Faculty Guide

Examining Our Christian Heritage 1

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The **Modular Course of Study** is an outcome-based curriculum designed to implement the educational paradigm defined by the Breckenridge Consultations. Clergy Development is responsible for maintaining and distributing the Modular Course of Study for the Church of the Nazarene.

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Series Foreword

A Vision for Christian Ministry: Clergy Education in the Church of the Nazarene

The chief purpose of all persons—indeed, all of the creation—is to worship, love, and serve God. God has made himself known in His deeds of creation and redemption. As the Redeemer, God has called into existence a people, the Church, who embody, celebrate, and declare His name and His ways. The life of God with His people and the world constitutes the Story of God. That story is recorded principally in the Old and New Testaments, and continues to be told by the resurrected Christ who lives and reigns as Head of His Church. The Church lives to declare the whole Story of God. This it does in many ways—in the lives of its members who are even now being transformed by Christ, through preaching, the sacraments, in oral testimony, and in mission. All members of the Body of Christ are called to exercise a ministry of witness and service. No one is excluded.

In God's own wisdom He calls some persons to fulfill the ministry of proclaiming the gospel and caring for God's people in a form that is referred to as the ordained ministry. God is the initial actor in this call, not humans. In the Church of the Nazarene we believe that God calls and that persons respond. They do not elect the Christian ministry. All persons whom God calls to the ordained ministry continue to be amazed that He would call them. They should continue to be humbled and amazed by God's call. The *Manual* of the Church of the Nazarene states, "we recognize and hold that the Head of the Church calls some men and women to the more official and public work of the ministry." It adds, "The church, illuminated by the Holy Spirit, will recognize the Lord's call" (*Manual,* Church of the Nazarene, paragraph 400).

An ordained Christian minister has as his or her chief responsibility to declare in many ways the whole Story of God as fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth. His or her charge is to "tend the flock of God . . . not under compulsion, but willingly, not for sordid gain but eagerly. Do not lord it over those in your charge, but be examples to the flock" (1 Pet 5:2-3, NRSV). The minister fulfills this charge under the supervision of Christ, the chief Shepherd (1 Pet 5:4). Such ministry can be fulfilled only after a period of careful

preparation. Indeed, given the ever-changing demands placed upon the minister, “preparation” never ceases.

A person who enters the Christian ministry becomes in a distinct sense a steward of the gospel of God (Titus 1:7). A steward is one who is entrusted to care for what belongs to another. A steward may be one who takes care of another person or who manages the property of someone else. All Christians are stewards of the grace of God. But in addition, in a peculiar sense a Christian minister is a steward of the “mystery of God,” which is Christ, the Redeemer, the Messiah of God. In all faithfulness, the minister is called to “make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel” (Eph 6:19, NRSV). Like Paul, he or she must faithfully preach “the boundless riches of Christ, and to make everyone see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things; so that through the church the wisdom of God in its rich variety might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places” (Eph 3:8-10, NRSV).

In fulfilling this commission, there is plenty of room for diligence and alertness, but no room for laziness or privilege (Titus 1:5-9). Good stewards recognize that they are stewards only, not the owners, and that they will give an account of their stewardship to the master. Faithfulness to one’s charge and to the Lord who issued it is the steward’s principal passion. When properly understood, the Christian ministry should never be thought of as a “job.” It is ministry—uniquely Christian ministry. No higher responsibility or joy can be known than to become a steward of the Story of God in Christ’s Church. The person who embraces God’s call to the ordained ministry will stand in the company of the apostles, the Early Fathers of the Church, the Reformers of the Middle Ages, the Protestant Reformers, and many persons around the world today who joyfully serve as stewards of the gospel of God.

Obviously, one who does not recognize, or who understands but rejects, just how complete and inclusive a minister’s stewardship must be should not start down the path that leads to ordination. In a peculiar sense, a Christian minister must in all respects model the gospel of God. He or she is to “shun” the love of money. Instead, the minister must “pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, gentleness.” He or she must “fight the good fight of the faith” and “take hold of the eternal life, to which you were called” (1 Tim 6:11-12, NRSV).

Hence, the Church of the Nazarene believes that "the minister of Christ is to be in all things a pattern to the flock—in punctuality, discretion, diligence, earnestness; 'in purity, understanding, patience and kindness; in the Holy Spirit and in sincere love; in truthful speech and in the power of God; with weapons of righteousness in the right hand and in the left' (2 Cor 6:6-7)" (*Manual*, Church of the Nazarene, paragraph 401.1). The minister of Christ "must be above reproach as God's steward, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not addicted to wine, not pugnacious, not fond of sordid gain, [8]but hospitable, loving what is good, sensible, just, devout, self-controlled, [9]holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching . . . able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict." (Titus 1:7-9, NASB).

In order to be a good steward of God's Story one must, among other things, give oneself to careful and systematic study, both before and after ordination. This will occur not because he or she is forced to do so, but out of a love for God and His people, the world that He is working to redeem, and out of an inescapable sense of responsibility. It cannot be too strongly emphasized that the attitude one brings to preparation for the ministry reveals much about what he or she thinks of God, the gospel, and Christ's Church. The God who became incarnate in Jesus and who made a way of salvation for all gave His very best in the life, death, and resurrection of His Son. In order to be a good steward, a Christian minister must respond in kind. Jesus told numerous parables about stewards who did not recognize the importance of what had been entrusted to them (Mt 21:33-44; 25:14-30; Mk 13:34-37; Lk 12:35-40; 19:11-27; 20:9-18).

Preparation—one's education in all its dimensions—for ministry in Christ's Church should be pursued in full light of the responsibility before God and His people that the ministry involves. This requires that one take advantage of the best educational resources at his or her disposal.

The Church of the Nazarene recognizes how large is the responsibility associated with the ordained Christian ministry and accepts it fully. Part of the way we recognize our responsibility before God is seen in the requirements we make for ordination and the practice of ministry. We believe that the call to and practice of Christian ministry is a gift, not a right or privilege. We believe that God holds a minister to the highest of religious, moral, personal, and professional standards. We are not reluctant to expect that those

standards be observed from the time of one's call until his or her death. We believe that Christian ministry should first be a form of worship. The practice of ministry is both an offering to God and a service to His Church. By the miracle of grace, the work of the ministry can become a means of grace for God's people (Rom 12:1-3). One's education for ministry is also a form of worship.

The modules that comprise the Course of Study that may lead a person to candidacy for ordination have been carefully designed to prepare one for the kind of ministry we have described. Their common purpose is to provide a holistic preparation for entrance into the ordained Christian ministry. They reflect the Church's wisdom, experience, and responsibility before God. The modules show how highly the Church of the Nazarene regards the gospel, the people of God, the world for which Christ gave His life, and Christian ministry. Completing the modules will normally take three or four years. But no one should feel pressured to meet this schedule.

The careful study for which the modules call should show that before God and His Church one accepts the stewardly responsibility associated with ordained ministry.

Contents

Introduction

Intended Use of This Faculty Guide

This faculty guide serves as an instructor's guide for teaching principles of *Examining Our Christian Heritage 1* to adult learners who are preparing for ordination in the Church of the Nazarene. The content is based on intended outcomes defined through the collaborative process conducted at Breckenridge, CO, USA, between 1990 and 1997. The materials prepare the pastor-teacher to present the topic by providing background reading, lesson plans, lectures, instructions to the teacher, and teaching resources for each class session. In most lessons complete lectures, questions for guided discussions, and defined learning activities are provided.

The pastor-teacher who will lead this module should hold a master's degree. Ideally, the pastor-teacher should have participated as a student in a module using this material prior to teaching the material to others. This faculty guide assumes that the pastor-teacher has some basic understanding of the History of Christianity.

It is further assumed that learners participating in a module using this material will be high school graduates and be adult learners beyond the traditional college age. Learners are assumed to be motivated to learn, and to have adult life-experiences. No prior college classroom experience is assumed on the part of the learners.

Acknowledgments

Every module is the accumulation of effort by many people. Someone writes the original manuscript, others offer suggestions to strengthen the content and make the material more easily understood, and finally an editor formats the module for publication. This module is not different. Many people have contributed to this module. Every effort has been made to accurately represent the original intent of the principal contributors.

Principal Contributor

The principal contributor for this module is Floyd T. Cunningham. Dr. Cunningham is academic dean at Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary in Taytay, Rizal, Philippines. He is also the professor of the history of Christianity and has been at the seminary since 1983. In 1984 he earned a doctorate in American religious history at The Johns Hopkins University. Dr. Cunningham is also a graduate of Eastern Nazarene College and Nazarene Theological Seminary and is an ordained minister in the Church of the Nazarene. He is author of *Holiness Abroad: Nazarene Missions in Asia* (Scarecrow, 2003).

Responder

Each module was reviewed by at least one content specialist to ensure that the content did not represent a single, narrow view or opinion. The responder provided suggestions that the principal contributor could integrate into this module.

W. Thomas Umbel was the responder for this module. Dr. Umbel has been a faculty member at Nazarene Bible College since 1999 where he teaches courses in history, theology, and practice of Christian ministry. Prior to 1999, he served for 19 years in various ministry assignments and was actively involved in district-based extension education. Dr. Umbel received his Ph.D. from The Johns Hopkins University (1992), M.Div. from Nazarene Theological Seminary (1980), and B.A. from Eastern Nazarene College (1977).

Revision History

Second Quarter, 2005, Revision 3, the current version

- Module reviewed for gender inclusiveness

First Quarter 2004, Revision 2

- Module title changed from *History of Christianity 1* to *Examining Our Christian Heritage 1*

Third Quarter 2003. Revision 1

- The Lesson Overview, Introduction, Body, Close format was established.

About This Module

Many aspects of the course outlines and content were developed at an intensive Faculty Development Workshop held in Grove City, Ohio, June 11-15, 2001.

The lessons are based on general goals that revolve around five basic themes in the history of Christianity: scripture and tradition; church structures; church and society; the spread of Christianity; and Christian spirituality, including Christian life, worship, and ministry. Understanding these aspects of the history of Christianity provides perspectives essential for Christian ministry in the world today.

This module aims at developing historical understanding of the Christian faith and tells the story of how people responded to the call of the gospel in the early and medieval periods. It is suggested that this module serve as a prerequisite for the History of Christianity 2.

This module will concentrate on the history of Christianity from the apostolic era through the Middle Ages to the pre-Reformation era. Students will discover and gain a deeper appreciation for the Church's redemptive purposes in people, events, movements, and cultures. Students will be enabled to build bridges from historical understanding to personal spiritual formation, the role of the Church in society, and contemporary ministry.

Module Materials

We have tried to design this module to be flexible and easy to adapt to your situation. For each lesson, there are several support pieces, which we have called simply "resources." These can be used in many different ways. Resources have been produced in the student guide for this module. The instructor will want a copy of the student guide for his or her own use.

1. The instructor may photocopy these to use for his or her own lecture outlines. There is space to add notes from the faculty guide, from a textbook, or from the additional suggested readings. Add in your own illustrations too!
2. The pages may be photocopied onto overhead transparencies for use in class.

One reason for developing this module is for the benefit of extension education. We understand that teachers all over the world are called upon to teach courses that are not in their area of specialty, but they teach them because they want to see pastors trained and leaders developed for the church. Extension education is basic to rapid church growth. We want to provide this as a resource for extension educators. If it helps others along the way, that's fine too.

Another reason for developing this module is to equip indigenous faculty. We believe a class like this is best taught and contextualized by someone from within the culture of the students. There are many fine teachers who are leaders in our churches around the world who do not have higher degrees in theology, but who have the skills to teach a module like this effectively. We want to set them free to do so, and in so doing, actually to improve the module and make it more dynamic and meaningful for their context than it would have been had we held on to it and insisted on teaching it ourselves.

Intended Outcomes for the Module

The *Manual,* Church of the Nazarene, and the *International Sourcebook on Developmental Standards for Ordination* define educational preparation for ordination. Additionally, each region of the International Church of the Nazarene has developed educational guidelines to qualify educational programs for ordination offered within their region.

The USA Region *Sourcebook for Ministerial Development* defines outcomes for the overall ministerial development program. The module assists candidates in developing these skills. Other modules in the program may also address the same outcomes.

Intended learning outcomes all relate to what are essential for the Christian ministry in terms of content, character, context, and competency.

PROGRAM OUTCOMES

CN 24 Ability to describe the general story line of church history and the development of the major doctrines and creeds

CN 25 Ability to identify and describe the significance of the major figures, themes, and

events of the Patristic, medieval, Reformation, Puritan, Pietist, Wesleyan, and Modern periods of church history

CN 26 Ability to describe how the church implemented its mission in the various periods of church history

CX 8 Ability to place the ministry context in light of the large schemes of world and national history

CX 10 Ability to understand and articulate the biblical, historical, and theological bases for Christian mission

OUTCOME STATEMENTS

By fulfilling the **CONTENT** learning outcomes of this module, the student will be enabled to:

1. Understand the goals and purposes of the historical study of Christianity.
2. Describe the general story lines of church history and the development of the major doctrines and creeds.
3. Possess general knowledge of early and medieval church history.
4. Understand what it meant to be Christian in these centuries by examining doctrinal issues, heretical movements and Christian responses, creeds and councils.
5. Understand the contributions of significant early theologians, and their relationship to their social context and their influence upon the Christian tradition.
6. Understand early methods of interpreting the Bible.
7. Identify and understand the significance of the major figures, themes, and events in the Christian church from its early period to the eve of the sixteenth-century Reformation.
8. Identify significant events, religious movements, and leaders in the history of Christianity in this time period.
9. Describe how the church implemented its mission in the various early and medieval periods of church history.
10. Understand the processes in the evangelization geographically.
11. Demonstrate critical themes of the Christian faith in early and medieval church history as focal points for carrying forward the gospel.
12. Identify significant changes in political history, and how these changes affected Christianity.
13. Continue the study of church history throughout ministry.

14. Describe, compare, and contrast early and medieval practices of ministry and worship to contemporary trends.
15. Defend and explain denominational Articles of Faith with reference to historical issues and council decisions.
16. Gain an appreciation for primary source material and significant literature of the periods under study.

This module helps to develop the **CHARACTER** of the minister by enabling students to:

1. Find helpful resources for personal spiritual and character formation and development in the works of Christians in this era.
2. Identify with worthy historical figures and movements.
3. Learn from history.

CONTEXT objectives enable students to:

1. Place the ministry context in light of the large schemes of world and national histories.
2. Examine issues of contextualization by looking at Christian apologetics.
3. Possess a richer understanding of the relationship between the church and society.
4. Understand the difference between what is essential in Christian life and practice, and what is incidental—a result of culture.
5. Understand Christianity better in their own countries.
6. Examine other social and historical contexts.
7. Apply historians' methods of viewing early and medieval Christianity in order to analyze their local church and its surrounding context.

COMPETENCY objectives enable students to:

1. Draw from early and medieval church history lessons and illustrations that inform how the church may effectively fulfill God's mission given today's realities.
2. Explain to a cult member why their beliefs were considered by the Early Church to be heretical.
3. Apply historical analysis to the life of a local congregation in order to describe its historical and cultural context.
4. Respond wisely from a historical basis to issues—both theological and practical in nature—arising in ministry.

Recommended Books

Each module within the Modular Course of Study is intended to be textbook independent. This does not imply that the modules are textbook irrelevant or that the module content cannot be enriched by selecting and requiring that students study a textbook along with the lessons provided in this faculty guide.

If these modules are adapted for use outside of the English-speaking countries of North America, a specific textbook may not be available in the language of the students. Therefore, the module does not rely on one textbook. The instructor may select any doctrinally sound textbook available to the students.

For this module Dr. Floyd Cunningham has suggested the following book as a good, readable, first-level choice as a history of Christianity textbook:

Bruce L. Shelley. *Church History in Plain Language,* second ed. Waco, TX: Word, 1995.

Suggested Meeting Schedule

The module lessons are designed to last 2 hours each. Each lesson is complete in itself with an opening, a middle, and a closing. They are sequential. Each lesson assumes the learners have mastered material presented in previous lessons. The lessons can be grouped in a variety of ways to accommodate the schedules of your learners.

When lessons are taught in the same meeting, instructors will need to adjust homework assignments because participants will not have time between lessons to prepare homework. It is very important for the instructor always to be looking ahead and planning for upcoming lessons.

Here are three suggestions (out of many) for ways the meetings can be organized.

1. Resident campus. The class can meet one day a week for 2 hours. Present one lesson per meeting time. Total time: 12 weeks.

