

History of Christianity 1

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History of Christianity I- Early Church to c. 1054 A.D.

The history of Christianity from the 2nd to the 11th century will focus on the beliefs and practices of significant individuals, movements, and institutions.

We will explore Christianity in the West (Europe and North Africa) and in the East (Eastern Mediterranean, Slavic peoples, Asia). We will ask about Christianity's engagement with Islam before 1000.

Special attention will be given to: (1) The authority and role of the Bible; (2) Early Christian missions, West, South, North, and East of Jerusalem.

This course is a seminar where each participant's life and faith experience is valued. The goal is that through our immersion in Christian History we can live into a more informed participation in our respective faith communities, locally and globally.

We will address the following questions, among others:

- How did the earliest Christians make sense of what they were taught and what they read (or heard) in the Bible?
- What did it mean to be a practicing Christian for priests, bishops, monks, nuns, abbesses and for the rest of us (or some of our distant ancestors)?
- When did Christianity come to northern Europe (France, Germany, England, Scandinavia), Slavic peoples (including Serbia, Slovakia, Bulgaria, Rumania, Russia), India and China?
- Why was North Africa the strongest Christian territory for many years?

Learning objectives:

To demonstrate basic knowledge of Christianity from the 2nd c. to the 11th c. through class discussion and examinations.

To identify a topic of special interest, research it and write a short paper on that subject.

Required reading and participation in class discussion	25%
Short paper	15%
Mid-term examination	30%
Final examination or Term Paper	30%

Readings: It is essential that students do the readings before coming to class and that they participate in the discussion.

Short Paper: Students will be asked to prepare a short paper (3 pages) early in the semester on a primary source reading. This assignment will be further explained in class.

Midterm and Final Examinations: The midterm and final examinations consist of multiple-choice of 20 questions and writing a one page essay in class. An hour will be set aside for the exam..

Term Paper: Students may elect to submit a term paper in place of the final examination. However, **topics for term papers must be approved by the instructor.** A brief **prospectus must be submitted by**

the dates assigned in the class schedule (no late submissions will be accepted), and students must take into account the instructors' comments. The prospectus must include:

1. the term paper title
2. a brief description of the problem to be studied (no more than 200 words)
3. a brief description of the primary sources to be consulted.

Students will be asked to make a brief oral presentation about their term paper to the class.

Text: Justo L. González, *The Story of Christianity*, Vol. I. Harper, 2010 (rev.ed.).

Brown, Peter. "Bridge to God: Remembering the Poor, Remembering the Dead". *Christian Century* April 15, 2015, 20-23.

Other readings as assigned.

Class 1	Chapters 1-12	The Early Church: Growth and Persecution
Class 2	Chapters 13- 18	The Imperial Church: Constantine, Nicea
Class 3	Chapters 19-23	Teachers, Theologians, Christology
Class 4	Chapter 24 -25	Augustine, "Barbarians", the Fall of Rome
Class 5	Chapter 26	Goths, Lombards, Vandals, Benedict, Islam
Class 6	Mid-term, Chapter 27	Eastern Christianity, Chalcedon
Class 7	Chapters 28-29	The Papacy, Charlemagne Prospectus due for those writing a term paper due.
Class 8		Spain, Vikings, Ireland, England
Class 9	Chapter 30	The Crusades
Class 10	Final exam	Term paper and oral presentations due for those choosing to write a paper.