we choose him. We choose him because he chose us!</p>

<p>L → Limited atonement. Jesus died for his sheep, for his people.</p> <p>I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, <sup>15</sup> just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. (John 10:14-15)</p> <p>God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. (Rom. 5:8)</p>	<p>Christ died for everyone, only those who respond receive the benefits.</p> <p><i>"If Christ didn't die for everyone, then we have no gospel to preach."</i></p> <p>My response: we preach the same gospel they preached in the book of Acts. They preached that, "Christ died for sinners and if you believe in him you will be saved!" They don't preach, "Christ died for you!"</p> <p>This is the most controversial of these points, but it is consistent with the NT teaching on the death of Christ being "for us," "for his people," "for the church," etc.</p>
<p>I → Irresistible grace or Effectual calling. The Holy Spirit calls without fail.</p> <p>For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. <sup>30</sup> And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified. (Rom. 8:29-30)</p>	<p>We can always resist the Spirit of God.</p> <p>Because free will is one of the highest priorities for the Arminian, they will always allow for us to resist God.</p> <p>My response: It simply isn't biblical.</p>
<p>P → Perseverance of the Saints. What God began he will complete</p> <p>And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ. (Phil. 1:6)</p> <p>My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. <sup>28</sup> I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. (John 10:27-28)</p>	<p>We can always fall away.</p> <p>Again, free will.</p> <p>Again, it simply isn't biblical.</p>
<p>Adherents:          Augustine, John Calvin, Martin Luther          John Owen, Jonathan Edwards          19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> cent: Herman Bavinck, Geerhardus Vos,          Charles Hodge -- B.B. Warfield          Presbyterians and Reformed Churches          John Piper, RC Sproul          Reformed Baptists like Charles Spurgeon, Al Mohler,          Mark Dever, D.A. Carson, Wayne Grudem          Sovereign Grace Church &amp; Churches</p>	<p>Adherents:          Roman Catholics          John Wesley          Methodists          (Most) Baptists          Charles Finney          Billy Graham          Most Baptist seminaries and churches (like Southeastern and Colonial Baptist)</p>

### III. Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758)

- A. His context: An American religious cacophony—Catholics, Puritans, Baptists, Presbyterians. Religious freedom becoming increasing hallmark on the nation, but not immediately. The landscape: New England Puritanism, Catholic Maryland, Rhode Island Baptists, Georgia Methodists, etc. In other words, America.
- B. His Life:
1. Born to Timothy Edwards, a rigorous and godly man.
  2. Brilliant.
  3. Educated at Yale (because it was not as liberal as Harvard, liberal at this time meaning it was Arminian and not Calvinist!). Would return to Yale as a kind of mentor for students (at 20, but was not happy or successful at this—the boys wanted to be disruptive and unruly, he wanted to study and pray).
  4. Some early pastorates and then settled in Northampton, Massachusetts.
  5. His greatest sermons and successes were there.
  6. His most famous sermon: *Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God*
  7. When the winds of revival began to blow under the mighty preaching of George Whitefield, Edwards was enthralled and added his own stamp to this work of God.
  8. Great Awakening greatly furthered by his preaching—profound Calvinism and heavy emphasis on personal response of faith.
  9. Eventually removed as pastor because of the way that he handled a “scandal” in the church—only the final result of long-standing rift.
  10. The scandal involved the ungodliness of teenagers in the church. He called them out in public at church. Officially, they removed him because of his views on the Lord’s Supper. It had everything to do with his handling of the teenagers.
  11. Many of those involved in his removal would later deeply regret their part in it. They would eventually realize it was motivated by pettiness, selfishness, and anger.
  12. Yet, God’s providence all over this: He became a missionary to the Indians and wrote all of his most famous books while there.
  13. Eventually he was called to Princeton University as President but died of smallpox vaccination after only a few months there. Some still refer to him as "President Edwards" in writings.