2. Extension education. The class can meet one day (or evening) each week for 4 to 4½ hours. Present two lessons per meeting with a break period between lessons. Total time: 6 weeks.

3. Intensive module. The class can meet five consecutive days for 4½ to 7 hours per day. Present two lessons in the morning with a break between lessons, and one lesson in the afternoon on the second and fourth days. Participants must complete reading assignments before arriving at the module site, and written assignments can be submitted 30 to 60 days following the class meeting. Total meeting time: 1 week.

The module is divided into 12 lessons. The progression of these lessons can be seen in the chart below. Space is given for you to fill in the dates when your class sessions will meet.

Date	Lesson
	1. Introduction to the History of Christianity
	2. The Spread of Christianity
	3. Early Church Doctrine and Persecution
	4. Development of the Canon and Creeds
	5. Ministry and Expansion of the Early Church
	6. The Formation of the Papacy and Eastern Christianity
	7. Early Middle Ages
	8. Interaction of Church and Culture
	9. Tensions Within the Church
	10. The Rise of Scholarship
	11. The Gospel and Culture Interact—East and West
	12. Late Middle Ages

About This Faculty Guide

Note: It is critical to remember that active participation by the learners will enhance their learning. That means you will not be an information giver. This module is not about you. The focus of the module is helping students learn. Your role is to design an environment in which your students will learn. Sometimes you

The faculty guide has been written to guide an instructor as he or she prepares to teach this module. It contains complete lesson plans and resources to provide a solid educational design for the topic. You will need to prepare for each lesson well in advance of the meeting time. Often there are background reading suggestions for the instructor or you may know additional reference materials you want to interject

will give lectures. At other times you will guide discussions or assign your students to work in groups. These kinds of activities keep the participants actively involved in the learning process. Learning is a team activity.

into the lesson. Questions that are intended to be answered or discussed by the students are in italic type.

A two-column format was chosen for the faculty guide. The right-hand column contains the content of lectures, descriptions of activities, and questions to keep students involved. The left-hand column is to give suggested instructions to you, the teacher. It also contains examples you can use to illustrate concepts in the lectures. Whenever possible you should use examples from your own experience and from your students' real-life context.

Large white space has been left in the left column to allow you to write notes and personalize the faculty guide.

The faculty guide has two major components: the Faculty Guide Introduction, and the Lesson Plans. The Introduction and Lesson Plans are in this document. Teaching Resources are contained in the companion Student Guide. You are reading the Faculty Guide Introduction now. It provides a teaching philosophy for adult learners, background information for organizing the module, and ideas about conducting the lessons.

Each section of the faculty guide is numbered with a two-part page number. Page 5 of Lesson 3 would be numbered "3-5." The first number is the lesson number and the second is the page number within the lesson. Each resource sheet is numbered for the lesson in which the resource is first used. The first resource page for Lesson 2 is numbered "2-1."

The Lesson Plans are complete in themselves. They contain an Overview, Introduction, Body, and Close. The Lesson Overview provides you with a planning tool for preparing and conducting each lesson.

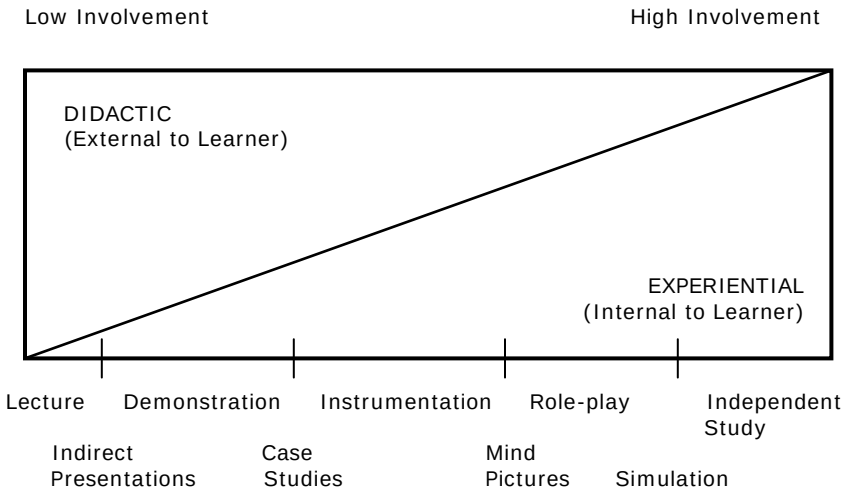
The Lesson Introduction should get participants' attention, orient them to the place this lesson holds in the overall module, define the intended objectives, and prepare them for the learning activities.

The Lesson Body is the core message of the lesson. The key is to keep the learners actively involved. Even in lectures, ask questions that prompt learners to think about the content, not just hear the lecture.

The following chart shows a continuum of learner involvement in different teaching methods. Lecture requires the least learner involvement, and

independent study requires the most learner involvement.

METHODS CONTINUUM



A variety of learning activities are used to present information and allow learners to experiment with their new knowledge. Each individual has a set of preferred methods of learning, and he or she has different life-experiences that can color or filter what he or she actually learns. A variety of learning activities help adults adapt to the learning task—by hearing, by doing, by reading, by discussing, or by combinations of these. The learners should have opportunities to test and clarify their new learning by talking with the instructor and other participants, and applying new knowledge in real or contrived situations as soon as possible.

The Lesson Close provides a time for answering questions, reviewing the information, connecting this lesson to future lessons, making assignments, and punctuating the finish. The close does not provide any new information but gives a sense of closure to the lesson.

Homework assignments are important learning activities. They provide the student with an opportunity to synthesize classroom learning. Working on these assignments also extends the learning experience beyond the time constraints of class time.

The student—especially the adult student—needs frequent and timely feedback about his or her learning. While interaction with other students helps the learner refine what he or she is learning, feedback from the instructor is also critical to the quality of his or her learning and ultimately to his or her persistence in the Course of Study.

It is your responsibility as the instructor for this module to provide students with timely responses to homework assignments in order to enhance the learning process. Reviewing and responding to homework will also provide you with critical information about what your students are learning and how well the teaching-learning process is succeeding.

Since these modules are preparing the learner for ordination rather than leading to a university degree, a letter grade may not be appropriate or necessary. Your response to the learners' assignments should be thoughtful, and in most cases it should be written. Its purpose will always be to refine and enhance the learning of the student.

You must determine how each resource will be used in your context. If an overhead projector is available, transparencies can be made by replacing the paper in your photocopy machine with special transparency material.

The Student Guide for this module contains the series foreword, acknowledgments, syllabus, copies of all resources, lesson objectives, and assignments. A copy of the Student Guide should be made available to each student.

Recommendations for printing. You may print this faculty guide if desired. The introduction and lesson plan segments are formatted for printing on both sides of the paper. The resource pages of the Student Guide should be printed on one side for use as transparency or handout masters.

The Student Guide should be printed on one side.

A Hidden Agenda

Hidden curriculum issues . . . because the way we teach teaches

In each session, there are certain methodological and environmental things to consider.

First, consider the classroom arrangement. Whenever possible, the room should be arranged to encourage a sense of community. Either the group should sit in a circle or around a table. If the group is very large, chairs can be arranged for easily moving into clusters for discussion.

Second, consider how you present yourself as teacher. Standing behind a lectern with your students facing you in rows says that you are above the students and have something to give them (although in a very large group this standing to teach may be unavoidable). Sitting as part of the circle makes the teacher a co-learner at the same level as the students. Speak naturally. Pay close attention to your students, and value the things they share. Learn their names. Encourage participation. Remember that you are modeling for them, and the way you teach will teach them far more than the words you say.

Third, invite the Holy Spirit's presence in the classroom. Do this each time the class meets.

Fourth, the sharing of stories activity does more than help the students begin to reflect on their own Christian experiences. It is a way to build community between the students. This is more than an exercise to be checked off. It is vital to set the tone of your intentional community.

When meeting times exceed 90 minutes, consider adding break times. The break between segments is an important time for community building. Remain available to the students during this time. Consider offering coffee or tea during this time as a way to encourage fellowship.

Journaling: The Key to Spiritual Formation

Journaling is a major assignment of each module in the Course of Study. It is the integrating element that helps draw spiritual meaning and ministerial application from the content of each module whether the module concentrates on content, competency, character, or context. It ensures that the "Be" component of "Be, Know, and Do" is present in every module in which one participates. What is journaling and how can it be meaningfully accomplished?

The Syllabus contains this explanation of journaling. Journaling provides the spiritual formation component for the module and is an integral part of the learning experience.

Have students read the journaling section during the Syllabus review in Lesson 1 and emphasize that journaling is an assignment for each lesson in the module.

When giving assignments in each lesson, assign journal writing each time the group meets.

Journaling: A Tool for Personal Reflection and Integration

Participating in the Course of Study is the heart of your preparation for ministry. To complete each module you will be required to listen to lectures, read books and articles, participate in discussions, and write papers. Content mastery is the goal.

An equally important part of ministerial preparation is spiritual formation. Some might choose to call spiritual formation devotions, while others might refer to it as growth in grace. Whichever title you place on the process, it is the intentional cultivation of your relationship with God. The module work will be helpful in adding to your knowledge, your skills, and your ability to do ministry. The spiritual formation work will weave all you learn into the fabric of your being, allowing your education to flow freely from your head through your heart to those you serve.

Although there are many spiritual disciplines to help you cultivate your relationship with God, journaling is the critical skill that ties them all together. Journaling simply means keeping a record of your experiences and the insights you have gained along the way. It is a discipline because it does require a good deal of work faithfully to spend daily time in your journal. Many people confess this is a practice they tend to push aside when pressed by their many other responsibilities. Even five minutes a day spent journaling can make a major difference in your education and your spiritual development. Let me explain.

Consider journaling time spent with your best friend. Onto the pages of a journal you will pour out your candid responses to the events of the day, the insights you gained from class, a quote gleaned from a book, and an ‘ah-ha’ that came to you as two ideas connected. This is not the same as keeping a diary, since a diary seems to be a chronicle of events without the personal dialogue. The journal is the repository for all of your thoughts, reactions, prayers, insights, visions, and plans. Though some people like to keep complex journals with sections for each type of reflection, others find a simple running commentary more helpful. In either case, record the date and the location at the beginning of every journal entry. It will help you when it comes time to review your thoughts.

It is important to chat briefly about the logistics of journaling. All you will need is a pen and paper to begin. Some folks prefer loose-leaf paper that can be placed in a three-ring binder, others like spiral-bound notebooks, while others enjoy using composition books. Whichever style you choose, it is important to develop a pattern that works for you.

Establishing a time and a place for writing in your journal is essential. If there is no space etched out for journaling, it will not happen with the regularity needed to make it valuable. It seems natural to spend time journaling after the day is over and you can sift through all that has transpired. Yet family commitments, evening activities, and fatigue militate against this time slot. Morning offers another possibility. Sleep filters much of the previous day's experiences, and processes deep insights, that can be recorded first thing in the morning. In conjunction with devotions, journaling enables you to begin to weave your experiences with the Word, and also with module material that has been steeping on the back burner of your mind. You will probably find that carrying your journal will allow you to jot down ideas that come to you at odd times throughout the day.

It seems we have been suggesting that journaling is a handwritten exercise. Some may be wondering about doing their work on a computer. Traditionally, there is a special bond between hand, pen, and paper. It is more personal, direct, and aesthetic. And it is flexible, portable, and available.

With regular use, your journal is the repository of your journey. As important as it is to make daily entries, it is equally important to review your work. Read over each week's record at the end of the week. Make a summary statement and note movements of the Holy Spirit or your own growth. Do a monthly review of your journal every 30 days. This might best be done on a half-day retreat where you can prayerfully focus on your thoughts in solitude and silence. As you do this, you will begin to see the accumulated value of the Word, your module work, and your experience in ministry all coming together in ways you had not considered possible. This is integration—weaving together faith development and learning. Integration moves information from your head to your heart so that ministry is a matter of being rather than doing. Journaling will help you answer the central question of education: "Why do I do what I do when I do it?"

Journaling really is the linchpin in ministerial preparation. Your journal is the chronicle of your journey into spiritual maturity as well as content mastery. These volumes will hold the rich insights that will pull your education together. A journal is the tool for integration. May you treasure the journaling process!

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Lesson 1

Introduction to the History of Christianity

Lesson Overview

Schedule

Start Time	Task or Topic	Learning Activity	Materials Needed
0:00	Introduction	Orient	Student Guide Computers
1:00	A Wesleyan Perspective on Church History	Lecture	Resource 1-1
1:20	Survey of Introductions and Prefaces	Small Groups	Resource 1-2 History books
1:50	Lesson Close	Review, Assign	Student Guide

Suggested Reading for Instructor

Bassett, Paul S. "The Significance of Historical Study." *Exploring Christian Holiness*. Vol. 2, *The Historical Development*. Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1985.

Bradley, James E., and Richard A. Muller. *Church History: An Introduction to Research, Reference Works, and Methods*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995.

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Spickard, Paul R., and Kevin M. Cragg. “Preface.” *God’s Peoples: A Social History of Christians*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1994.

Lesson Introduction

(60 minutes)

Get Acquainted

Ask each of the students to give their name and to answer a question such as "What is your all-time favorite comic strip?"

Orientation

What is church history? While church history deals with the history of faith and faithful Christians, it relies upon historical methods.

Learner Objectives

Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.

Restating the objectives for the learners serves as an advanced organizer for the lesson and alerts learners to key information and concepts.

At the end of this lesson, participants should

- understand the goals and purposes of the historical study of Christianity
- discuss church history's relevance to their ministries
- articulate how a Wesleyan perspective upon church history might be different from others

Overview

Open your Student Guides.

Lead the students through the Series Foreword, the Acknowledgments, the Contents, and the Syllabus.

Read through the Module Vision Statement. Look at the Program Outcome Statements that will be covered by this module.

Look at the list of Resources available for this module.

***If possible** have a computer available—or meet in a computer lab—and spend some time looking at some of the sites they can use.*

Make sure they know what is required for attendance and assignments.

The Daily Work section has information about a homework assignment that is different from most of the other modules, and will require them to seek information on their own—the reason for the computer search.

Read through the section on Term Projects.

Go over the schedule and give the time and dates for class.

Do you have questions concerning this module?

Lesson Body

Lecture: A Wesleyan Perspective on Church History

(20 minutes)

History is crucial to Christians. The Bible is the history of salvation. Through it, we come to understand how God works. He created all that is in time. He established His covenants with Abraham and the Hebrews in history. In the “fullness of time” God gave His only Son for the redemption of the world. Christ was incarnated in history.

God works to save us in and through history, not around or in spite of it. Based on the Bible’s descriptions of God’s acts, Christianity possesses a chronological or linear understanding of time. God’s great acts were and are historical. He interacts with human beings in particular contexts, circumstances, and situations. At the same time, God works toward goals and ideals.

Historians can only speak of the human response to God, not about God’s doing. This is because we are not privy, as the inspired prophets and apostles were, to God’s specific acts. Because evangelicals hold the Bible to possess a higher authority, they cannot say with the same certainty as they can about God’s acts among the Israelites or in Christ, “this is how God acted” when it comes to, for instance, the councils or the Reformation.

History answers many of the questions as to why things are as they are; why things are done as they are done; what the original purposes and meanings were for a practice or a belief. History brings a form of self-knowledge to the Church and to individuals.

Church history helps to define what has been considered biblical and essential to faith, and what has been considered either nonorthodox or nonessential to faith. Using church history, persons are better able to assess present-day trends.

For accuracy and objectivity, church history must be built upon primary sources. These are materials created geographically and chronologically near the events or persons being described. Though history aims to tell a story, to have a plot, it is based firmly upon sources. Historians interpret and organize

sources, which are themselves interpretations of the events being described. Though history cannot be considered objective in the same way as the natural sciences, its aim is to be as accurate as possible, based on the sources at hand, and to have no hidden agendas or preconceived notions about the course of events. Historians, nevertheless, have to decide on relations between events. These are beyond the comprehension of their sources. Historians have to weigh evidence and make conclusions.

Though there are heroes in church history, its purpose is to understand the past, not to venerate ancestors. Church historians do not fear the truth being told about people and events in the past.

The church historian can only describe the outward response to, not the inner workings of the human interaction with the divine. Some, even in the Church, responded to the Holy Spirit's promptings selfishly and sinfully. Students of church history learn from the mistakes as well as the successes of the past. At the same time, there is much good to be told. The Church has helped men and women cope with everyday existence and has positively influenced society. The Church is less "incarnate" than Christ. It is fully human, and not in its earthly state "fully divine."

