

# **THE 503: INTRODUCTION TO CHURCH HISTORY**

**ANGLICAN SCHOOL OF MINISTRY-LITTLE ROCK  
SPRING 2012**

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## **Course Description, Rationale and Objectives**

This course will survey the history of Christianity from the ancient world to the present day. We will explore the history, beliefs, institutions and expansion of the Church, particularly as manifested through its major three traditions: Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant. THE 503 will trace both continuity and transformation through the centuries and revisit certain themes resonating throughout Church history. These themes include:

- \*rise of Christianity in the Roman Empire: from persecution to establishment
- \*development of Christian doctrine through canons, creeds and councils
- \*Christian perspectives on authority: within the Church and in relation to the State
- \*interaction of Christianity and various western and non-western civilizations
- \*interplay of Church and influential political, social, cultural, intellectual forces
- \*diverse expressions of Christian spirituality, community and popular culture
- \*history of reform and renewal movements within various strands of Christianity
- \*Christianity, modernity, postmodernity: accommodations and tensions

Course objectives include:

- \*Students will become familiar with important factual events and themes in Church History.
- \*Students will be able to explore and assess various frameworks for understanding Church History.
- \*Students will gain experience in assessing primary source documents.
- \*Students will cultivate communication skills in class discussions, presentations, and written assignments.
- \*Students will become familiar with research skills and databases relevant to the the study of Church History.

**Required Course Textbooks:**

- Noll, Mark. *Turning Points: Decisive Moments in the History of Christianity*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2000.
- Pelikan, Jaroslav. *The Vindication of Tradition*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986.
- Bettenson, Henry & Chris Maunder, *Documents of the Christian Church*, Fourth Edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.
- Wilken, Robert Louis. *The Spirit of Early Christian Thought*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003.
- Sanneh, Lamin. *Disciples of All Nations: Pillars of World Christianity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.
- Bede. *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*.

**Seminar Presentation Possibilities:**

<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf201.pdf>

Eusebius, *Life of Constantine*, Book III  
1288-1357 in the CCEL pdf

<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf102.pdf>

Augustine, *The City of God*, Book XIX  
907-958 in the CCEL pdf

[http://www.ccel.org/ccel/gregory/life\\_rule.pdf](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/gregory/life_rule.pdf)

Gregory the Great, *The Life of Our Most Holy Father S. Benedict*  
3-56 in the CCEL pdf

<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/calvin/institutes.pdf>

John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Book IV, Ch. 6-9  
880-937 in the CCEL pdf

<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/foxe/martyrs/files/fox116.htm>

*Foxe's Book of Martyrs*, Ch. XVI

<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/guyon/auto.pdf>

*Autobiography of Madame Guyon*, Book Two  
106-189 in the CCEL pdf

John Henry Newman, "Tract 90" from *Tracts for the Times*

<http://www.newmanreader.org/works/viamedia/volume2/tract90/tract90-1.html>

<http://www.newmanreader.org/works/viamedia/volume2/tract90/tract90-2.html>

Alexander Schmemmann, Selections on Orthodoxy  
(To be sent by Instructor)

## **Course Requirements**

- 15% Weekly Interaction and Reflection
- 20% Mentoring Worksheets
- 20% Seminar Presentations
- 10% Wilken Book Response
- 10% Sanneh Book Response
- 10% Bede Book Response
- 15% Open Book Final Exam

### **WEEKLY INTERACTION AND REFLECTION (15%)**

This course will be interactive, which makes your participation crucial. You will be expected to have the materials read and be ready to discuss. You will prepare a one-page paper reflecting on the Noll textbook reading. These will be emailed to me eight hours in advance and will provide some of the basis for our discussions together.

### **MENTORING WORKSHEETS (20%)**

You will complete 6 mentor-student worksheets, provided by the instructor, with the assistance of your mentor. 6 hours of meeting time with your mentor will be required. All worksheets will be due at the end of the semester.

### **SEMINAR PRESENTATIONS (20%)**

You will lead two discussions each during our Web Ex sessions on the readings listed above. You will be expected to provide some context on the author and the work while also having several questions and topics ready for discussion. Prepare to lead a 30-45 minute discussion.

### **BOOK RESPONSES (10% Each, 30% Total)**

You will write three-to-four page book response essays on the Wilken, Sanneh and Bede books. You will receive handouts during the course of the semester that will offer further assignment details, suggestions and writing tips.

### **OPEN BOOK FINAL EXAM (15%)**

You will complete an open book final exam that is essay in format. You will receive a list of questions from which to choose.