C. His writings

1. Sermons

- a. None more famous than *Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God*—captures in unforgettable language the fires of hell and how close we are to it if we are apart from Christ:

*O sinner! Consider the fearful danger you are in: it is a great furnace of wrath, a wide and bottomless pit, full of the fire of wrath, that you are held over in the hand of that God, whose wrath is provoked and incensed as much against you, as against many of the damned in hell. You hang by a slender thread, with the flames of divine wrath flashing about it, and ready every moment to singe it, and burn it asunder, and you have no interest in any Mediator, and nothing to lay hold of save yourself, nothing to keep off the flames of wrath, nothing of your own, nothing that you ever have done, nothing that you can do, to induce God to spare you one moment....Therefore, let every one that is out of Christ, now awake and fly from the wrath to come.*

- b. NOTE: *Don't read his sermons if you struggle with whether or not you're a Christian. Read Spurgeon—again and again and again. Read Edwards if you don't care whether you're a Christian or not. Or read Edwards to inspire your appreciation of the doctrine of hell.*
- c. Worked to capture some sense of the glory and beauty of Christ in his affections and his sermons.

2. Books—a sampling:

- a. *Resolutions* – A famous set of personal resolutions that he wrote as a young man (19 years old or so). Example, "Resolved, to live with all my might, while I do live."
- b. *The Freedom of the Will* — Explores the idea that we *always* do what we want most, so in that sense our will is not free at all (we WON'T do what we don't want most), but we can also say that we are never coerced by God to do what we don't want to do. God works by changing what we want MOST.
- c. *The End for Which God Created the World* — Vividly shows that God is ALWAYS working for his own glory at each stage of redemption history. He creates for his own glory. He punishes sin for his own glory. He saves through Christ for his own glory. He delivers his people throughout their lives for his own glory.
- d. *Charity and its Fruits* — A challenging look at 1 Corinthians 13, which in older English translations uses "charity" and not "love." Phil Sasser continues to recommend this highly.
- e. *Biography of David Brainerd* — Brainerd is for Edwards a perfect prototype for how to live the Christian life: He was

obsessed over the state of his own soul, completely sold out for Christ, always in poor health because of his extreme efforts for Christ, and died as a missionary to American Indians. This biography was massively successful as a book and is still in print.

3. Pamphlets on all manner of topics.

D. Summary thoughts

1. Perhaps one of the great examples of an active, independent, brilliant mind submitted to the Word of God.
2. Rigorous Calvinist, high view of the Bible, grasped that our faith must be a heart matter and not simply a mental one, saw that faith must be the all-consuming obsession of the soul.
3. Yet, lacked some basic sense of people, did poorly at building relational bridges as a pastor, at times his good intentions ruined his theology (e.g., good to say that faith must be all-consuming, but hurtful and damaging to say that we must go through some agonizing darkness of conviction before we are truly converted).

# The Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries

## Church History Survey

### Lecture 12

#### I. Introduction

- A. No longer talking about church history, but *our history*.
- B. There is a direct connection between what we are talking about here and the day in which we live—the people you meet, the college you attend, the global picture around us.

#### II. Threats to Christianity

- A. Evolution
  1. Charles Darwin (1809-1882) and his 1859 *The Origin of Species*.
  2. Darwin is credited with popularizing the theory of evolution
  3. Finally a rationale to deny a Creator and establish an entirely godless humanity.
  4. Despite the many gaps in his theory and the overall weakness of the case, it spread like an epidemic.
  5. The Christian responses to Darwin have been many, but *Darwin's Black Box* is one of the recent and famous ones.
  6. Genesis 1:1, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."
  7. He is the ultimate source of all life.
  8. Amazing to read about the source of the stuff that blew up in the Big Bang. They accuse us of being ridiculous!
  9. The scientific method simply doesn't allow for the kind of absolute confidence they have in this theory. In fact, when it speaks to the origin of all life, it steps into the area *religion* but doesn't acknowledge it.
  10. When you want to find out what really happened, ask someone who was actually there and what is his testimony: "In the beginning was

the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made” (John 1:1-3).

B. Two World Wars

1. World War I and II brought the destruction of two generations of men in Europe.
2. The fact that Europe was often the birth of the philosophies that swept through the West meant that a new despair impacted art, literature, music, philosophy at this time.
3. Must see the connection between Darwin in 1859 and World War II's systematic killing of races and entire cultures.
4. When you take God out of your life, there are bitter and profound consequences.
5. As Paul told the Galatians, “Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap” (6:7).