Justo Gonzalez, The Story of Christianity, *vol. 1,* The Early Church to the Dawn of the Reformation *(San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1984), xvi.*

Church history is being constantly revised and rewritten. That is not only because new information is being discovered but also because new questions are being asked of the old information. New paradigms or theoretical frameworks are used to interpret the data.

In the nineteenth century historians focused on the institutional structure, leadership, and development of the Church. In the late twentieth century attempts were made to expand the Eurocentric interpretation of the church's history to incorporate the mission of the church beyond the West.

At the same time, though the history of theology remains important, church historians also have tried to understand the beliefs and devotion of common people, especially including women. They focus on religious behavior. Church historians are interested not only in the thoughts or acts of a few, but in what the masses of people were thinking, and how they were behaving. How did common Christians cope with sickness and death and natural disasters? How did they worship?

For examples see Adrian Hastings, ed., A World History of Christianity *(Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999). Also, Dale T. Irvin and Scott W. Sunquist*, History of the World Christian Movement, *vol. 1,* Earliest Christianity to 1453 *(Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2001).*

Church historians look for interrelationships between religious ideas and behavior. They look for ways in which Christianity has helped shape family life, political structures, moral codes, and economic systems, and look, in turn, to how each of these aspects of society influenced Christianity. When church historians analyze ideas, they want to see the ideas in their cultural and historical context. Church history cannot be seen apart from "secular" world history.

Church history reveals how faith has been applied in various places at various times. Though there were historians who interpreted religion, including Christianity, as being in decline, victim to rationalism and secularism, in truth Christianity has ebbed and flowed, sometimes growing, sometimes receding. Neither its advance nor its decline has been historically inevitable. Just when the demise of Christianity is announced, some new popular religious movement comes along to claim the faith of the masses.

Christianity has been influenced by culture, but just as greatly, Christianity, like any religion, has greatly influenced culture. If Christianity has at times sanctioned slavery and racial prejudice, it also has defended women and produced antislavery and other social reforms. Church history illuminates the processes by which Christianity interrelates to culture and how it functions in culture.

Refer to Resource 1-1 in the Student Guide.

The historical method is congenial to the Wesleyan's understanding that God works dynamically, by the gentle promptings of grace, and with human response—rather than by manipulation. The voluntary cooperation of human beings to God's intentions is the way in which God interacts with creation. Wesleyans possess a philosophy of history that sees God as the great Persuader. Wesleyan historians will note the many human and even environmental variables and contingent factors that go into the making of history, and not ascribe all that has been solely to God.

The Wesleyan theological framework puts emphasis on the human response to God. There is a dynamic interrelationship between the graciously given human freedom to respond to God's luring and persuading. With freedom, God has granted an open-endedness to the events of history. For Wesleyan historians, it is not necessary to understand culture as a dichotomy of sacred and secular. The Wesleyan concepts of the preveniency and universality of grace erase the difference.

By showing how Christians in the past have responded to all sorts of issues and problems, church history allows ministers and laypeople to find a broader basis or context for making decisions and sound judgments. It helps Christians to have stronger rationale for defining and confronting theological and moral errors. It enables Christians to separate what is really essential to faith from what is temporal and transient.

Small Groups: Survey of Introductions and Prefaces

(30 minutes)

Divide the class into groups of two to three students each.

Refer to Resource 1-2 in the Student Guide.

Have at least one copy of each of the suggested reading books given at the beginning of the lesson.

Divide the books between the groups.

Allow each group to report and ask questions of each other.

In your group read the introduction and/or preface of the books.

- Bruce Shelley, *Church History in Plain Language*
- *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church,* third edition
- Justo Gonzalez, *A History of Christian Thought*
- Justo Gonzalez, *The Story of Christianity,* Vol. 1, *The Early Church to the Dawn of the Reformation*
- Paul Bassett and William Greathouse, *Exploring Christian Holiness,* Vol. 2, *The Historical Development*
- James Bradley and Richard Muller, *Church History: An Introduction to Research, Reference Works, and Methods*
- Kenneth Latourette, *A History of Christianity*
- Paul Spickard and Kevin Cragg, *God's Peoples: A Social History of Christians*

Ask these questions of each of the books:

- *How does this author approach church history?*
- *Does he have an agenda of his own?*
- *What is the style?*
- *How are the books different or alike?*

Be prepared to report to the class.

Allow for response.

Is the Wesleyan approach to church history different from others?

How? Why?

Lesson Close

(10 minutes)

Review

Ask each of the students to write out the answer to this question.

If time allows, have them read their answer to the class.

What is the relevance of church history to your ministry?

Assign Homework

Direct students to the Homework Assignments in the Student Guide.

Reading topics:

- The spread of Christianity east and west in the first two centuries
- The Apostolic Fathers—Ignatius, Clement of Rome, Polycarp, Shepherd of Hermas, and Papias
- Shelley, *Church History in Plain Language,* chapters 1-3 and 8

Write a two-page response giving your thoughts, impressions, and feelings about the people, events, and theology.

Begin working on the term projects.

Write in your journal. Reflect and respond to the following:

AUGUSTINE'S CONFESSIONS, READING 1

Augustine of Hippo, Confessions, *trans. and ed. Albert C. Outler (Holiness Data Ministry, Digital Edition, 1999. Abridged and modernized English by Floyd T. Cunningham, 2003). All journaling assignments in this module are from* Confessions *and are from this source and are in the public domain.*

BOOK ONE

In God's searching presence, Augustine undertakes to plumb the depths of his memory to trace the mysterious pilgrimage of grace that his life has been—and to praise God for His constant and omnipotent grace. In a mood of sustained prayer, he recalls what he can of his infancy, his learning to speak, and his childhood experiences in school. He concludes with a paean of grateful praise to God.

CHAPTER I

1. "You are great, O Lord, and greatly to be praised; great is your power, and infinite is your wisdom." And man desires to praise you, for he is a part of your creation; he bears his mortality about with him and

carries the evidence of his sin and the proof that you resist the proud. Still he desires to praise you, this man who is only a small part of your creation. You have prompted him, that he should delight to praise you, for you have made us for yourself and restless is our heart until it comes to rest in you. Grant me, O Lord, to know and understand whether first to invoke you or to praise you; whether first to know you or call upon you. But who can invoke you, knowing you not? For he who knows you not may invoke you as another than you are. It may be that we should invoke you in order that we may come to know you. But “how shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? Or how shall they believe without a preacher?” Now, “they shall praise the Lord who seek him,” for “those who seek shall find him,” and, finding him, shall praise him. I will seek you, O Lord, and call upon you. I call upon you, O Lord, in my faith that you have given me, which you have inspired in me through the humanity of your Son, and through the ministry of your preacher.

Lesson 2

The Spread of Christianity

Lesson Overview

Schedule

Start Time	Task or Topic	Learning Activity	Materials Needed
0:00	Introduction	Orient	Student Guide
0:10	The Spread of Christianity Westward	Lecture	Maps Resources 2-1—2-4
0:30	The Spread of Christianity Westward	Guided Discussion	
0:40	The Spread of Christianity Eastward	Lecture	Maps Resource 2-5 Resource 2-6
1:00	Thomas's Work in India	Small Groups	Resource 2-7 Large pieces of paper and colored markers
1:15	The Apostolic Fathers	Lecture	Resource 2-8
1:45	The Apostolic Fathers	Guided Discussion	
1:55	Lesson Close	Review, Assign	Student Guide

Suggested Reading for Instructor

Latourette, Kenneth S. *A History of Christianity*. Vol. 1, *Beginnings to 1500*. Revised edition, New York: Harper and Row, 1975.

Nash, Ronald H. *Christianity and the Hellenistic World*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984.

Neill, Stephen. *A History of Christian Missions*. Revised edition, London: Penguin, 1986.

Tillich, Paul. *A History of Christian Thought*. Edited by Carl Braaten. New York: Harper and Row, 1968.

Lesson Introduction

(10 minutes)

Accountability

The students need to help each other so they do not waste time. Their time needs to be spent reading information, not just looking for information.

Collect homework.

Journals will be checked during the last lesson and do not need to be checked or collected each lesson.

The students' homework needs to be evaluated and critiqued each lesson. This does not require a grade, as a grade will not be given at the end of the module. Completion of the module is dependent on attendance, participation, and completion of all homework.

What sources were the most helpful in finding information for the homework assignment?

Were there some that were difficult to work with?

Orientation

This lesson provides an overview of Christianity's spread westward through the Roman Empire and beyond. We will also look at the beginnings of the church eastward, especially in India. Finally, we will look at the "Apostolic Fathers" who wrote before A.D. 170 and helped define the faith of the church.

Learner Objectives

Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.

Restating the objectives for the learners serves as an advanced organizer for the lesson and alerts learners to key information and concepts.

At the end of this lesson, participants should

- describe the historical setting of the Roman Empire as the venue for the spread of Christianity
- describe the geographical areas into which the church advanced, and chart these on a map
- list various reasons for the advance of Christianity
- show how Christianity transformed people while building on the culture of antiquity
- describe early missionary efforts
- discuss reasons for and against the possibility that the apostle Thomas began the church in India
- describe methodologies used by Thomas in the evangelization of India

- become familiar with the writings of the Apostolic Fathers
- find among these persons ones worthy of emulating
- contrast and compare these writers' understanding of sanctification to that of the Church of the Nazarene

Lesson Body

Lecture: The Spread of Christianity Westward

(20 minutes)

Christianity presented a faith for the world, not a particular class or ethnic group. The particular, saving event of Christ became the universal Christian message. The geographic boundaries of Christianity increased dramatically in the first century. The task of mission fell upon the church. While the Jews considered Christians to be heretics and foreigners, the Greeks persecuted them for their "atheism"—their failure to worship the pagan gods and the emperors.

Jerusalem was not to be the center of Christianity, especially after its fall in A.D. 70. By then, the church had broadened its base to include the Gentiles. The role of the apostles in this spread is uncertain.

Karl Baus, From the Apostolic Community to Constantine *(New York: Crossroad, 1965), 112-14. See Eusebius,* The History of the Church from Christ to Constantine, *trans. G. A. Williamson (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1965), Book 2, and Book 3.1. See also J. K. Elliott, ed.,* The Apocryphal New Testament: A Collection of Apocryphal Christian Literature in an English Translation*. Based on M. R. James (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), Part 2.*

Only in the second or third century did the so-called "Acts of the Apostles" appear. It is purported to be an account of the later work and martyrdoms of the apostles, but emanated from heretical, Gnostic circles. These stories, nonetheless, appealed to the common people. In Clement of Rome's letter to the Corinthians, about A.D. 100, there is strong support for the tradition that both Peter and Paul sojourned to and were martyred in Rome during the time of persecutions under Nero.

In a sense, the lost record of the later deeds of the apostles only emphasizes the reality that every Christian was a witness. The Christian message spread through converts of all kinds. Miracles, signs, and wonders often accompanied them. That Christians "died well" when persecuted awed and swayed many.

The Early Church acutely sensed the tension between the gospel and the world. In Rome, Christians used underground tunnels or "catacombs" both as places of worship and to bury their dead.

Refer to Resource 2-1 in the Student Guide.

In many ways they were different from their pagan neighbors.

- They refused to take up arms to defend the state, but, at the same time, were obedient members of society.

- Often, they freed their slaves.
- They avoided contemporary public amusements. At the same time, they were compassionate and concerned.
- They were ambivalent toward prosperity.
- They treated their spouses and families with dignity and respect.

Meanwhile, Christians translated the gospel into other languages. Early theologians used the philosophies of their time to express the gospel. In doing so, Christianity demonstrated its respect for indigenous cultures, and its optimism that cultural forms and idioms could equally express and reflect the good news of Christ.

The Roman world was ready for the gospel. The Roman Empire reflected a political and cultural unity. Intellectual exchange remained influenced by Greek "Hellenist" philosophy. There was one language, Greek, for trade and education. Rome provided a common law. The empire contained many gods and religions. People were interested in finding ways to salvation. The broad diversity of peoples and religions demanded a degree of tolerance with the views and beliefs of others. That is why Judaism with its radical monotheism did not fit well.

Nonetheless, Jews and synagogues, scattered throughout the empire, formed a network through which the gospel spread. Their monotheism—pure, radical, and personal—had appealed to some non-Jews. There were Greek "God-fearers" who were not only interested in Judaism but were worshipers of God. In the gospel of Jesus Christ all their longings for salvation were fulfilled.

Ronald H. Nash, Christianity and the Hellenistic World *(Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984), 19-21. See also Paul Tillich,* A History of Christian Thought, *ed. Carl E. Braaton (New York: Harper and Row, 1968), 1-16.*

Growth of the Church in the Roman Empire

Have large wall maps of the first and second century world so that you can point out the places as you lecture.

Refer to Resource 2-2 and 2-3 in the Student Guide.

Christian evangelism and growth in the Roman Empire was effected by mobility in all directions. The empire provided cities, ports, roads, and a postal system that transported the gospel message rapidly over great distances. Evangelism centered in the cities, and progressed outward from them into:

Have the students fill in their map in the Student Guide or follow along on maps that they may have.

As you identify each area, ask the students what information they found from their reading.

PALESTINE: There was inevitably a rift between the church and the synagogue. Eventually Jewish Christianity dwindled. Out of Jewish Christianity came some heresies, which insisted that even Christians conform to the old Jewish laws.

ANTIOCH: Syria, where the disciples were first called Christians (Acts 11:26), became the second home of the church. By A.D. 400 perhaps one-half of Antioch's population of about a half million were Christians.

CYRENE: The church here may have been initiated under those from Cyrene who were present in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:10).

ASIA MINOR: Here the people were civilized, intelligent, and volatile, but receptive to the gospel. Paul initiated work here where, as was true throughout the empire, city-dwellers proved more receptive to the gospel than rural people.

ROME: After Jerusalem and Antioch, Rome was the third home of Christianity. Early, the Roman church identified Peter and Paul as founders. Indeed, these two apostles probably were martyred under Nero about A.D. 64. Initially, in Rome, the church drew members from the poorer, Greek-speaking masses. Only in 190 was Latin in use. Much later, in the 300s, Rome claimed superiority to the other centers of the church.

GAUL AND SPAIN: The church reached the southern, tribal people here by A.D. 150.

BRITAIN: The only certainty is that the church had been established in Britain by 314, when it was represented in a council. Probably, Britain was Christianized through Roman soldiers stationed there.

EGYPT: The important city here was Alexandria, a center for East/West trade. Alexandria seemed eager for new ideas. Hellenistic Judaism was prominent—flourishing under the philosopher Philo (20 B.C.-A.D. 50), who used an allegorical method in his interpretation of Scripture. Important early Christian theologians from Alexandria included Clement (late second century) and Origen (early third century). Alexandria developed a Logos-centered theology that attempted to proclaim the gospel using the language of Greek philosophy.

NORTH AFRICA: The church here may have been the result of Christians from both Rome and Alexandria. North Africa was the first Latin-speaking area of the church and gave rise to important theologians: Tertullian (160-220), Cyprian (d. 258), who worked in Carthage, and Augustine of Hippo (354-430).

By the beginning of the fourth century the church had virtually "conquered the Roman world"—even though

Christians probably made up less than 10 percent of the total population of the empire. At the same time, while the church was spreading throughout the empire, the cultural values of the empire were seeping into the church—especially after the Edict of Toleration pronounced by Emperor Constantine in 313, who had been converted to Christianity in 312 as the result of a vision. This brought a great influx of new believers.

After this, Christians literally built upon Roman ruins. Christianity led in the shaping and the reshaping of civilization. In theology, it was influenced by Greek philosophy; in polity, by Roman law. In some measure, the world entered the church.

The Growth of the Church in the West Outside of the Roman Empire

THE GOTHS: A Germanic tribe, the Goths were evangelized by Christians from Cappadocia, particularly Ulfilas, who in the 300s became bishop of the Goths. Ulfilas translated the Bible into Gothic.

IRELAND: Patrick, who became a bishop in the 400s, evangelized this island. By 460 Ireland was largely Christianized. Irish or Celtic Christianity became known for its evangelical monasticism.

THE FRANKS: This was another Germanic tribe. Among the first-known evangelists was Martin of Tours (316-397). In 496 Clovis, king of the Franks, was baptized. He was able to defeat the Arian barbarians and preserve orthodox faith.

Why the Phenomenal Spread of Christianity?

Refer to Resource 2-4 in the Student Guide.

Historian Kenneth Latourette describes several reasons for the rapid growth of Christianity in these early centuries.

