

History 209

THE HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY

(5 credits)

DR. TIM HEINRICHS, INSTRUCTOR

Autumn, 2010

CONTACT:

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WELCOME--

History 209 follows the 2000-year story of Christianity from its Jewish origins to modern times. Our emphasis will be placed on mainstream Christianity. This means the the three major branches: Roman Catholic, Protestant, and Eastern Orthodox.

Religions generally have small beginnings, but few can rival Christianity for an unpromising one. It began in a remote part of the Roman Empire, among the Jews of Palestine, a people not very much honored or even liked by their rulers in Rome. The movement's leader thoroughly alienated the religious leaders of his nation with his revolutionary teachings. He was betrayed to these leaders by one of his own inner circle, put on trial, and executed in the most painful and shameful method imaginable—by crucifixion. And yet his remaining followers rallied and spread the message that they proclaimed was the “good news.” Their faith not only defied and survived persecution, but won over the Roman Empire and took the lead in framing Western culture. Today Christianity is has more adherents than any other religion and is still adding many new converts around the world.

Christianity has been especially relevant in the history of the Western Hemisphere since European settlement began there around 1500. Spanish, Portuguese, and French missionaries spread the Roman Catholic version of Christianity to the indigenous populations. The English Puritans sought to create in America a “Modell of Christian Charitie,” a society based on Christian relationships. Since those early days, the history of the United States has been strongly influenced by evangelical Christian “Great Awakenings,” powerful revivals of revived religious fervor. These advanced the American commitment to democracy and spawned such reform movements as abolitionism, women's rights, civil rights, education, and causes for political and social justice. Christianity has also inspired numerous humanitarian outreaches in the United States and elsewhere such as homes for orphans, hospitals, shelters, and hunger relief. Church history has featured un-Christian behavior as well—the massacres that took place in the medieval Crusades; the Inquisition; the use of slavery; the volume of warfare in the name of Christ; etc. Yet the oft-heard criticism of “hypocrites in the church” is itself a testimony to the moral standards expected of their religion. Whether

one dwells on the achievements or on the misdeeds of the adherents of Christianity, their faith is undeniably relevant to any study of U. S. or world history.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS--

BOOKS--

* Tim Dowley, ed., *Introduction to the History of Christianity* (Fortress Press, 2006; ISBN 9780800638122). This book comes with a

CD-ROM, which contains chapter summaries, key terms, discussion questions, and help for writing research papers.

* Other readings will be placed online at MyBC or made available on reserve at the library.

STRATEGY--

At the conclusion of this course, successful students will be able to:

1. Explain the significance of key people, beliefs, and events in the history of Christianity, and develop standards to judge them from a historical-cultural perspective
 2. Demonstrate the importance of traditions of thought and ethical values in historical change
 3. Expand their vocabulary
 4. Evaluate historical arguments, judging the appropriateness of both logic and content
 5. Adapt scholarly processes of analysis, interpretation, and synthesis to articulate their own points of view, demonstrating a command of relevant facts and a framework of logical deduction...
- *drawing inferences from data*
 - *differentiating between facts, value judgments, and generalizations*
 - *differentiating between description and explanation*
 - *recognizing the role of cause and effect in historical analysis*

COURSEWORK—

TOTAL PACKAGE

By the end of the term, you will have finished these assignments and assessments:

- reading weekly textbook and discussion assignments;
- writing four Discussion essays (250-400 words each)--two of them by the end of the fifth week--based on various readings;

- writing a 6-7-page paper, due December 1;
- meeting me for a 15-minute slot twice during the term;
- taking a midterm exam October 25, covering the first half of the course;
- taking a final exam December 6, covering the second half of the course

Please note that course documents such as paper assignments will usually be made available at mybc.net.