C. Higher Criticism and a Rejection of the Inspiration of the Bible

1. Adopts a “Scientific” approach to the Bible.
2. This view rejects God *and* man as the co-authors of Scripture. Sees only man as the author.
3. Higher critics acknowledge that the Bible is impressive, just not inspired by God.
4. The basis for virtually all versions of liberal Christianity, summarized by H. Richard Niebuhr:

*“A God without wrath brought men without sin into a kingdom without judgment through the ministration of a Christ without a Cross” (Shelley, 395).*

5. Evolution will be the most common attack on Christianity you will experience, but the 2<sup>nd</sup> most common is an attack on God as the Author of Scripture.
6. No matter where you go to college, please beware of ANY class you take on the Bible.
7. It is a common experience to go to a school like Campbell and expect a conservative approach and be shocked. Go to a school like UNC please DO NOT take any course on the Bible.
8. Yet, “All Scripture is breathed out by God” (2 Tim. 3:16).
9. It possesses a unity and coherence and accuracy that show this on every page.

10. Attacks by archaeology have been numerous, but each time there is a chance to disprove the history of the Bible, archaeology proves that the Bible is reliable history.

D. Islam

1. Muslims believe in one God (Allah), the prophet Mohammed, and the Quran. After this agreement, they also believe in the "Five Pillars" of prayer, fasting (most famously in Ramadan), giving, prayer, and a pilgrimage to Mecca.
2. Two main denominations are Sunni and Shiah. Primary difference relates to who should have received the mantle of leadership from Mohammed in 632 A.D. Vast majority are now Sunnis, but Iran and Iraq are two powerful Shiah states.
3. There is an ongoing struggle between traditionalists who want the Quran to impact law at every level and moderns who want greater religious freedom. This is often a generational divide.
4. Christians can be threatened, imprisoned, killed for evangelizing in such places.
5. Muslims who convert can face excommunication from their family, even death.
6. The gospel has not penetrated into these places as it has everywhere else on the planet.
7. The "Islamic State" is a real and deadly threat in the Middle East, though since it has no nation of its own, it is a question how widespread its influence will become.

### III. Fundamental-ists and Evangelicals: Responding to Twentieth-Century Threats

- A. As late 19<sup>th</sup> century became the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, many Christians saw the need to argue again for the essentials of the faith.
- B. The Five Fundamentals

*The vast majority of evangelicals, however, stayed with the mainline and tried to purify their churches from within. By the early 1910s, they formed a massive, cross-denominational movement for reform based on a common acclamation of the "fundamental," or cardinal, doctrines of Christianity.*

*The most popular list was "The Five Point Deliverance" of the Northern Presbyterians. The 1910 Presbyterian General Assembly ruled that all who wanted to be ordained within their ranks had to affirm the Westminster Confession and subscribe to five fundamental doctrines: 1) the inspiration and inerrancy of the Bible, 2) the virgin birth of Christ, 3)*

*the substitutionary atonement of Christ, 4) the bodily resurrection of Christ, and 5) the historicity of the biblical miracles.*<sup>15</sup>

- C. They wrote a series of articles called *The Fundamentals* in 1910-1915.
- D. These were conservatives taking a stand for issues like the authority and inspiration of Scripture, the doctrine of sin, salvation by faith, etc.
- E. A later group in 1920s included men like J. Gresham Machen who saw the softening of institutions like Princeton Seminary. Started Westminster Seminary to take a stand for Christian truth.
- F. The next generation of conservative scholars produced what we now call Evangelicals.
- G. This post-WWII generation included men like Billy Graham, Carl Henry, institutions like Fuller Seminary (CA), Trinity Seminary (D.A. Carson, Jeff Purswell), etc.
- H. This trend continues with modern attempts like Together for the Gospel, The Gospel Coalition, Alliance for Confessing Evangelicals
- I. The goal always the same – To restate the fundamentals of the faith for a modern audience. Every generation must do the same in the language of its day. New threats require new statements.
- J. What we inherit from these scholars: A high view of Scripture, a clear view of the Gospel, a deep regard for the study of theology, a commitment to ongoing rigorous scholarship, and more.