- Evangelists such as Martin demonstrated signs and wonders associated with the Cross.
- Christianity satisfied basic philosophical and religious quests for immortality, morality, and fellowship, while preserving antiquity.
- It grew in a time when old social structures were disintegrating.
- By the time of Constantine, the church had become the strongest institution in all of Roman society.
- Its message was inherently “translatable” in all cultures and languages.

- It appealed both to men and women, all classes, and all races.
- Christianity was flexible while remaining true to its basic convictions. It abhorred syncretism, yet was forgiving for those who fell away.
- Christians died well. The blood of the martyrs truly affected the people.
- Christianity worked moral transformation in individual lives.
- Believers told the story both well and passionately.
- Their lives were winsome.
- Finally, the message of Jesus was itself compelling.

Guided Discussion: The Spread of Christianity Westward

(10 minutes)

Allow for interaction and response.

Does the church advance and grow for the same reasons today as it did in the first three centuries?

What would be some of the different reasons?

Were some of the reasons for the growth and spread of Christianity related to its "minority" status?

Lecture: The Spread of Christianity Eastward

(20 minutes)

Continue to point out the areas on the map and call for information that the students gained in their reading.

Refer to Resource 2-5 in the Student Guide.

Ian Gillman and Hans-Joachim Klimkeit, Christians in Asia Before 1500 *(Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1999), 32-36.*

Christianity spread outside of as well as within the Roman Empire. Outside of the empire, Christianity spread to:

MESOPOTAMIA (Edessa): Oerhoene claimed to be the first kingdom in the world to embrace Christianity when King Abgar IX (177-212) became a Christian. A legend has it that his predecessor, Abgar V, had exchanged letters with Jesus himself. According to the story, Jesus promised to send one of His apostles. It was said that Thaddeus, one of the seventy, reached Edessa. What is sure is that Edessa became an important center of Syrian Christianity and enabled the spread of the gospel eastward.

ETHIOPIA (Abyssinia): Christianity reached Ethiopia by the 200s. There is a tradition that roots Ethiopian Christianity in Philip's encounter with the eunuch (Acts 8:27-39).

ARMENIA: Gregory of Cappadocia evangelized Armenia in the late third century. In about A.D. 300, Armenia accepted Christianity as its state religion.

Based upon Floyd T. Cunningham, "Thomas and Beginnings in India," Word and Ministry *4 (October, November, December 1996), 59-61. See also Gillman and Klimkeit,* Christians in Asia*, 161.*

INDIA: Most historians now conclude—regarding the legend about Thomas the apostle beginning Christianity in Asia—that while there is no direct historical proof, there is enough evidence to show that it would not have been impossible, and it may even be probable, that Thomas did indeed preach and evangelize in India.

According to the late second- or early third-century Syriac "Doctrine of the Apostles" and "Acts of Thomas," written by Edessan Christians, Thomas wrote letters from "India"—though the exact meaning of that is not certain—and evangelized adjacent countries. In about 170, Heracleon writes of Thomas dying a natural death, as does Clement of Alexandria about 50 years later. Origen in 250 describes Thomas as evangelizing the Parthians.

In the early fourth century the historian Eusebius mentions Thomas as being allotted "Parthia" by the apostles, which was an ancient country extending from what is now northwestern Iran to the Indian state of Punjab. There are three separate traditions testifying to Thomas's work in India, even if disagreeing in details:

1. the "Acts of Thomas"
2. the Western church sources
3. the Indian church itself, in its oral history

The latter accounts were transmitted within certain well-respected, Indian families as well as in the church itself. They told the history to the Portuguese who began trading along the coast in the sixteenth century and the Portuguese subsequently wrote these accounts.

If some of the legendary material is stripped away, there may even be lessons to learn from Thomas's experience. The "Acts of Thomas" tells of Thomas's initial reluctance. After Thomas met an agent of an Indian ruler, Gundaphar, God persuaded him that it was His will for Thomas to go eastward. This agent was looking for a carpenter to help the king build his palace, and the Lord himself appeared to the agent in a dream, according to the "Acts," which led Thomas to doubt no longer that it was God's will for him to go with the agent.

So they traveled, eventually encountering King Gundaphar. The story is filled with miracles of a type surpassing those of Peter and Paul in the "Acts of the Apostles." As well as miraculously healing various

sicknesses and raising a number of dead, Thomas lived simply and counseled asceticism.

As his contractor, the king gave Thomas money to build the palace. But instead Thomas spent it to alleviate the sufferings of the poor. This enraged the king, initially, but he came to realize—through the dreams of his brother, who dies, goes to heaven, and then returns to life again—that Thomas built his palace, but in heaven rather than on earth. Gundaphar became a Christian, as did many others in his realm. Thomas went on from there, leaving a deacon in charge.

The historical context for the story is substantiated by coins bearing Gundaphar's image and dating from the first century, and by evidence that during the first century trade and communications were common between Palestine and India. In fact there is even documentation for Indian rulers seeking Palestinian carpenters for building projects in India in the first century! Added to this are the traditions of both the Early Church Fathers and the ancient Mar Thoma Church of India, which is centered in the southeastern state of Kerala, along the Malabar coast.

There is some speculation as to how far east and south into the subcontinent Thomas actually reached. Parthia was considered part of India as defined in these centuries, and the "Acts" seem to locate Thomas in Punjab, which is in the north, an area ruled by Gundaphar, according to history. But the oral traditions of the Mar Thoma Church speak of Thomas's conflicts with Brahmins, who according to some accounts, finally had him killed. Much tradition has him buried near Madras, on the southwestern coast. In the fourteenth century Marco Polo mentions the site.

Historian Samuel Moffatt surmises that there are ways the accounts can be harmonized to indicate that Thomas may indeed have started in the northwest, and journeyed south and eventually eastward. Some local Indian traditions have Thomas journeying to China and back, and successfully establishing churches across much of Asia.

Poignant features of Thomas's work in India, insofar as it is known, may be helpful today.

- Thomas went with a kind of comity arrangement of the apostles, which allowed them not to compete

with each other. Rather there was a plan of cooperation for the evangelization of the world, even though it seems Thomas was given so much larger a part of the world compared to the other apostles!

- That he was given this responsibility is remarkable considering he was the "Doubter" among them, who would believe only when thoroughly convinced of Christ's resurrection. But perhaps that was precisely the kind of apostle the Indians needed.

- Thomas went supporting himself, not as a tentmaker like Paul, but as a carpenter. Their strategies were similar in this respect. Thomas's vocation opened possibilities he otherwise would not have had.

- Thomas went with the permission of the authorities—in fact the king himself—which was important, yet he did not actually abide by the king's instructions. In fact his service was, in the king's eyes, subversive. Yet, because Thomas was faithful to the heart of the gospel, to offer the good news to the poor, God opened the king's eyes and he was converted. The king's conversion had far-reaching implications for his people.

- Thomas's preaching was accompanied by good works. Not only the miracles, but the very tangible redirection of the king's funds touched the people holistically. It was obvious that Thomas perceived well their social, economic, and political situation. His method was both subversive and constructive, making sure the poor truly benefited.

- At the same time, the point was that the kingdom of God is in palaces above, not in magnificent institutions below. As he ministered to the poor, the Kingdom was indeed being built.

- Apparently Thomas was, again like Paul, on the move rather constantly. If Paul's goal was to reach Spain, the western extreme of the known world, one can well imagine that Thomas's intent was to reach the eastern extreme. Whether he really reached China, as Indians (and even Martin Luther) believed, historians probably never will know.

Summary

Taken from Paul R. Spickard and Kevin M. Cragg, God's Peoples: A Social History of Christians *(Grand*

By A.D. 325, Christianity had reached the following areas of the world:

Rapids: Baker, 1994).

Refer to Resource 2-6 in the Student Guide.

THE END OF THE APOSTOLIC PERIOD (A.D. 100)
- Adriatic Sea
- Asia Minor
- Greece/Macedonia
- Iberia
- India
- Mesopotamia
- North Africa coast: Alexandria, Carthage, Cyrene
- Palestine
- Persia (western)
- Southern Italy (Rome)
- Syria

THE CHURCH OF THE COUNCIL OF NICEA (325)
- Arabian Peninsula
- Armenia
- Asia Minor
- Britain
- Ceylon
- Gaul
- Germanic tribes
- Iberian
- Illyricum
- India
- Italy
- Lower Nile basin
- Macedonia/Greece
- Mesopotamia
- Palestine
- Persia/Persian Gulf
- Roman North Africa
- Syria

Small Groups: Thomas's Work in India

(15 minutes)

Divide the class into groups of three.

Describe the methods used by Thomas in evangelizing India.

Refer to Resource 2-7 in the Student Guide.

Compare and contrast Thomas and Paul.

Have the students write responses on large pieces of paper for all to see and compare.

What is the strongest argument, in your opinion, for Thomas starting the church in India?

Lecture: The Apostolic Fathers

(30 minutes)

Refer to Resource 2-8 in the Student Guide.

The Early Church leaders who personally had known the apostles, or who had known direct disciples of the apostles, and who left writings, are known as the "Apostolic Fathers." They include Ignatius, Clement of

Rome, the Shepherd of Hermas, Polycarp, Papias, and the writers of the Epistle of Barnabas, the Epistle to Diognetus, Second Clement, and the *Didache*.

The designation "Apostolic Father" dates to 1672, when Jean Cotelier, a scholar, collected some of the church's earliest writings. Though some of these writings were in the form of tracts or catechisms, most were letters. They possessed a literary simplicity and evidenced earnest religious conviction. At the same time, they showed little influence of Hellenistic philosophy.

These early writings were intended, primarily, for those in the church, which as the writings indicate, was under attack and needed order. They depict a more exactly organized church than described in the New Testament. They indicated the church's need to preserve the apostolic witness in order to guard the church from extremes. The writings of the Fathers indicate a rising sense of unified consciousness about both ethics and doctrine. The creeds imbedded in these early writings were extrapolations upon baptismal formulas.

Cyril C. Richardson, trans. and ed., Early Christian Fathers *(Philadelphia: Westminster, 1953), 15-22.*

IGNATIUS OF ANTIOCH (c. 35-107)

Ignatius was a disciple of the apostles and was bishop of Antioch—the second to be appointed there "in succession to Peter" [per Eusebius]. Ignatius was arrested (about A.D. 96-98) and sent bound to Rome to be fed to the lions. Along the journey to Rome he wrote his several letters. Ignatius stopped at Smyrna on the way, meeting with the church there and their Bishop Polycarp. Ignatius wrote an epistle to Ephesus—which had sent their Bishop Onesimus to greet him—and possibly also another to the apostle John who was still residing in Ephesus at that time, along with a third to Mary, who may have still lived there with John.

Encourage the students to read a sampling of his letters.

Richardson, Early Christian Fathers*, 15-22.*

Ignatius sent epistles to the churches at Magnesia, Tralles, and Rome. From there he went on to Troas and wrote letters to the Smyrneans, to Polycarp, and to the Philadelphians—seven "canonical" letters in all. These letters reveal much about the life of the church in that day, particularly the significance of the role of the bishop, and the unity of the church and the sacraments.

The Lord's Supper was important to Ignatius. He believed "the bread that is the flesh of Jesus Christ" became present in the Lord's Supper, and he believed it must be administered with the authority of a bishop.

In this as in other matters, a bishop helped to safeguard the unity of the church.

Ignatius believed the goal of salvation is "union" with God, and that the goal of this union was Christlikeness. The principle means of gaining this was through the Lord's Supper. His view of Christian life was so high that he believed "no one who professes faith sins, nor does one who has gotten love hate." The perfection of love maintains Christian unity. The Holy Spirit, Ignatius wrote, joined in the work of redemption in the life of the believer.

Paul Bassett and William Greathouse, Exploring Christian Holiness, *vol. 2,* Historical Foundations *(Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1985), 27-29.*

Ignatius's letter to the Ephesians included a hymn. Though Ignatius may not have authored the hymn, it reflects the early beliefs of the church regarding Christ. The later Apostles' Creed incorporated many of the ideas of the hymn, leaving in the paradox of the full humanity and full deity of Christ:

> Uncreated, and yet born;
> God-and-Man in One agreed,
> Very-Life-in-Death indeed,
> Fruit of God and Mary's seed;
> At once impassible and torn
> By pain and suffering here below:
> Jesus Christ, whom as our Lord we know.

Early Christian Writings: The Apostolic Fathers, *trans. Maxwell Staniforth (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England: Penguin, 1968), 77-78.*

As bishop of Antioch, Ignatius had a wide influence on Christianity in Syria and eastward. Jesus, Ignatius emphasized, was not an angelic being, but one who truly ate and drank. Ignatius believed the Christian's imitation of Christ and union with Him must become so complete that he or she is ready to die. While they lived, Christians must be like Christ in acts of kindness and charity. Tradition says Ignatius was martyred at the Colosseum in Rome.

THE LETTER OF BARNABAS (c. 70-100)

This epistle by an unknown author of the first two centuries was attributed to Barnabas, Paul's companion. The epistle depicts a doctrine of Two Ways—the way of the Jews and the way of Christ. The way of animal sacrifices, the material kingdom, and other aspects of Judaism were mistakes. The Jews had taken too literally what God had revealed to them. While the epistle's tone was antagonistic to the Jews, it depicted Jesus as a rabbi and showed how the Prophets and Law of the Old Testament pointed to and culminated in Christ. Jesus had been destined to suffer. The picture of the church in the epistle does not indicate a rapidly expanding church, but emphasizes

duties toward widows and orphans. In using allegories to prove from Scripture that Jesus fulfilled prophecy, the letter bears characteristics like those of Alexandria.

CLEMENT OF ROME (d. c. 100)

Clement is considered the third or fourth "bishop" of Rome. Roman Catholics consider Peter the first bishop, and record that he was followed by Linus, who was mentioned in 2 Timothy 4:21, and who served from A.D. 66 to 78. Linus was followed by Anacletus, who served from 79 to 91, and Anacletus by Clement, who tradition reports, was taught by the apostles Peter and Paul, and is identified as the one referred to by Paul at Philippi (Phil 4:3). Yet the epistles of Clement do not mention either Paul or Peter in connection to the founding of the church in Rome, or link them to the unique position of the Roman church.

Clement wrote letters to various churches outside of Rome. The tone of the letters was fraternal, yet authoritative. Churches apparently appealed to Clement for advice, and Clement's advice constituted a kind of intervention in the life of the churches beyond Rome.

Clement's epistle to the Corinthians, called "First Clement" was written about A.D. 95. Like Paul's letters to the Corinthians, Clement's letter deals with a situation of strife in the church. Clement severely reprimands the Corinthians for unlawfully deposing their elders, thereby cutting themselves off from the apostolic faith and the unity of the church. Clement issues a call for repentance and the reinstatement of the elders. Those who possessed authority in the church should be obeyed. Clement emphasized maintaining Christian tradition as a way of preserving right order. Clement's arguments for order and organization reflected the concerns of the western church.

At the same time, Clement sought to balance law with love. He wrote:

> Let him who has love in Christ keep the commandments of Christ. Who can describe the bond of the love of God? What man is able to tell the excellence of its beauty, as it ought to be told? The height to which love exalts is unspeakable. Love unites us to God. Love covers a multitude of sins. Love beareth all things, is long-suffering in all things. There is nothing base, nothing arrogant in love. Love admits of no schisms: love gives rise to

> no seditions: love does all things in harmony. By love have all the elect of God been made perfect; without love nothing is well-pleasing to God. In love has the Lord taken us to himself. On account of the love he bore us, Jesus Christ our Lord gave his blood for us by the will of God; his flesh for our flesh, and his soul for our souls.

Clement continued along this line in describing perfection in terms of perfect love:

> Ye see, beloved, how great and wonderful a thing is love, and that there is no declaring its perfection. Who is fit to be found in it, except such as God has vouchsafed to render so? Let us pray, therefore, and implore of his mercy, that we may live blameless in love, free from all human partialities for one above another. All the generations from Adam even unto this day have passed away; but those who, through the grace of God, have been made perfect in love, now possess a place among the godly, and shall be manifest at the revelation of the kingdom of Christ.