CLASS PARTICIPATION AND ATTENDANCE

The 20% class participation grade reflects your performance in quizzes and class discussions. **Daily attendance is expected.**

DISCUSSION ESSAYS

Each week an assignment is made from the week’s readings. Four times during the term (two in Weeks #1-#5 and two in the remaining weeks), you will write an essay of 250-400 words to answer a question of the week. Each essay should be 250-400 words. The deadlines for these usually fall on **Friday**, right after our normal weekly discussion day of **Thursday**. You don’t have to write one every week. (Extra credit is possible for a fifth or sixth discussion essay.)

LATE WORK

Normally, late discussion essays and late papers are accepted but with a penalty of two percent per day, up to a total of ten percent. This can be avoided if you obtain permission for an extension in advance of the due date and have a compelling reason for that. Note: weekly essays are graded on a 25-point scale, so the late penalty amounts to .5/25 per day (up to a maximum of 2.5/25).

GRADING

The following is a breakdown of the final grade:

<i>Class participation</i>	20%
<i>Paper</i>	20%
<i>Discussion essays</i>	20%
<i>Midterm exam</i>	20%
<i>Final exam</i>	20%

All items will be assigned percentage grades, whose average will be translated into a letter grade according to the following:

93-plus	A	77-79%	C+
90-92%	A-	73-76%	C
87-89%	B+	70-72%	C-
83-86%	B	67-69%	D+

If you’re ever not sure you’re on top of it all during the course, please call me at 425-564-2114, or email me at theinric@bellevuecollege.edu.

Schedule of Lectures and Readings

Week #1: September 20-24
Origins

Topic #1: Context for Christianity	Topic #2: Promise and Preparation	Topic #3: Life and Work of Christ
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Bruce Dowley, *Introduction to the History of Christianity*, pp. 55-114

Week #2: September 27-October 1
Building the Structure

Topic #4: The Church Is Born	Topic #5: The Conquest of Rome	Topic #6: Building Catholic Doctrine
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Dowley, *Introduction to the History of Christianity*, pp. 115-186

Week #3: October 5-8 (no class Monday)
Medieval Construction

Topic #7: Forging a New Europe-I	Topic #8: Forging a New Europe-II	Topic #9: Turbulence and Creativity
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Dowley, *Introduction to the History of Christianity*, pp. 187-245

Week #4: October 11-15
Era of Militance

Topic #10: The Crusades	Topic #11: Scholasticism	Topic #12: Late Medieval Christendom
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Dowley, *Introduction to the History of Christianity*, pp. 247-306

Week #5: October 18-22
Rival Authorities

Topic #13: World of Man: the Renaissance	Topic #14: Word of God: the Reformation
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Dowley, *Introduction to the History of Christianity*, pp. 307-365

Week #6: October 25-29
Counter-Reformation

Topic #15: Strains of Protestantism	Topic #16: Resurgent Catholicism	Topic #17: Spread of Catholicism
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Dowley, *Introduction to the History of Christianity*, pp. 366-434

* * * **Midterm Exam October 25** * * *

Week #7: November 1-5
Militant Catholics and Protestants

Topic #17: Puritan Commonwealths	Topic #18: Of Head and Heart
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Dowley, *Introduction to the History of Christianity*, pp. 435-499

Week #8: November 8-12 (no class Thursday)
Faith, Reason, and Revolution

Topic #19: Church and Revolution	Topic #20: Romantic Christianity
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Dowley, *Introduction to the History of Christianity*, pp. 500-556

Week #9: November 15-19
Age of Progress

Topic #21: Anglo-American Evangelicalism	Topic #22: Catholics and the Century of Progress	Topic #23: Grand Era of Foreign Missions
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Dowley, *Introduction to the History of Christianity*, pp. 557-580

Week #10: November 22-24
Toward a Post-Christian West

Topic #24: Era of Science	Topic #25: Broken Spirits of the 20th Century
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Dowley, *Introduction to the History of Christianity*, pp. 581-623

Week #11: November 29-December 3
Toward a Post-Western Christianity

Topic #26: The Call to Relevance	Topic #27: New Voices of Christianity
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Dowley, *Introduction to the History of Christianity*, pp. 624-672

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