NOTE: Please keep and refer to this syllabus throughout the semester. I reserve the right to make any changes and will notify you promptly of those changes, if necessary.

# COURSE CALENDAR

**Week of Jan. 16**      Technology Check, Introductions

## **SESSION ONE: GETTING STARTED (Week of Jan. 23)**

*Hour One:*              Course Introduction; Discussion of Noll, *Turning Points*,  
“Introduction”

*Hour Two:*              Presentation by Instructor on Pelikan, *The Vindication of Tradition*

## **SESSION TWO: EARLY CHURCH FOUNDATIONS (Week of Jan. 30)**

*Hour One:*              Discussion of Noll, *Turning Points*, Ch. 1 and  
*Documents of the Christian Church* (5-7, 7-17, 28-31, 66-67)

*Hour Two:*              Seminar Presentation: Eusebius, *Life of Constantine*

## **SESSION THREE: CONCILIAR CHRISTIANITY AND ROME (Week of Feb 6)**

*Hour One:*              Discussion of Noll, *Turning Points*, Ch. 2-3 and  
*Documents of the Christian Church* (18-21, 26-28, 72-75)

*Hour Two:*              Seminar Presentation: Augustine, *City of God*

## **SESSION FOUR: THE SPIRIT OF EARLY CHRISTIAN THOUGHT (Week of Feb 13)**

*Both Hours:*              Discussion of Robert Louis Wilken’s *The Spirit of Early Christian  
Thought*

BOOK REVIEW DUE

## **SESSION FIVE: MONASTICISM AND THE MIDDLE AGES (Week of Feb 20)**

*Hour One:*              Discussion of Noll, *Turning Points*, Ch. 4-5 and  
*Documents of the Christian Church* (84-85, 121-122, 122-135)

*Hour Two:*              Seminar Presentation: Gregory the Great, *The Life of Our Most  
Holy Father S. Benedict*

**SESSION SIX: CHURCH HISTORY IN PRACTICE: THE VENERABLE BEDE**  
**(Week of Feb 27)**

*Both Hours:* Discussion of the Venerable Bede, *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*

BOOK REVIEW DUE

**SESSION SEVEN: DIVISIONS BETWEEN EAST AND WEST (Week of March 5)**

*Hour One:* Discussion of Noll, *Turning Points*, Ch. 6 and *Documents of the Christian Church* (35-36, 93-102, 413, 415-417)

*Hour Two:* Seminar Presentation: Alexander Schmemmann, Selections on Orthodoxy

**SESSION EIGHT: LUTHER, CALVIN AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF PROTESTANTISM (Week of March 12)**

*Hour One:* Discussion of Noll, *Turning Points*, Ch. 7 and *Documents of the Christian Church* (194-226)

*Hour Two:* Seminar Presentation: John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Book IV, Ch. 6-9

**SESSION NINE: THE ENGLISH REFORMATION AND THE CATHOLIC COUNTER-REFORMATION (Week of March 19)**

*Hour One:* Discussion of Noll, *Turning Points*, Ch. 8-9 and *Documents of the Christian Church* (242-243, 251-255, 264-270)

*Hour Two:* Seminar Presentation: *Foxe's Book of Martyrs*, Ch. XVI

**SESSION TEN: GLOBAL EXPANSION AND A REVOLUTIONARY AGE (Week of March 26)**

*Hour One:* Discussion of Noll, *Turning Points*, Ch. 10-11 and *Documents of the Christian Church* (327-339)

*Hour Two:* Seminar Presentation: *Autobiography of Madame Guyon*, Book Two

**\*\*\*Week of April 2: Holy Week—NO CLASS**

**SESSION ELEVEN: PILLARS OF WORLD CHRISTIANITY (Week of April 9)**

*Both Hours:* Discussion of the Lamin Sanneh, *Disciples of All Nations: Pillars of World Christianity*

BOOK REVIEW DUE

**SESSION TWELVE: MISSIONS, ECUMENISM, AND GLOBAL CHRISTIANITY (Week of April 16)**

*Hour One:* Discussion of Noll, *Turning Points*, Ch. 12-13 and *Documents of the Christian Church* (344-354, 357-369)

*Hour Two:* Seminar Presentation: John Henry Newman, “Tract 90” from *Tracts for the Times*

**END OF SEMESTER DUE DATES:**

**Final Exam Essays: MAY 8**

**Mentoring Worksheets: MAY 15**