#### **IV. The Three "Waves of the Spirit" in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century**

- A. The Pentecostal movement has been identified by C. Peter Wagner as having three "waves." Others argue with his terminology, but it is useful.
- B. 1<sup>st</sup> Wave of the Spirit: Azusa Street Revival and Pentecostalism
  - 1. Cairns identifies the beginning as perhaps being the opening of Charles Parham's Bethel Bible College in Topeka, Kansas (Oct 1900). On Jan 1, 1901, students studying "the work of the Holy Spirit in Acts, and one student, Agnes Ozman, asked others to lay hands on her so that she would receive the Holy Spirit. She spoke in tongues, and later other students also spoke in tongues" (*Christianity Through the Centuries*, 1996, p. 490).
  - 2. The Azusa Street Revival in Los Angeles, CA, in 1906.
    - a. William J. Seymour (1870-1922) began series of meetings in an old building on Azusa Street.
    - b. Massive numbers of conversions, but the revival was especially known for the many who spoke in tongues as a

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.christianitytoday.com/ch/2006/issue92/3.12a.html> on April 28, 2015.

result of their encounter with God. Speaking in tongues spread throughout the world through these Christians. New denominations were born.

- c. Anticipated by the Scotsman Edward Irving (1792-1834), much zeal for revival at the turn of the century, revival already in Wales (1903-4).
- d. This was the birth of a Pentecostalism that spread to Catholic, Lutheran, Presbyterian, Episcopal churches.

### 3. Pentecostal Denominations

- a. Enormously popular outside of the US, especially Africa, South America, though millions in the US.
- b. Church of God in Christ had 6.5 million members as of 1994.
- c. Assemblies of God began 1914 in Arkansas and as of 1990 includes about 24 million members.
- d. Aimee Semple McPherson (1890-1944) founded the Foursquare Church, which emphasized "a foursquare gospel of salvation, Christ's second coming, healing, and the baptism of the Holy Spirit with tongues as evidence" (Cairns, 490).

### C. 2<sup>nd</sup> Wave is the **Charismatic Movement** when the charismatic hit mainline denominations in the 1960s

1. Dennis Bennett (1917-), a charismatic Episcopal clergyman who wrote *The Holy Spirit and Me*.
2. Larry Christensen (1928-) of Lutheran circles, among Catholics a student-faculty retreat in 1967 at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh.
3. Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship (eventually grew to 300,000 members, including Phil Sasser!).
4. Word of Faith – Kenneth Hagin and Kenneth Copeland

### D. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Wave of the Spirit

1. It is associated with John Wimber of the Vineyard Churches that preached the presence and power of the Holy Spirit (esp. with gifts of healing, even raising the dead) not necessarily connected with the baptism of the Holy Spirit.
2. John Wimber taught a class, MC510, "The Miraculous and Church Growth," where in each class they would lecture and then have a time of healing and "signs and wonders."
3. Emphasis on the gifts as evidence of the kingdom of God, the age to come breaking into the present age, "the already and the not yet."

4. Speaking in tongues de-emphasized. The baptism of the Spirit is something you experience at conversion (1 Cor. 12:13) and is to be followed by additional fillings of the Spirit (Eph. 5:18).
  5. Description of Third Wave by C. Peter Wagner:
 

*“The Third Wave is a new moving of the Holy Spirit among evangelicals who for one reason or another have chosen not to identify with either the Pentecostals or the Charismatics. Its roots go back a little further but I see it as mainly a movement beginning in the 1980's and gathering momentum through the closing years of the 20th century. I see the Third Wave as distinct from, but at the same time, very similar to the first and second waves. They have to be similar because it is the same Spirit of God who is doing the work. The major variation comes in the understanding of the meaning of "Baptism in the Holy Spirit" and the role of tongues in authenticating this. I myself, for example, would rather not have people call me a Charismatic, I do not consider myself a Charismatic, I am simply an Evangelical Congregationalist who is open to the Holy Spirit working through me and my church in any way He chooses.”*

*The Third Wave of the Holy Spirit (1988), 18-19.*
  6. Adherents today often go by the name of *Continuationists*.
    - a. That is, the gifts of the Spirit in the NT *continue* until Jesus ("the perfect") returns (Acts 2:17-21; Eph. 4:11-13; etc.).
    - b. This is in contrast to *Cessationists* who would say that some gifts of the Spirit have *ceased*.
- E. Our critics: “Adherents to these movements all tend to be more experiential than theological in their approach to faith and life” (Cairns, 494). And this is one of the nice criticisms.
- F. Though all three moves of God have connections to the Sovereign Grace Churches, the Charismatics and Third Wavers are most directly tied to us.

## V. Final Thoughts on Church History

*And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me."<sup>19</sup> Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,<sup>20</sup> teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age." (Matt. 28:18-20)*

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