Clement further defined the purpose of this love:

> Blessed are we, beloved, if we keep the commandments of God in the harmony of love; that so through love our sins may be forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord will not impute to him, and in whose mouth there is no guile. This blessedness cometh upon those who have been chosen by God through Jesus Christ our Lord; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

The First Epistle of Clement, *chapters 49-50, in* Ante-Nicene Fathers: The Apostolic Fathers from Justin Martyr to Irenaeus, *vol. 1, eds. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson (Reprint, Grand Rapids, 1981), 18-19.*

Clement closed with this benediction for the Corinthians:

> May God, who seeth all things, and who is the ruler of all spirits and the Lord of all flesh—who chose our Lord Jesus Christ and us through him to be a peculiar people—grant to every soul that calleth upon his glorious and holy name, faith, fear, peace, patience, long-suffering, self-control, purity, and sobriety, to the well-pleasing of his name, through our High Priest and Protector, Jesus Christ, by whom be to him glory, and majesty, and power, and honor, both now and for evermore. Amen.

Chapter 59, in Ante-Nicene Fathers*, 1:21.*

Clement's writings indicate little regard for the outside world. He assumed the church to be loyal to the Roman Empire, that it would remain at peace with it.

At the same time, there is no stated concern in his writings for the return of Christ.

It is debated whether he also wrote "Second Clement," which was composed in Rome about A.D. 100. This epistle or sermon stressed almsgiving. It also made creedal-sounding statements directed against heresies.

Clement's writings were considered canonical by several early writers, including Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, and Origen. The early Syriac church, as well, treated the letters as biblical.

DIDACHE (c. 115)

The manuscript of this work, also called *The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles,* was discovered in 1873. The work was written sometime before the beginning of the second century and is reflective of Syrian Christianity. It was probably a catechism, and is composed of two sections. The first, often called "The Two Ways," is a contrast between the path of righteousness and the path of unrighteousness, the way of life and the way of death.

The second part is composed of teachings on church rites and orders. It includes various sacraments, fasts, and instructions for their proper use. Baptism was a "sealing" analogous to circumcision in the Old Testament. It was a means of grace. Baptism was to be given by immersion under "running water." Where this was not possible, baptism was to be done by a threefold pouring. The *Didache* offered precise rules for prayers and fasting. Wednesdays and Fridays were days of fasting. The *Didache* depicted the bishop as "monarchial"—presiding over the Eucharist and superior to the elders. The bishop mediated Christ to the faithful, and the faithful to Christ, whom the *Didache* described as coming soon. Therefore, Christians must be watchful of the Antichrist and morally faithful.

The *Didache* included an ancient form of the Lord's Supper. The bishop, and not all elders, celebrated and presided over the Lord's Supper. These were the instructions:

> *At the Eucharist, offer the eucharistic prayer in this way. Begin with the chalice:*
> We give thanks to thee, our Father, for the holy Vine of thy servant David, which thou hast made known to us through thy servant Jesus. Glory be to thee, world without end.

Then over the particles of bread:
We give thanks to thee, our Father, of the life and knowledge thou hast made known to us through thy servant Jesus.

Glory be to thee, world without end.

As this broken bread, once dispersed over the hills, was brought together and became one loaf, so may thy Church be brought together from the ends of the earth into thy kingdom.

Thine is the glory and the power, through Jesus Christ, forever and ever.

No one is to eat or drink of your Eucharist but those who have been baptized in the Name of the Lord; for the Lord's own saying applies here, "Give not that which is holy unto dogs."

When all have partaken sufficiently, give thanks in these words:
Thanks be to thee, holy Father, for thy sacred Name which thou hast caused to dwell in our hearts, and for the knowledge and faith and everlasting life which thou hast revealed to us through thy servant Jesus.

Glory be to thee for ever and ever.

Thou, O Almighty Lord, hast created all things for thine own Name's sake; to all men thou hast given meat and drink to enjoy, that they may give thanks to thee, but to us thou hast graciously given spiritual meat and drink, together with life eternal, through thy Servant. Especially, and above all, do we give thanks to thee for the mightiness of thy power.

Glory be to thee for ever and ever.

Be mindful of thy Church, O Lord; deliver it from all evil, perfect it in thy love, sanctify it, and gather it from the four winds into the kingdom which thou hast prepared for it.

Thine is the power and the glory for ever and ever.

Let His Grace draw near, and let this present world pass away.

Hosanna to the God of David.

Whosoever is holy, let him approach. Whoso is not, let him repent.

Early Christian Writings, *231-232.*

O Lord come quickly. Amen.

PAPIAS (c. 130)

Papias was bishop of Hierapolis about A.D. 130. Irenaeus writes that Papias was a disciple of the apostle John and a companion of Polycarp. Papias composed at least five treatises, none of which still exist, except for quotes by Irenaeus and Eusebius. From Papias, apparently, the church remembered that Mark's Gospel was dependent on Peter, and that Matthew composed materials in Hebrew.

At the Second Coming, Papias believed, there would be joys for Christians and material benefits. Furthermore, there would be a millennium in which the messianic kingdom would be established, with the saints enjoying fruits on earth.

SHEPHERD OF HERMAS (c. 140-155)

The letter was probably written 140-155, perhaps by a brother of Pope Pius. It drew its name from an angel who visited Hermas in the form of a shepherd. The book was widely used in the Greek-speaking church and served as a textbook for those seeking baptism. The writer was a one-time Christian slave sold in Rome to a woman, Rhoda, who set him free. He married and became a wealthy merchant, but lost all in a persecution of Christians.

The book has three parts: the first deals with visions, the second with mandates, and the third with similitudes. It teaches the necessity of penance and the possibility of forgiveness of sins after baptism. It indicates that perfect love is an expected norm, and out of this perfect love there flowed acceptance for repentant ones fallen into sin. Hermas expected those baptized to be able to live without sin, but the church inevitably had to deal with those who did not avail themselves of the grace. More than other writers of the time, Hermas emphasized the work of the Holy Spirit in believers. The Holy Spirit empowers believers to live pure lives. This was not just an ideal, but a norm.

POLYCARP (c. 69-155)

Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna, was a leading churchman of his time, probably a disciple of John, and a staunch defender of orthodox faith against the heretics. On his

way to martyrdom, he wrote several letters; only one remains, written to the church in Philippi. Polycarp recognized his own leadership over the Philippians and urged Christians to obey the word of righteousness and accept discipline. He argued against those who denied that Jesus had come in the flesh, and those who supposed that Christians, being under grace rather than under the law, were excused from right behavior. The letter emphasized salvation through adherence to tradition and orthodox faith. It also emphasized conduct as a crucial means of salvation and demonstrated continuities between the Old and New Testaments.

EPISTLE TO DIOGNETUS

This letter was probably written by an unknown Christian—possibly Quadratus of Asia Minor—in Asia Minor in the second century, to an inquirer by the name of Diognetus—possibly Emperor Hadrian.

The letter uses Johannine categories in speaking of Christ and the revelation of God. The author explains why Judaism and paganism cannot be tolerated and calls Christians the "soul of the world." Salvation comes through God's love. The letter also included the Logos doctrine that later would be become prominent among Christian apologists.

Conclusion

These early writings helped to define and shape the beliefs of early Christians. They depict a church in the process of 1) developing liturgies and rituals, and 2) defining a Christian's place in the world. They show a church that very consciously understood itself as standing apart from the cultures in which it existed. The church was developing Christian doctrine—its beliefs, teachings, and confessions—based on the word of God.

Jaroslav Pelikan, The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine, *vol. 1,* The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition 100-600 *(Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971), 1.*

Guided Discussion: The Apostolic Fathers

(10 minutes)

Allow for interaction and response.

What was the early theology of the church in relation to salvation?

Ask the students about other information they may have found in their homework reading.

What was the theology in relation to sanctification?

What was the theology in relation to the church?

How much was John Wesley influenced by the Fathers?

Lesson Close

(5 minutes)

Review

Call on students for response.

How much has our denomination been influenced by the Early Church?

In what ways?

Assign Homework

Direct students to the Homework Assignments in the Student Guide.

Read a portion of the *Didache.* Look for specific references that relate to our doctrines and rituals. Write a two-page paper.

Reading topics:

- Early theologians—Irenaeus, Tertullian
- Early Church persecution and toleration
- Gnosticism
- Shelley, *Church History in Plain Language,* chapters 4, 5, and 9

Write a two-page response giving your thoughts, impressions, and feelings about the people, events, and theology.

Work on the term projects.

Write in your journal. Reflect on and respond to the following:

AUGUSTINE'S CONFESSIONS, READING 2

CHAPTER V
5. Who shall bring me to rest in you? Who will send you into my heart so to overwhelm it that my sins shall be blotted out and I may embrace you, my only good? What are you to me? Have mercy that I may speak. What am I to you that you should command me to love you, and if I do it not, art angry and threaten vast misery? Is it, then, a trifling sorrow not to love you? It is not so to me. Tell me, by your mercy, O Lord, my God, what you are to me. Say to my soul, "I am your salvation." So speak that I may hear. Behold, the ears of my heart are before you, O Lord; open them and say to my soul, "I am your salvation." I will hasten

after that voice, and I will lay hold upon you. Hide not your face from me . . .

6. The house of my soul is too narrow for you to come into me; let it be enlarged by you. It is in ruins; do you restore it. There is much about it that must offend your eyes; I confess and know it. But who will cleanse it? Or, to whom shall I cry but to you? “Cleanse you me from my secret faults,” O Lord, “and keep back your servant from strange sins.” “I believe, and therefore do I speak.” But you, O Lord, you know. Have I not confessed my transgressions unto you, O my God; and hast you not put away the iniquity of my heart? I do not contend in judgment with you, who are truth itself; and I would not deceive myself, lest my iniquity lie even to itself. I do not, therefore, contend in judgment with you, for “if you, Lord, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?”

CHAPTER XII

19. But in this time of childhood . . . I had no love of learning, and hated to be driven to it. Yet I was driven to it just the same, and good was done for me, even though I did not do it well, for I would not have learned if I had not been forced to it. For no man does well against his will, even if what he does is a good thing. Neither did they who forced me do well, but the good that was done me came from you, my God. For they did not care about the way in which I would use what they forced me to learn, and took it for granted that it was to satisfy the inordinate desires of a rich beggary and a shameful glory. But you, Lord, by whom the hairs of our head are numbered, did use for my good the error of all who pushed me on to study: . . . And I—though so small a boy yet so great a sinner—was not punished without warrant. Thus by the instrumentality of those who did not do well, you did well for me; and by my own sin you did justly punish me. For it is even as you have ordained: that every inordinate affection brings on its own punishment.

Lesson 3

Early Church Doctrine and Persecution

Lesson Overview

Schedule

Start Time	Task or Topic	Learning Activity	Materials Needed
0:00	Introduction	Orient	Student Guide
0:10	Early Theologians	Lecture	Resource 3-1 Resource 3-2
0:35	Early Church Persecution and Final Toleration	Lecture	Resource 3-3 Resource 3-4
1:10	Gnosticism and Other Early Heresies	Lecture	Resource 3-5
1:35	Contemporary Expressions of Heresy	Small Groups	Magazines, newspapers, books Large pieces of paper
1:55	Lesson Close	Review, Assign	Resource 3-6 Student Guide

Suggested Reading for Instructor

Aulen, Gustaf. *Christus Victor: An Historical Study of the Three Main Types of the Idea of the Atonement*. Reprint, New York: Macmillan, 1969.

Bassett, Paul, and William Greathouse. *Exploring Christian Holiness*. Vol. 2, *The Historical Development*. Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1985.

Bassett, Paul, ed. *Great Holiness Classics.* Vol. 1, *Holiness Teaching: New Testament Times to Wesley*. Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1997.

Brown, Harold O. J. *Heresies: The Image of Christ in the Mirror of Heresy and Orthodoxy from the Apostles to the Present*. Reprint, Grand Rapids: Baker, 1988.

Frend, W. H. C. *Martyrdom and Persecution in the Early Church: A Study of a Conflict from the Maccabees to Donatists*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1981.

_____. *The Rise of Christianity*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984.

Gonzalez, Justo. *A History of Christian Thought*. Vol. 1, *From the Beginning to the Council of Chalcedon*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1970.

Gooch, John O. "The Concept of Holiness in Tertullian." Ph.D. dissertation, St. Louis University, 1983.

Grant, Robert M. *Augustus to Constantine: The Rise and Triumph of Christianity in the Roman World*. Reprint, San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1990.

Greenslade, S. L., ed. *Early Latin Theology*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1956.

http://www.ccel.org/fathers2/

Lightfoot, J. B., ed. and trans. *The Apostolic Fathers: Clement, Ignatius and Polycarp*. 3 vols. Reprint, Grand Rapids: Baker, 1981.

Pelikan, Jaroslav. *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine*. Vol. 1, *The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition (100–600)*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971.

Roberts, Alexander, and James Donaldson, eds. *The Ante-Nicene Fathers: Translations of the Writings of the Fathers Down to A.D. 325*. Vol. 1, *The Apostolic Fathers from Justin Martyr to Irenaeus*. American edition. Reprint, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1981.

Lesson Introduction

(10 minutes)

Accountability

Ask the students which books or Internet sites were helpful and which ones were not helpful. During these first few lessons it is important for the students to share helpful sources of information.

Call on 1 or 2 students to read their papers on the Didache.

Return and collect homework.

Orientation

Like the "Apostolic Fathers," early theologians Irenaeus and Tertullian helped to define the faith of the Church.

The Christian Church underwent active persecution in the Roman Empire. Particularly severe persecution came under Emperor Nero in AD 64, and during the periods from 155 to 180 under Emperors Antoninus Pius and Marcus Aurelius—which were most severe in Lyons. In the 250s persecution came under Emperors Decius, Gallus, and Valerian, and from 303 to 313 under Emperor Diocletian. In addition to these, there were other periods and particular places where Christians suffered and died for their faith.

This lesson will also cover heresies in the era of the Early Church. The Church came to define what was acceptable biblical and orthodox belief, and what was unacceptable, by its responses to false teachers and false teaching.

Learner Objectives

Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.

Restating the objectives for the learners serves as an advanced organizer for the lesson and alerts learners to key information and concepts.

At the end of this lesson, participants should

- be aware of the writings of Irenaeus and Tertullian
- find qualities among these persons worthy of emulating
- contrast and compare these writers' understanding of sanctification to the Church of the Nazarene
- trace the story of the Roman persecutions of the Church from Nero to the Edict of Toleration

- articulate reasons for Rome's persecutions of both the Jews and Christians
- develop an appreciation for the martyrs in the light of some specific examples, such as Polycarp
- understand the divergent voices of Christianity in the Early Church, and the sense of the need for unity upon crucial doctrines
- draw parallels in today's Church by:
  1. explaining three characteristics of Gnosticism, or other heretical notions, and connecting these characteristics to current religious movements
  2. showing how—especially in relation to Montanism—claims of "higher spiritual knowledge and experience" developed into heresy
- explain the meaning of heresy and orthodoxy

Lesson Body

Lecture: Early Theologians

(25 minutes)

Two significant theologians arose in the late second century: Irenaeus and Tertullian. These two significant church leaders molded the direction of Christian theology and raised the question as to the place of the Church in God's plan of salvation. In general ways, Irenaeus represents paths of thought taken by the Eastern or Greek-speaking church, and Tertullian the direction taken by the Western or Latin-speaking church.

Irenaeus (130-202)

Refer to Resource 3-1 in the Student Guide.

Irenaeus was born in Asia Minor. He settled in Lyons, Gaul, about 170 and became bishop of Lyons after 177. During this time the church in Lyons faced major persecutions. This influenced his theology. Many of his works were addressed to heretics. These included *Denunciation and Refutation of the So-Called Gnosis* and *Demonstration of Apostolic Preaching*.

In the *Denunciation,* Irenaeus countered Gnostics' claims that redemption was wholly discontinuous with creation. God is the same. The Old Testament God, the one who creates, is the same God who saves. God, not Satan, was the ruler of the world. Yet, Irenaeus depicted a real struggle between God and the devil. Irenaeus assumed a kind of cosmic dualism, of evil forces versus God. Human beings became captive to both sin and death.

God ruled by "two hands": the Son and the Holy Spirit. The Son and the Holy Spirit were not intermediary beings, but God himself as He related himself to the world.

God created human beings in His own image, which is to say, in the image of His Son. Human beings possessed a lost image of God, but Christians were enabled to grow toward that image in free response to God's grace. That is to say, their original "perfection" was finite. It did not imply their original completion. Their original perfection included the capacity for development and growth. This is the essence of what God intended when He created human beings. Adam and Eve were like children—weak and vulnerable. From

the beginning of their creation, in relation to them, God was long-suffering and patient.

Human beings were to grow until they reached the "stature of the fullness of Christ" (Eph 4:13), Irenaeus said. Growing toward God, humans would have fulfilled God's purposes. As learning and developing creatures, Adam and Eve needed "evil" in order to know the good. Being free-willing, they needed to be able to choose between right and wrong. Adam's fall was basically an interruption of human growth, but the Fall made human beings servants of the devil.

