

CARIBBEAN SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

Educating and training ministerial leadership



HIS222 Civilizations Past and Present I

Mission Statement

CST is committed to connect, serve, and train for Pentecostal ministry, leadership, and missions throughout the world.

Professor

Course Description

This course traces the rise of both western and eastern civilizations from their preliterate beginnings. Consideration is given to the development of civilization in China, India, the Graeco-Roman world, Eastern Europe, and Russia. The student becomes acquainted with the rise of Islam and the beginnings of civilization in Africa, Europe, and the Americas. This foundation leads to an understanding of states and political systems. As the history of world civilization is developed, a number of global issues are considered. These include migration, religion and government, location and identity, and technological exchange. This course concludes with a review of the scientific revolution and the Enlightenment.

Resources

You will use the textbook *Civilizations Past & Present, Combined Volume, Twelfth Edition*, by Robert R. Edgar et al, along with the *Study Guide Civilization Past & Present I (Third Edition)*. The Holy Bible is also required. Bible quotations in the Study Guide are from the New International Version (NIV 1978 edition) unless otherwise noted. Most assignments require you to access the Global University Library Web site. Instructions for accessing the Internet are provided in the Undergraduate Writing Assignment Guidelines (UWAG) in the Student Packet. You will fulfill the requirements for this three-credit course by completing a collateral writing assignment (CWA). This is based on the textbook, *Civilizations Past & Present, Combined Volume, Twelfth Edition*, by Robert R. Edgar et al. The instructions for completing the CWA are in the Student Packet.

Objectives

The key (important) concepts presented in the lesson are derived from the objectives. You will find the objectives listed in the lesson outline on the opening pages, and as sub-topic headings as you read through the lesson. Study each objective carefully as you begin each lesson. First, identify the key concepts presented in the objective and second, identify what each objective is asking you to do with the key concepts. For example, in the objective, *What role did the church play in stabilizing western European society after the fall of the Roman Empire?* The key concept is the church played a formative role by providing a unified cultural and religious foundation for the early European society (page 264). In this objective you are asked to deduce the influence of the church—or arrive at a conclusion concerning the effect the Church had in Western Europe at this time.

Course Procedures

Classroom lectures, group discussion, audio-visual presentations, handouts, and case studies constitute some of the various methods that will be utilized in order to attain the course objectives.

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Introduction

From the beginning of time, humans have desired to pass information to the next generation. Before the development of writing skills, information may have been memorized by a family member or a tribal member as the “keeper of the group’s secrets and understanding of things.” As written language was refined, information was entrusted to monuments, tablets, or other materials. Nations kept annals or chronicles so leaders might benefit from the past, and individuals often kept diaries as reminders of events and points of wisdom for living.

However, such works are generally not considered history, although the materials are historical in nature. History (in contrast to mere listing of facts and information) has come to mean some interpretation of collections of factual and philosophical information—bringing meaning to or making sense out of information. The historian “makes sense” of the large amount of data in human experience. The beginning of the writing, or real history in which fact and truth and meaning is brought together in a readable form, is often attributed to Herodotus (about 450 BC).

Facts can only be useful if someone can assemble them in such a way that there appears to be connection and meaning in the various events. To accomplish this, a historian must decide which facts to include in the narrative and what truths to assemble. This produces philosophies of history. No history is free of such perspective or point-of-view. This text, like all history books, is written from a perspective. The authors have decided what is most important in their understanding of history and have assembled the facts to demonstrate that position. Since all good historians agree on the basic facts of history, only the emphasis of facts is slightly different.

Over the years historians have developed numerous philosophies of history. Such theories of historical writing include:

- Military and political events and leaders
- The great men and women theory
- Scientific and technological improvements (i.e., agriculture, industry)
- Economic theory of history (Marx)
- Darwinian theory applied to history (survival of fittest nations)
- The centrality of moral and ethical values—religion (as taught by Toynbee)

Any interpretation is useful, but not necessarily the final answer. The student needs to ask, Why was this fact included and not another? The facts may be correct, but is this interpretation of their meaning the final answer?