

History 209

THE HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY

(5 credits)

DR. TIM HEINRICHS, INSTRUCTOR

Winter, 2010

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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 liked or honored 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--

* Bruce L. Shelley, Church History in Plain Language (Thomas Nelson, 3d edition, 2008; ISBN—0-321-44502-3). This is the main text.

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

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 reader 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 5-7-page paper, due March 15;*
- *meeting me for a 15-minute slot twice during the term;*
- *taking a midterm exam February 16, covering the first half of the course;*
- *taking a final exam March 22, covering the second half of the course.*

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

Class participation

Daily attendance in class is required; a pattern of absence will affect your grade. Beyond that, the 20% class participation grade reflects your performance in quizzes and class discussions.

Discussion essays

Each week an assignment is made from the Bettenson book of readings. One or two discussion questions will come with that reading assignment. Four times during the term (two in Weeks #1-#5 and two in the remaining weeks), you will write an essay to answer a question of the week. Each essay should be 250-400 words. The deadlines for these *usually* fall on **Thursday**, right after our normal weekly discussion day of **Wednesday**. 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.

History 261 *Schedule of Lectures and Readings*

Week #1: January 4-8: The Beginning of the Church

Topic #1: Context for Christianity	Topic #2: Promise and Preparation	Topic #3: Life and Work of Christ
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Bruce Shelley, *Church History In Plain Language*, Chapters 1-5 by Monday 1/11

Week #2: January 11-15 Early Triumphs

Topic #4: Building the Church	Topic #5: The Conquest of Rome	Topic #6: Building Catholic Orthodoxy
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Shelley, *Church History*, Chapters 6-11 by Tuesday 1/19

Week #3: January 19-22 (*Monday holiday*) Rise of Christendom

Topic #7: Forging a New Europe--I	Topic #8: Forging a New Europe--II	Topic #9: Turmoil and Creativity
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Shelley, *Church History*, Chapters 12-17 for Friday 1/23

Week #4: January 25-29 Era of Militance

Topic #10: Militance	Topic #11: Crusades	Topic #12: Lofty Thoughts and Spires
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Shelley, *Church History*, Chapters 18-20

Week #5: February 1-5 (No class Tuesday)
Rival Authorities

Topic #13: Practice of Politics	Topic #14: Challenge of Religious Ideals	Topic #15: Challenge of Secular Ideas
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Shelley, *Church History*, Chapters 21-23

Week #6: February 8-12
Era of Reformation

Topic #16: Lines of Reformation	Topic #17: Counterattack and Civil Wars	Topic #18: Eastern Church in the Ottoman Era
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Shelley, *Church History*, Chapters 24-26

Midterm Exam on February 12

Week #7: February 16-19 (Monday holiday)
Great Discoveries

Topic #19: Outreach to Africa and Asia	Topic #20: Planting Catholicism in America	Topic #21: The Puritan Errand
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Shelley, *Church History*, Chapters 27-29

Week #8: February 22-26
Age of Revolutions

Topic #22: Enlightenment and New Light	Topic #23: French Revolution	Topic #24: Romantic Philosophy
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Shelley, *Church History*, Chapters 30-35

Week #9: March 1-5 (No class Thursday)
Piety and rationality

Topic #25: Anglo-American Evangelicalism	Topic #26: Catholics and the century of progress	Topic #27: New Wave of Missions
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Shelley, *Church History*, Chapters 36-40

Week #10: March 8-12
Drift and new challenges

Topic #28: Topic #28: Age of Science	Topic #29: Turkey and Saudi Arabia	Topic #30: Crises and Aimlessness
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Shelley, *Church History*, Chapters 41-45

Week #11: March 15-19
Despair and diversity

Topic #31: The Call to Relevance	Review
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Shelley, *Church History*, Chapters 46-49

Final Exam March 22, 9:30-11:20