One might question why God created such a weak and vulnerable creature. God could, of course, have created any type of being. If God had created beings not able to will, and subsequently not able to fall, He could have, but they would have been some other type, and not "human" beings.

This interpretation of Irenaeus is derived from John Hick, Evil and the God of Love *(rev. ed. San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1978), 211-15, and throughout.*

God's remedy for sin was Christ. In Christ there is the union of humanity and divinity. He is the Word of God to humanity. In Christ the divine will dominated the human life and the Word of God found perfect expression in His work. Christ is the Human who responds to the Word. Christ became human that we might become divine, is the way Irenaeus put it.

Irenaeus formulated what has been called the "classic" or "Christus Victor" idea of the atonement. The initial victory of Christ is His incarnation, which, in itself, is saving. In Christ, God is both the Reconciler and the Reconciled. In the Atonement, in Irenaeus's theology, God took the initiative, and all was accomplished through Christ for human salvation. Through not only the Cross and Resurrection, but in the Incarnation itself and in Christ's consistent holy obedience to the Father, Christ became Victor over hostile powers of sin, death, and the devil. Christ's destruction of sin *for* us, His historic and objective conquest over sin, makes possible human beings' true sanctification—Christ *in* us.

Early in the twentieth century the influence of Irenaeus's ideas of the Atonement was noted by Gustaf Aulen. Christus Victor: An Historical Study of the Three Main Types of the Idea of the Atonement *(1931; Reprint, New York: Macmillan, 1969), 16-35.*

The whole earthly life of Christ was a "continuous process of victorious conflict" over Satan. Christ is all Adam should have been had he not succumbed to temptation. Christ frees human beings from bondage so they may grow in His image.

Employing this theme from a Wesleyan perspective is William Greathouse, "Sanctification and the Christus Victor Motif in Wesleyan Theology," Wesleyan Theological Journal 7 *(Spring 1972): 47-59.*

Irenaeus employed the idea of "recapitulation" to understand Christ and salvation. Christ was the New Adam, the "Son of Man," because "he recapitulates [sums up] in himself the original man who was the

source from which sprang the race fashioned after woman; that as through the conquest of man our race went down to death, so through the victory of man we might ascend to life."

Irenaeus, Against the Heretics, *V.21.1., in* Documents of the Christian Church, *ed. Henry Bettenson (Second ed., London: Oxford University Press, 1963), 30.*

The Church, with Christ as head, overcomes Satan. This is Irenaeus's theology of the Church. The Church enables growth toward Christlikeness. Human beings are united to Christ through the Lord's Supper and baptism. But to do so, the Church must remain true. Christians must be firm in the doctrines they have received. For that reason, Irenaeus followed an understanding of the Church's orthodoxy being preserved by "apostolic succession." This meant each church and each bishop that was orthodox would be able to trace its founding and leadership to the apostles themselves.

Irenaeus's understanding of Christian perfection related to his theology of recapitulation, that there was a growing, developing likeness in Christians toward Christ. "They that fear God and believe in the advent of his Son, and by faith establish in their hearts the Spirit of God," Irenaeus wrote, "such are justly called men, and spiritual, and alive unto God, who have the Spirit of the Father, who cleanses man and exalts him to the life of God." Sanctification, to Irenaeus, was part of the whole process of God restoring and perfecting human beings.

Irenaeus, Against the Heretics*, V.9.2., quoted in Aulen,* Christus Victor, *22.*

See R. Newton Flew, The Idea of Perfection in Christian Theology: An Historical Study of the Christian Ideal for the Present Life *(Reprint, New York: Humanities, 1968), 124-28.*

Through Christ's going through life victoriously, each stage of life was sanctified. Irenaeus wrote:

> He came to save all through himself; all, that is, who through him are born into God, infants, children, boys, young men and old. Therefore he passed through every stage of life: he was made an infant for infants, sanctifying infancy; a child among children, sanctifying those of this age, an example also to them of filial affection, righteousness and obedience; a young man amongst young men, an example to them, and sanctifying them to the Lord. So also amongst the older men; that he might be a perfect master for all, not solely in regard to the revelation of the truth, but also in respect of each stage of life. And then he came even unto death that he might be "the firstborn from the dead, holding the pre-eminence among all" [Col 1:18], the Prince of life, before all and preceding all.

Irenaeus, Against the Heretics, *II.22.4. ed. Bettenson, 30; see also Paul Bassett, ed.,* Holiness Teaching: New Testament Times to Wesley *(Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1997), 61-70; Bassett and Greathouse,* Historical Development, *44-50.*

What ideas or thoughts sound familiar to you?

Allow for student response.

How much was Wesley influenced by Irenaeus?

What ideas are new or unfamiliar?

Tertullian (150-225)

Refer to Resource 3-2 in the Student Guide.

Tertullian was born in Carthage, in Latin-speaking North Africa, the son of a Roman centurion. He was educated in grammar and rhetoric and trained as a lawyer. In midlife, about 190, probably influenced by Christian martyrs, he was converted. He was deeply impressed by spiritual discipline.

Tertullian became known as the "Father of Latin Theology." Tertullian produced strong defenses of the faith that stressed morality and discipline. Thirty-one of his works survive. Primary among them are *To the Gentiles, Against Marcion, On Modesty,* and *Apology*. He helped to shape the Latin theological vocabulary that influenced the Western church. One of his most important contributions was to the Church's understanding of the Trinity. He was antagonistic toward philosophy, asking what Athens had to do with Jerusalem.

Pelikan, The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition, *49. See S. L. Greenslade, ed.*, Early Latin Theology *(Philadelphia: Westminster, 1956), 21-24.*

Tertullian believed heresies came from philosophies, not faith. Heresies made faith of ancient errors. Indeed, Christian beliefs—the Crucifixion, the Resurrection, the power of baptism—were too wonderful to be understood by pagans.

The Gnostics and other heretics put themselves out of the Church by rejecting Scripture. At the same time, Tertullian taught, only the Church could rightly understand and interpret the Scriptures. The canon provided a binding authority for the Church. The Scriptures were those books written by the apostles themselves and their associates. Within the Scriptures, Tertullian taught, there was a core apostolic preaching, the kerygma, that was the essence of the gospel. This provided a rule of faith. Baptismal professions of faith, as well, formed creeds that guided the Church.

Similar to Irenaeus, Tertullian believed heretics were unable to prove their lineage to the apostles, whereas, true churches could claim apostolic roots. Tertullian, in his *Prescription Against the Heretics,* wrote:

> But if there be any [heresies] that are bold enough to plant themselves in the midst of the apostolic age . . . let them produce the original records of their churches; let them unfold the roll of their bishops, running down in due succession from the beginning in such a matter that [their first] bishop shall be able to show for his ordainer and

> predecessor some one of the apostles or of apostolic men . . . as the church of Smyrna, which records that Polycarp was placed therein by John; as also the church of Rome, which makes Clement to have been ordained in like manner by Peter . . . transmitters of the apostolic seed . . . They are in no sense themselves apostolic because of their diversity as to the mysteries of the faith.

The Ante-Nicene Fathers, *3:258.*

Bishops were outward witness to and divinely assisted links in this continuity within the Church.

Tertullian's theology of the Trinity became the orthodox position of the Western church. Tertullian introduced the terms "substance" and "person." He taught that the three "persons,"—the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—shared the same "substance." These terms were more legal than biblical. The "substance" represented the shared properties of the persons of the Trinity. The "persons" of the Trinity indicated who possessed or shared the substance or property. Thus, as Justo Gonzalez summarizes, "The three share in single and undivided substance, but this does not prevent them from being three different persons." In this "shared monarchy," there was no distinction between the essence of the Father and the essence of the Son.

Gonzalez, A History of Christian Thought, *1:183.*

Yet Tertullian's understanding of the Trinity left ambiguities. It seemed that Tertullian emphasized the distinctions of the Trinity at the expense of the essential unity of God. Tertullian's view that there was a time when the Son did not exist made the Son subsequent and subordinate to the Father. This view, later condemned by the Church, became known as "subordinationism."

Another one of Tertullian's concepts of the Trinity was dispensational. He taught that the organic relationship among the three persons of the Trinity developed through a historical "divine economy." There was an age of the Father, an age of the Son, and an age of the Spirit.

Tertullian's Christology was firmly anti-Docetic. He emphasized the incarnation of Christ in flesh. He also taught that in Christ there were two substances, divine and human, belonging to a certain person, who acted in unity with both.

Regarding human beings, Tertullian taught "traducianism," the idea that the soul is passed from parents just as the body is. Sin is transmitted also in

this way. Original sin is an inheritance from parents. Tertullian spoke of seven deadly sins: idolatry, blasphemy, murder, adultery, fornication, bearing false witness, and fraud. After a person's baptism, only once, for one of these, would there be forgiveness, Tertullian believed.

The Christian was repentant and broke with the previous life of sin before the cleansing received at baptism. Tertullian was a "rigorist" on this point, that after baptism, one would not sin: baptism made one complete and "perfect." Baptismal water was a vehicle of the grace of God "to make holy":

> All waters, when God is invoked, acquire the sacred significant of conveying sanctity; for at once the Spirit comes down from heaven and stays upon the waters, sanctifying them from within himself, and when thus sanctified they absorb the power of sanctifying.

De Baptismo *4:204, quoted in John O. Gooch,* The Concept of Holiness in Tertullian *(Ph.D. dissertation, Saint Louis University, 1983), 35.*

By "perfect," Tertullian meant 'completed' or 'full.' There were degrees of perfection as human beings reached a greater likeness toward God's holiness. The Holy Spirit is the *Sanctificator,* the one who purifies and makes whole. "No one," Tertullian wrote, "was perfect before the economy of faith was revealed; no one was a Christian before Christ was taken up into heaven; no one was holy before the Holy Spirit came from heaven to establish this discipline."

Quoted in Gooch, 21.

"Holiness" was not only a gift but also a life to be lived; it was both transmitted and learned through discipline. Sanctification, to Tertullian, meant:

- consecration, a setting apart
- an act of divine grace carried out by the Holy Spirit, cleansing and purifying at baptism
- a Christian's participation in the life of the Spirit
- restoration of the lost likeness of God
- degrees of sanctity in moral terms, in which growth is possible
- sexual purity

Gooch, 43. See also Bassett, Holiness Teaching*, 107-12.*

Tertullian had no expectation of Christians living in harmony with or permeating society. He had "no hope of baptizing the customs and institutions of the Roman world," S. L. Greenslade comments. He expected Christians to have as little to do with the world as possible. There must be no compromise with the world in any form, Tertullian warned. Of central concern to him was the matter of idolatry, which was tied to so many cultural practices of the day. Christians should do nothing that would require them to participate in

S. L. Greenslade, ed., Early Latin Theology, *80.*

idolatrous ceremonies. Demons, Tertullian believed, stood behind the idols. Christians could not serve as magistrates, soldiers, or schoolmasters. Christian artisans must not build temples. Christian shopkeepers must not sell incense that might be used in pagan ceremonies. A Christian must be prepared to lose everything.

After an influential career defending the faith, Tertullian became a Montanist about 207. The Montanists were members of a holiness group begun in the late second century. They emphasized both strict morality and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on their own prophets, who included women. Tertullian was concerned about the growing power of the Church's hierarchy, and its laxity in dealing with sinners. He expected the Church to be holy and beyond reproach, to be morally pure. Increasingly in his thought there was association between sanctification and celibacy: "by disciplining the flesh you will 'gain the Spirit.'" Tertullian was appalled that a bishop would offer penance for major sins. He disallowed second marriage and he imposed fasting. It is not clear, however, that by joining the Montanists Tertullian understood that he was leaving the orthodox and catholic faith.

Quoted in Gooch, The Concept of Holiness, *40.*

A point made by Irvin and Sunquist, History of the World Christian Movement, *1:146.*

Allow for student response.

What teachings of Tertullian have found their way into our doctrines?

If you had lived in Tertullian's day, would you have left the church you once defended?

Lecture: Early Church Persecution and Final Toleration

(35 minutes)

Persecution

Refer to Resource 3-3 in the Student Guide.

The persecution of the Christian Church began early in its history. Emperor Nero began persecuting Christians in A.D. 64. It is thought that both the apostles Peter and Paul lost their lives in this wave of persecution. Publicly, Nero blamed a fire that destroyed much of Rome upon the Christians.

Persecutions of both Jews and Christians resumed under Emperor Domitian, who ruled from 81 to 96. Domitian's elder brother Titus had been the previous emperor. Titus had completed the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. Domitian called himself "Master and God," and went so far as to attempt to blot out the entire lineage of David so the Jews could no longer claim an ancient kingly bloodline. Similarly Domitian

started to expunge the remaining descendants of Jesus' family. However, he freed the grandsons of Jude, Jesus' brother, once he learned of their virtue.

Domitian had the apostle John exiled to Patmos. Domitian put to death his own niece Flavia Domitilla, the wife of a proconsul. Christians remembered her as a martyr. Domitian's persecution of the Christians ended after seeing that they were no threat. After his death the apostle John and many other Christians were allowed to return from exile.

Persecutions resumed and continued throughout the first half of the second century. Trajan, who became Roman emperor in A.D. 98 and ruled until 117, was particularly noted for the correspondence between himself and Pliny regarding how to deal with the Christians. Trajan sent Pliny the Younger to reorganize his province of Bithynia.

In his letters to Trajan, Pliny described his alarm at how many Christians were being put to death. He also described some of the practices in which he thought Christians engaged. Pliny wrote that it seemed the Christians were doing nothing illegal or improper, merely going to pray at sunrise and singing to Christ as a god. As a result of Pliny's letter, the emperor told him not to pursue Christians, but only to examine them as any charges were made against them. Trajan's reply to Pliny was one of moderation—as opposed to the severe measures of his predecessors. Rather than outright persecution, Trajan said Christians should not be sought out, and that if they were accused they should be tried, and punished only if convicted.

Eusebius, History of the Church, *145.*

Nonetheless, during this period Ignatius, one of the Church Fathers and bishop of Antioch, was sent by Pliny himself to Rome—because Ignatius was a Roman citizen—where in 115 he "became food for wild animals because of his testimony to Christ."

Persecutions continued under Trajan's successor, Hadrian, who ruled until 138. Quadratus, a Christian prophet, wrote Hadrian soon after he became emperor, a *Defense of the Faith*. He wrote:

> Our Savior's works were always there to see, for they were true—the people who had been cured and those raised from the dead, who had not merely been seen at the moment when they were cured or raised, but were always there to see, not only when the Savior was among us, but for a long

Eusebius, History of the Church, *155.*

> time after his departure; in fact some of them survived right up to my own time.

Hadrian then forbade persecution of Christians without trial.

The next emperor, Antoninus Pius, who ruled until 161, protected Christians from mob violence. Nonetheless, Christians continued to suffer persecution. Notably Polycarp, the bishop of Smyrna, who had been a disciple of John and a friend of Ignatius, was martyred in 155.

After a trip to Rome, Polycarp returned to his native city during a pagan festival and was arrested. Professing that he had served Christ for 86 years, he refused to recant his faith and was put to death. The church at Smyrna issued a widely circulated report of his death:

> All the crowd, astonished at the noble conduct of the God-beloved and God-fearing race of Christians, cried out, "Away with the atheists; let search be made for Polycarp."
>
> And they set him on an ass and led him into the city. Now it was a high Sabbath. And there met him the sheriff Herod, and his father Nicetes, who removed him into their carriage, and tried to persuade him, sitting by his side and saying, "Now what harm is there in saying 'Lord Caesar,' and in offering incense, and so on, and thus saving yourself?" He at first made no reply, but since they persisted he said, "I do not intend to do what you advise." Then, failing to persuade him, they began to use threatening words; and they pulled him down hastily, so that he grazed his shin as he descended from the carriage. Without turning back, as if he had suffered no hurt, he went on with all speed, and was led to the stadium, wherein the tumult was so great that no one could be heard.
>
> Now, as he was entering the stadium, there came to Polycarp a voice from heaven, "Be strong, Polycarp, and play the man." And no one saw the speaker, but the voice was heard by those of our people who were there. Thereupon he was led forth, and great was the uproar of them that heard that Polycarp had been seized. Accordingly, he was led before the Proconsul, who asked him if he were the man himself. And when he confessed the Proconsul tried to persuade him, saying, "Have respect to your age," and so forth, according to

their customary form; “Swear by the genius of Caesar”; “Repent;” “Say, ‘away with the atheists!’” But the Proconsul urged him and said, “Swear, and I will release you; curse the Christ.” And Polycarp said, “Eighty and six years have I served him, and he has done me no wrong; how then can I blaspheme my king who saved me?”

