

CARIBBEAN SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

Educating and training ministerial leadership



HIS232 Church History 1

Mission Statement

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

Professor

Course Description

This course is an introductory study of the history of Christianity from its birth to the beginnings of the Reformation. The course provides an introduction to history as a discipline and emphasizes the importance of history in relation to the Christian faith. It deals with the apostolic church, the early church fathers, the ecumenical councils, the emergence of medieval theology and church practice, as well as the beginning of the Renaissance in Europe. The course content includes a consideration of the contribution of major Christian theologians, the relationship of the church and state, and the rise of monasticism and missions, tracing the geographical expansion of Christianity. The twelve lessons are structured so as to enable you to apply insights learned from the past to contemporary situations.

Resources

You will use *The Church: From Pentecost to the Reformation*, an Independent Study Textbook by Donald D. Smeeton as both the textbook and study guide for the course. You will also use *The Holy Bible* is the only other requirement. Bible quotations are from the New International Version (NIV) unless otherwise noted. Some assignments require you to access the Global University Library Web site or other academic resources. Instructions for accessing the Library Web site are provided in the Undergraduate Writing Assignment Guidelines (UWAG) in the Student Packet. If you are enrolled in this course for three credits, the third credit will be earned by completing a collateral reading assignment (CRA). This assignment is based on the sections “Ancient Church History 5 BC–AD 590” and “Medieval Church History 590–1517” from the textbook *Christianity Through the Centuries* by Earle E. Cairns. The instructions for completing this assignment are in the Student Packet.

Objectives

The key concepts presented in the lesson are derived from the objectives. 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, Assess the positive and negative ways that colonialism affected the spread of Christianity, the key concept is colonialism affected Christianity. In this objective you are asked to assess positive and negative ways—or show the good and bad effects colonialism had on the spread of Christianity.

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Course Introduction

History tells a story. It tells about the who, what, where, when, and why of the past. Church history is the story of Christianity.

In this course we discuss the terms history and church, the Christian perspective of history, and the task of the historian. We begin the story with the birth of the church on the Day of Pentecost and follow its development up to the Protestant Reformation in 1517. From the early days of persecution from without to the late medieval time of the Inquisition, the church courageously spread the gospel. With the rising and declining of the power of the papacy, the church repeatedly sought reform and spiritual renewal. Despite setbacks from doctrinal conflicts and moral corruption among clergymen, the church thrived.

You will enjoy your study of church history even more if you try to imagine yourself living in each circumstance. Consider the factors that led to an elaborate hierarchical sacramental system. Survey the church's relationship to the state, its encounters with heresies, its ecumenical councils, and its evangelistic outreach. Weigh carefully the contributions of key leaders, the growth of monasticism and scholasticism, and the impact of the Renaissance and humanism. As you relive the past, you will find yourself better prepared to live out church history today.