“If you do vainly imagine that I would swear by the genius of Caesar, as you say, pretending not to know what I am, hear plainly that I am a Christian.

“You threaten the fire that burns for an hour and in a little while is quenched; for you know not the fire of the judgment to come, and the fire of the eternal punishment, reserved for the ungodly. But why delay you? Bring what you wilt.”

As he spoke these words and many more, he was filled with courage and joy; and his countenance was full of grace, so that not only did it fall not in dismay at what was being said to him, but on the contrary the Proconsul was astonished, and sent his herald to proclaim thrice in the midst of the stadium, “Polycarp has confessed himself to be a Christian.”

The whole multitude of Gentiles and Jews who dwelt in Smyrna cried out with an ungovernable rage and in a loud voice “This is the teacher of Asia, the father of the Christians, the destroyer of our gods, that teaches many not to sacrifice nor worship.” Then they decided to shout with one accord that he should be burned alive.

And now things happened with such speed, in less time than it takes to tell, for the mob straitway brought together timber and faggots from the workshops and baths. They were about to nail him to the stake, when he said, “Let me be as I am. He that granted me to endure the fire will grant me also to remain at the pyre unmoved, without being secured with nails.”

When he had ended his prayer the firemen lighted the fire. And a great flame flashed forth; and we, to whom it was given to see, beheld a marvel. The fire took the shape of a vault, like a ship’s sail bellying in the wind, and it made a wall round the martyr’s body; and there was the body in the midst, like a loaf being baked or like gold and silver being tried in the furnace.

> So at length the lawless ones, seeing that his body could not be consumed by fire, bade an executioner approach him to drive in a dagger. And when he had done this there came out abundance of blood so that it quenched the fire, and all the multitude marveled at the great difference between the unbelievers and the elect.

Abridged from Bettenson, ed., Documents of the Christian Church, *9-12.*

After Antoninus Pius, Marcus Aurelius became emperor and ruled until 180. Though Marcus Aurelius was an educated, Stoic philosopher, severe persecution broke out in the empire. Marcus Aurelius decreed that all Christians who did not recant would die. At great celebrations to the cult of the emperor, Christians were substituted for gladiators.

The populace feared that somehow Christians, and their God, would triumph over them. So the crowds witnessing the games were delighted to see Christians mauled by lions. In a way it was a kind of human sacrifice to the old gods. The ancient, animist religions of the people united with the Roman pantheon of gods to align the common people behind the emperor in opposing Christianity. Justin, a well-known theologian and apologist, was martyred in Rome in 165, perhaps because he had offended a particular Roman philosopher.

W. H. C. Frend, Martyrdom and Persecution in the Early Church: A Study of a Conflict from the Maccabees to Donatists *(Grand Rapids: Baker, 1981), 8-10.*

Reasons for the continued reaction against Christians were complex. Their neighbors could not understand why Christians would not worship the old gods. Christians would not say “Lord Caesar.” Christians were blamed for plagues. More rational opposition to Christianity was evidenced in the writings of Celsus. He had read much of the biblical writings, and criticized the clannishness of the Church and saw its disloyalty to the empire as a threat. Christianity was atheistic—in the sense that it denied the old gods. Celsus was also alarmed by the scope of the Church’s organization.

Furthermore, Greek philosophy rejected Christianity’s view of God. It could not accept that God himself would intervene in history, that God would let any aspect of the world be beyond His control, that God could possess humanlike passions, and that humankind is at all made in the image of God. Celsus noted derisively that Christians converted women and slaves while abandoning ancestral customs.

Frend, Martyrdom and Persecution, *1-30, 268-302.*

Persecutions were especially severe in the vicinities of Vienne and Lyons in the Rhone River area of Gaul. These persecutions climaxed at the hands of the local population and local civil authority about 177. Though

there were Roman and Celtic converts, the church in the area of Lyons was dominated by Greek, rather than Latin-speaking immigrants—such as Irenaeus—from Asian cities as Smyrna, Phrygia, and Pergamum. Christians were relatively wealthy, sometimes holding slaves. Christians included many merchants who had immigrated because of trade routes, as well as physicians and lawyers.

The churches of Gaul composed a letter to the churches of Asia telling them of those who were martyred under this persecution. They sent this letter in the hands of Irenaeus, then an elder at Lyons. Among the martyrs was Sanctus, a deacon from Vienne who, to every question put forward by interrogators, answered, "I am a Christian." They tortured Sanctus by pressing red-hot copper plates against his body. Other martyrs included Maturus, a newly baptized convert; Attalus, a pillar of the church; Blandina, a godly woman who endured a multitude of tortures and indignities, and yet confessed Christ to the very end. Their bishop, Pothinus, was also killed in the persecution, which led the people to ask that Irenaeus be appointed bishop in his place.

The letter is contained in Eusebius, History of the Church, *193-202, Book V, sections 1-3.*

Allow for response.

Under the persecution of the empire, why would anyone have chosen to become a Christian?

Tatian from Assyria was an educated Greek who became a Christian in Rome sometime between 150 and 165. He studied under Justin Martyr. In subsequent arguments in favor of the Christian faith, Tatian pointed to the simplicity of Christian monotheism, the cultural priority of Hebrew prophets, the consistency and directness of Christian beliefs, the Church's moral teachings, the Church's interest in the poor, including their education, and Christians' willingness to suffer for their faith. For the common people, the latter reason may have been the most important. They were impressed that Christians were willing to suffer and die for their faith.

Persecutions became even more severe under Emperor Septimus Severus (193-211). He attempted to force the assimilation of Christianity with other religions, and, in 202, forbade conversions to Christianity. Under him, Leonides, the father of Origen, the great theologian of Alexandria, was beheaded.

Another martyr was Perpetua. She was a noblewoman of North Africa, a catechumen awaiting baptism when she was imprisoned. She was baptized in prison, and experienced spiritual visions before her martyrdom.

Felicitas, on the other hand, was a Roman slave. She was martyred along with her seven sons.

Christians were heartened by literature regarding earlier Jewish martyrs. They saw their suffering in eschatological, not social or political terms. Many believed Christ would soon come again—a position called chiliasm. The period of persecution gave rise to rigorism. Rigorists were unwilling to readmit the apostate, and demanded fasting and purity.

The persecutions had a deep affect upon the Church. Tertullian once wrote of the second century: “The blood of the Christians is the seed of the church. It is the bait that wins men to our school. We multiply whenever we are mown down by you.” The Church came to idealize martyrdom and martyrs. Martyrs won the esteem of the Christian community; they became the image of “saints.”

A special “perfection” was supposed to be won through martyrdom. Christians witnessed a very literal imitation of Christ. On a popular level, saints as intercessors poured into the Church’s belief system. Local cults associated with holy places and guardian saints became prominent. Old gods were revived in new forms, with new “masks.” The pagan annual festivals were imbibed, along with charms and relics.

Adolph von Harnack, The Expansion of Christianity in the First Three Centuries, *2 vols., trans. James Moffat (London: Williams and Norgate, 1904), 1:391-95.*

Montanism was another response to the period of persecution. This was a schismatic movement rising in the later half of the second century, led by Montanus in Phrygia. The sources of Montanism rested in Judaism, in the prophetic tradition of the Early Church, and in Johannine mysticism. It was a protest against any compromise with the world, and against the institutionalism of the Church. Montanism was characterized by emotionalism and frenzy, Spirit possession and ecstatic tongues. Like the rigorists, the Montanists prophesied the Second Coming soon. Montanism spread widely but declined when prophecies failed.

Persecution was widespread during the 250s, beginning under Emperor Decius, though his reign was short, 249 to 251. In celebration of the one-thousandth year anniversary of the founding of Rome, Decius mounted a general persecution of Christians. The Edict of Decius in 250 demanded that on a certain date everyone sacrifice to the gods and the emperor, or face the confiscation of their property, exile, torture, or death. Origen was tortured, and three bishops became martyrs: Faianus of Rome, Babylas of Antioch, and

Alexander of Jerusalem. Gallus, who reigned briefly after Decius, continued the persecution. He blamed the Christians for pestilence and famine.

Emperor Valerian (253-260) issued an edict forbidding Christians to assemble or to use their cemeteries, on penalty of death. Bishops Sixtus II of Rome and Cyprian of Carthage were martyred.

Relative peace followed Valerian. But under Emperor Diocletian, who reigned from 284 to 305, persecution resumed in 303. This was known as the "Great Persecution." Diocletian sought the total extermination of the Christians as the "final solution" to the problem. Under the first edict, churches were destroyed. Two subsequent edicts were aimed at suppressing the clergy. A fourth edict was aimed at laity. Christians were deprived of their offices and civil rights. Scriptures were burned. Whole families were executed. Christians were tortured by being racked, scraped, flogged, dragged, and maimed. Persecution continued under Maximian and Galerius.

Allow for response.

How do you explain the growth of Christianity during this time?

Should individuals (Christians) who had recanted their faith have been readmitted into the fellowship?

What does this say about our witness today?

Toleration

Refer to Resource 3-4 in the Student Guide.

Finally came official religious toleration of Christianity under Emperor Constantine the Great (272-337). His conversion in a battle had far-reaching affects on the common practice of Christianity. Constantine had been acclaimed emperor by the army in 306, but there were two other claimants to the rulership of the empire. In 312 Constantine invaded Italy and defeated his brother-in-law Maxentius at the Milvian Bridge near Rome. In battle Constantine carried a cross. He believed the cross gave him victory: *in hoc signo vinces,* "in this sign, victory."

In 313 Constantine joined Licinius in issuing the Edict of Milan, which officially gave Christians toleration within the empire. This did not mean Constantine's rule reflected Christian values. He remained ruthless. He postponed baptism until near his death so as to continue sinning without violating the cleansing that came through the holy water. His conversion was not an inward transformation, and he never completely

understood Christian doctrine or its exclusivity. He continued to appeal to pagan gods, especially to the Sun God. Yet he wanted a strong religion that would unify the empire. Christians rejoiced. They were convinced God had raised up Constantine.

Christianity quickly became wedded to the empire, the Church to the state. In addition to being freed from persecution, the Edict of Toleration released churches from taxation. The empire began subsidies to certain Christian ministers. It financed church building projects and facilitated the copying of the Bible. A portion of provincial revenues went to charities. In 319 Constantine decreed the burning of soothsayers. In 321, he declared Sunday a day of rest. He passed laws that expressed Christian values, including ones protecting children, slaves, peasants, and prisoners.

Constantine succeeded in uniting the Eastern and Western halves of the empire in 324 by defeating Lincinius. This left Constantine the sole ruler. But he was disappointed to find that churches in the East differed with churches in the West over some theological issues. Wanting Christianity to present a united front in the empire, Constantine called for Church leaders to meet together at the Council of Nicea in 325.

Henry Chadwick, The Early Church *(New York: Penguin, 1967), 125-29.*

How genuine was Constantine's conversion and baptism?

Christ and Culture

The Early Church understood itself as being in tension with the world. Christians thought Jesus would soon return. They made no attempt to change the world. They felt themselves to be powerless victims, not molders of events.

In a variety of ways, Christians understood that Christ stood against culture. Early theologians such as Tertullian emphasized this separation from the world. At the same time, Tertullian recognized that Christianity provided a bulwark against the chaos of pagan society. Christians refused to accept jobs in the government. Christians avoided public amusements popular in the Roman world. They avoided gladiator fights and theaters, which both honored pagan gods and were lewd.

Though many Christians still owned slaves, they worked against slavery's cruelest forms and reminded masters that they were responsible to God. They

added dignity to slaves by reminding them that they were working for God. Preachers urged Christians not to be extravagant in how they lived. Christians valued poverty rather than wealth and gave to others sacrificially. They supported widows, orphans, sick and disabled people, and extended help to non-Christians—for instance, during famines at Carthage and Alexandria.

More than society around them, they gave women prominent roles. They forbade abortion and allowed divorce only for the sake of adultery. Christians did not participate in war. They were committed pacifists. For three centuries Christian writings condemned war. Their allegiance was to Christ, not Rome. Having been the victims of so much, they stood against all bloodshed and violence.

After toleration, the situation changed. Now Christians were charged with responsibilities. As the Roman world changed, the Church remained one of the strongest institutions in the empire. Eventually it was one of the few threads that bound together various parts of the Roman world. Augustine—writing about a century after the enactment of toleration in the empire—sharply contrasted the "city of God" to the "earthly city;" he concluded that some wars were just, if under the authority of a ruler and if fought without unnecessary violence, and with "inward love" aimed at restoring peace.

With toleration, no longer did being a Christian demand sacrificial commitment to the point of giving one's life. Now Christians, like any other group of citizens in the empire, were responsible for its successes and failures. Christians put pressure on the empire to change laws, for instance, to allow for the fair treatment of widows and poor. But the temptation became great for the Church, which had heretofore courageously entered the world, to allow the world to enter the Church.

Latourette, A History of Christianity, *1:236-66. See also H. Richard Niebuhr,* Christ and Culture *(New York: Harper and Row, 1951), 41-55.*

What did Constantine's conversion do for the Church and its relationship to the state?

Lecture: Gnosticism and Other Early Heresies

(25 minutes)

Refer to Resource 3-5 in the Student Guide.

See Acts 5:17 and 26:5.

"Heresy" is based on the Greek word *haireses,* meaning group or party. It represents a doctrine or a party that destroys the unity of the Christian Church. Heresy is most often related to doctrinal disagreements on issues relating to the nature of Christ and the

Trinity. Augustine defined heretics as those who "in holding false opinions regarding God, do injury to the faith itself." He contrasted heretics to schismatics, who believed the same as the orthodox Church, but who "in wicked separations break off from brotherly community."

Cited in Pelikan, The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition, *69.*

"Heresy" presupposes there is "orthodoxy," or right belief, and a defining tradition of Christian teachings. Whenever it arises, heresy serves the Church, in a sense, by making orthodoxy explicit.

Harold O. J. Brown, Heresies: The Image of Christ in the Mirror of Heresy and Orthodoxy from the Apostles to the Present *(Reprint, Grand Rapids: Baker, 1988), 2-5.*

Early Heresies

Most teachings of the early heretics recur throughout Christian history in one form or another. The Early Church's understanding of what lay outside the bounds of Christian orthodoxy continues to provide a benchmark for determining, today, what is heresy.

Ebionism

This heresy was a form of "Judaizing" Christianity. It originated in Palestine in the first century among Jewish Christians. They emphasized that all Christians should obey the Mosaic Law as necessary for salvation. To the Ebionites, Christianity is a reformed Judaism.

They used Hebrew in worship. They were vegetarians. They maintained ceremonial washings and purification rites. They limited the biblical canon to the Gospel of Matthew, which they read in the Hebrew language. Ebionites—also known as Elkesaites and Mandaeans—believed Paul was wrong in emphasizing grace to the neglect of law.

Ebionites could not reconcile the deity of Christ with the strict monotheism of Judaism. In order to reconcile Jesus and monotheism, they denied Jesus' divine nature. Jesus was simply the human son of Joseph and Mary, and a prophet.

Ebionites acknowledged Jesus as the Messiah, but they believed He became the Messiah on the basis of His perfect obedience to the Law. He was a second, greater Moses. Jesus was to them the champion of good and set a perfect example for all to follow.

Jesus' Sonship, Ebionites taught, was conferred as the Holy Spirit fell upon Him at His baptism. This was a form of "adoptionism" that recurred in other heresies. Those who were condemned for adoptionism taught that Christ was an ordinary human. Christ's humanity

was adopted into divinity. This denied a real incarnation.

Gnosticism

According to Justin Martyr, Simon Magus—mentioned in Acts 8—was the founder of this movement. 1 John seems directed against an Ephesian Gnostic named Cerinthus, who suggested that "Christ" designated the "divine" and "Jesus" the "man." The Third Epistle of John, as well as Paul's Epistle to the Colossians, was written against Gnostic heresies of the first century. Gnosticism appeared throughout the Roman Empire.

Gnosticism fit the Neoplatonism prevalent in Alexandria and other parts of the Roman Empire. Neoplatonism stressed the incapacity of matter to reveal truth or knowledge. Gnosticism was influenced, as well, by eastern mysticism. The streams that fed into Gnosticism could not understand how materiality, or creation, could be redeemed.

They could not accept that human flesh could bear the divine. The Gnostic heretics rejected any genuine incarnation and therefore complete redemption in this world. To them, matter was evil, and inherently opposed to the Supreme Being. The material world was neither good nor created by God. All materiality was evil, Gnostics believed. Only through intermediary "aeons" was materiality created.

Gnosticism presented a kind of dualism between spirit and matter. Valentinus (about A.D. 150), one of the more well-known Gnostics of the second century, developed a story of creation that started with the Bythos or Primal Cause or Depth. From this Bythos came silence *(sige),* and transcendent male and female principles in the universe. From them arose both Understanding *(nous)* and Truth *(aletheia);* from these, Word and Life; from these Human Beings and the Church. Thirty generations followed to complete the heavenly world or *pleroma*—the full number or plentitude of aeons. The last aeon was Wisdom (Sophia), from which issued the *ialdabaoth* (the Child of Chaos), who created the universe with all of its imperfections. Valentinus suggested that "Christ's mission was to bring gnosis, so that through it the spirits of men, which truly belong in the pleroma may return there."

Gonzalez, A History of Christian Thought, *1:138.*

Basilides, another second-century Gnostic teacher, formed a kind of Gnostic creation story that also removed God from being the Creator of material

things. God created thought (or *nous*), which in turn created Reason or the Word *(logos).* Reason gave rise to prudence, wisdom, and power (three virtues according to Hellenistic Judaism), and from these virtues, the first heaven. There were 365 heavens in all. God thus was far removed from the lowest group of angels, who created the world. To Basilides, Yahweh, the God of the Old Testament, the God who created material things, was a "demiurge." In order to redeem human beings from this demiurge, the true Supreme Being sent Christ into the world.

Gnosticism was concerned with the doctrines of salvation. Salvation was the liberation of the spirit from enslavement to materiality. To them, knowledge, or *gnosis,* provided liberation from the flesh. Gnosis was a form of mystical illumination that resulted from the eternal spirit. The spirit is a divine substance but is held prisoner to matter. The body, the "animal soul," possesses desires and passions, and because the body is by nature evil, it makes no difference how human beings treat it. This led Gnostics to be either morally loose, since the flesh had nothing to do with salvation, or strict ascetics, attempting to discipline and control the body.

Gnostics believed that they themselves, because of some "seed" or "spark" within them, possessed knowledge or gnosis. While other people were made of soul and body, they believed themselves made of spirit. They used allegorical means of interpreting the Scripture to justify their views.

In spite of the way in which Gnosticism fit some first-century patterns of thought, it failed to appeal to the masses. Gnostic worship varied greatly, from the simple to the elaborate.

Docetism

In its understanding of Christ, Gnosticism represented one of the first forms of Docetism. Those Gnostics who held that Christ was the Redeemer held that His physical appearance was an illusion—since matter is inherently evi, it would be impossible any other way. Christ could not have come in the flesh; His body was a mere appearance. Whereas Ebionism denied the divinity of Christ, Gnosticism denied His humanity.

Marcionism

Marcion, a wealthy ship-builder, was a Gnostic whom the Roman Church expelled about A.D. 150. He worked

in Asia Minor. Basically anti-Jewish, Marcion emphasized grace rather than law, love rather than justice, so Marcionism was a kind of "exaggerated Paulinism."

Like other Gnostics, Marcionism taught that Yahweh, the cruel God of this world, was the God of the Jews—a God of Law. The other, "unknown" God was the God of grace. The true God reigned above. The God of this world, the "Demiurge," was the creator of evil. Christ came to abolish the works of this world's creator. He came not to fulfill the Old Testament, but to abolish it. "Abba," the Father of Jesus, was not the God of the Old Testament.

Marcionism rejected this world—including the "uncleanness" of sex and childbirth. Like Gnosticism, Marcionism had a docetic Christology. Christ could not have been true human, Marcion taught. If He had been a human with a material body, it would have meant the end of His divinity.

Marcion established a limited canon or set of scriptures to support his views. He dismissed the Old Testament. He kept Luke and Paul's epistles, but purged even Paul's writings of references linking the Father to the God of the Old Testament.

Yet, as Jaroslav Pelikan comments, "for raising the question of the authority of the Old Testament in the Christian community and for compelling at least some clarification of the question, the church's doctrine was indebted to Marcion."

Pelikan, The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition, *81.*

Montanism

The movement emerged in Phrygia and spread to Rome and North Africa. Montanus was a pagan priest baptized about A.D. 155. After becoming Christian, he and his followers emphasized possession by the Holy Spirit and prophecy, and attempted to reorient Christian beliefs and practices around the expected soon return of Christ.

Among the prophets were women, including Montanus's own daughters, Priscilla and Maximilla. Montanists believed God gave them new revelations, and believed they lived in a new dispensation, that of the Spirit. Apparently, Montanists practiced speaking in tongues ("glossolalia"). They thought of themselves as being spiritually superior to others. They were "spiritual," others were "carnal." Montanists taught the universal priesthood of believers.

The Montanists influenced theologians such as Tertullian to think of the Holy Spirit in more personal terms. However, they understood the Trinity in "modalistic" ways. **Modalism** taught that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit were successive ways by which the One God manifested himself. Unfortunately, Montanus's followers linked Montanus himself to the Paraclete or Holy Spirit!

Their expectations were associated with the millennial reign of Christ on earth for 1,000 years, which they expected to begin at any time. This is called **chiliasm**. Montanists were ascetic. In expectations of Christ's soon coming, Montanists had a rigorous ethic that included fasting and celibacy. At the same time, they willingly faced persecution and even sought martyrdom. Their discipline and faith impressed the theologian Tertullian, who joined them late in his life. The Montanists' contentions that they received new revelations weakened the finality of God in Christ and the authority of Scripture.

Manichaeism

This movement began in Persia through the prophet Mani (215-277). More of a religion than a Christian heresy it contained elements of **Zoroastrianism**, a dualistic Persian religion. Manichaeism was characterized by a strict hierarchical organization that survived Mani's own violent death at the hands of persecutors.

Like Zoroastrians (and Gnostics), Manichaeans held a dualistic view of creation. Like Gnostics, they could not accept that Christ's body was truly flesh. Rather, they taught that Christ had only an illusion of humanity. They used the image or metaphor of light versus darkness to express this dualism. Christ was the representative of Light, and Satan of Darkness. The Manichaeans taught that the apostles had corrupted Christ's actual teachings, which were revealed directly to Mani.

The Manichaeans were strict and ascetic. This aspect of their religion appealed to Augustine, who made his way from paganism to Christianity by means of Manichaeism, a kind of middle way. But Augustine found the philosophy of Manichaeism inadequate. Nevertheless, Manichaeism spread eastward. Through Manichaean traders along the silk road, its mangled and misrepresented Christian teachings may have first born the news of Christ to central Asia.

Hans-Joachim Klimkeit, trans. and ed., Gnosis on the Silk Road: Gnostic Texts from Central Asia *(San Francisco: Harper, 1993).*

Monarchianism

This was a particular theory of the Trinity that the church in Rome condemned in 195. To safeguard the unity of God—against Gnosticism—Monarchians taught that the divinity of Christ could not be distinguished from that of the Father. There was one "divine monarchy." Christ's divinity was an impersonal power or force *(dynamis).* "Dynamic monarchianism" was a particular form of monarchianism that refused to ascribe "God" to Christ and turned Him into little more than a human.

Sabellianism

Sabellianism was a heresy that arose from a third-century teacher, Sabellius. He denied all distinctions in the Godhead, teaching that God is Christ, and Christ is God. Sabellius taught that God manifested himself first as the Father, then as Son, and finally as Holy Spirit. Christ was a temporary "mode" of God. This position affirmed no real Trinity. This position was called "modalist monarchianism," since it identified the full divinity of Christ with the Father.

Patripassianism

Patripassianism was a form of monarchianism that taught that the Father himself had suffered in Christ.

Responses of the Church to Heresies

In response to these heresies, the Church stressed authority of the canon. It placed the writings that were currently in use among the churches, those written by the apostles, alongside the Hebrew Scriptures as authoritative and binding. In so doing, the Church stressed the continuity between the Old Testament revelation and Christ. The Church read many Old Testament passages as prophecies of Christ.

The canon was fixed by about A.D. 200. The Church accepted into the New Testament canon those works associated with the apostles. This reflected the Church's sense that its faith rested soundly upon apostolic authority. It included the Gospels, the Acts of Apostles, and Paul's Epistles. But there was still uncertainty as to the books of James, Peter, 1, 2, and 3 John, Jude, and Revelation. Sometimes pseudepigraphal writings were still included.

Paralleling the emphasis upon the continuity of the God of the Old Testament and Christ, the Church

emphasized the oneness of God in creation and redemption. The Church formalized various rules of faith that made this point. In councils, the Church's theologians forged creeds based on old baptismal confessions, and developed catechisms to initiate the faithful.

A sense of ministry and doctrine handed on from the apostles and the churches they established in succession was a means of preserving tradition—even as soon as the late first century. The apostles were thought of as champions of the true teachings of Christ. The major churches should be able to trace their leadership to apostolic origins. It thus became important to preserve the history of the churches.

Pelikan, The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition, *107-19.*

Allow for response.

Toward what heresies is the Church most prone today?

Are there particular groups that might be considered heretical?

How does the Church today best guard against heresies?

Small Groups: Contemporary Expressions of Heresy

(20 minutes)

Divide the class into groups of three.

Have magazines, newspapers, and books that could be searched and used for this activity.

Have large pieces of paper, markers, and glue available for making a collage.

Allow a few minutes for reports.

In your group search the magazines, newspapers, and books for examples of contemporary expressions of Gnosticism—or other heresies.

You can cut up the magazines and newspapers. Use the books for writing quotes.

You will be asked to report to the class on the things that you found and why you included them.

Lesson Close

(5 minutes)

Review

Call on several students.

What single event or person impacted your thinking today concerning the history of the Church?

Look Ahead

In the next lesson we will explore more thoroughly the development of the canon and creeds.

Assign Homework

Direct students to the Homework Assignments in the Student Guide.

Reading topics:

- Development of the Canon
- Reason and Revelation: Early Christian Apologetics
- The First Five Councils
- Shelley, *Church History in Plain Language,* chapters 6, 10, and 11

Remind students that the Shelley book may not have information on all the topics.

Write a two-page response giving your thoughts, impressions, and feelings about the people, events, and theology.

Read Resource 3-6. Prepare three discussion questions over the material.

Continue working on the term projects.

Write in your journal. Reflect on and respond to the following:

AUGUSTINE'S CONFESSIONS, READING 3

BOOK TWO
He concentrates here on his sixteenth year, a year of idleness, lust, and adolescent mischief. The memory of stealing some pears prompts a deep probing of the motives and aims of sinful acts. "I became to myself a wasteland."

CHAPTER I
1. I wish now to review in memory my past wickedness and the carnal corruptions of my soul—not because I still love them, but that I may love you, O my God. For

love of your love I do this, recalling in the bitterness of self-examination my wicked ways, that you may grow sweet to me, your sweetness without deception! Your sweetness happy and assured! Thus you may gather me up out of those fragments in which I was torn to pieces, while I turned away from you, O Unity, and lost myself among “the many.” For as I became a youth, I longed to be satisfied with worldly things, and I dared to grow wild in a succession of various and shadowy loves. My form wasted away, and I became corrupt in your eyes, yet I was still pleasing to my own eyes—and eager to please the eyes of men and women.

CHAPTER IV

9. Theft is punished by your law, O Lord, and by the law written in men and women’s hearts, which not even ingrained wickedness can erase. . . . Yet I had a desire to commit robbery, and did so, compelled to it by neither hunger nor poverty, but through a contempt for well doing and a strong impulse to iniquity. For I pilfered something that I already had in sufficient measure, and of much better quality. I did not desire to enjoy what I stole, but only the theft and the sin itself. There was a pear tree close to our own vineyard, heavily laden with fruit, which was not tempting either for its color or for its flavor. Late one night—having prolonged our games in the streets until then, as our bad habit was—a group of young scoundrels, and I among them, went to shake and rob this tree. We carried off a huge load of pears, not to eat ourselves, but to dump out to the hogs, after barely tasting some of them ourselves. Doing this pleased us all the more because it was forbidden. Such was my heart, O God, such was my heart—which you did pity even in that bottomless pit. Behold, now let my heart confess to you what it was seeking there, when I was being gratuitously wanton, having no inducement to evil but the evil itself. It was foul, and I loved it. I loved my own undoing. I loved my error—not that for which I erred but the error itself. A depraved soul, falling away from security in you to destruction in itself, seeking nothing from the shameful deed but shame itself.

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Lesson 4

Development of the Canon and Creeds

Lesson Overview

Schedule

Start Time	Task or Topic	Learning Activity	Materials Needed
0:00	Introduction	Orient	Student Guide
0:10	Development of the Canon	Lecture	Resource 4-1 Resource 4-2
0:25	Canonical Differences	Small Groups	Roman Catholic Bibles Other Bibles with different canons Resource 4-3
0:40	Reason and Revelation: Early Church Apologetics	Lecture	Resources 4-4—4-7
1:05	The First Five Councils and Early Creeds	Lecture	Resource 4-8 Hymnals
1:15	The First Five Councils and Early Creeds	Guided Discussion	
1:55	Lesson Close	Review, Assign	Student Guide

Suggested Reading for Instructor

Chadwick, Henry. *The Early Church*. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1967.

Clapp, Rodney. *A Peculiar People: The Church as Culture in a Post-Christian Society*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996.

Cochrane, Charles N. *Christianity and Classical Culture: A Study of Thought and Action from Augustus to Augustine*. Reprint, New York: Oxford University Press, 1957.

Davies, J. G. *The Early Christian Church: A History of Its First Five Centuries*. Reprint, Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1985.

Evans, William. *The Book of Books*. Chicago: Bible Institute Colportage Association, 1902.

Geisler, Norman L., ed. *Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1999.

Gonzalez, Justo. *A History of Christian Thought*. Vol. 1, *From the Beginnings to the Council of Chalcedon*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1970.

Hahn, Paul. "Development of the Biblical Canon." www.columbia.edu/cu/augustine/a/canon.html

von Harnack, Adolph. *The Expansion of Christianity in the First Three Centuries*. 2 vols. Translated by James Moffatt. London: Williams and Norgate, 1904.

Kelly, J. N. D. *Early Christian Doctrines*. Revised edition, San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1978.

Metzger, Bruce. *The Oxford Companion to the Bible*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1994.

Mickelsen, A. Berkeley. *Interpreting the Bible*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1963.

Nash, Ronald H. *Christianity and the Hellenistic World*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984.

Patrinacos, N. "The Ecumenical Councils of the Orthodox Church." www.cygnus.uwa.au

Pelikan, Jaroslav. *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine*. Vol. 1, *The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition (100-600)*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971.

_____. *Jesus Through the Centuries: His Place in the History of Culture*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1985.

Schaff, Philip, ed. *The Creeds of Christendom*. 3 Vols. Sixth edition. Reprint, Grand Rapids: Baker, 1990.

Lesson Introduction

(10 minutes)

Accountability

Call on two students to read their reports from the topic readings.

Return and collect homework.

Have the students keep the discussion questions for later.

Orientation

The Church developed an understanding of what constituted God's written Word. The canon included those books that had been used in the churches with blessing and profitable instruction. The writings the church accepted as canonical were attached to the authority of an apostle.

We will look at the "School of Alexandria," which articulated Christian faith using Greek philosophy.

The first five ecumenical councils are still considered normative by most Christians. They formed the basis for the Articles of Faith. What was decided at these councils defined and preserved the faith of the New Testament. However, the language in which it expressed this faith was not altogether clear and needed to be refined.

Learner Objectives

Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.

Restating the objectives for the learners serves as an advanced organizer for the lesson and alerts learners to key information and concepts.

At the end of this lesson, participants should

- understand the formation of the official canon in the Early Church
- explore the connection between the formation of the canon and the development of Christian orthodox thought
- understand the unique challenges involved in formulating the canon
- explore ways we ought to affirm, highlight, and perpetuate the canon of Scripture in ministry today
- review the common arguments of the apologists and show their importance in the development of Christianity

- show how Greek philosophy influenced Christian thinking
- show the historical developments leading toward the Nicea-Constantinople (381) and Chalcedon (451) creeds
- understand historically the human and divine nature of Christ in the doctrine of the Trinity
- note the origins of the Articles of Faith of many denominations in early council decision

Lesson Body

Lecture: Development of the Canon

(15 minutes)

Refer to Resource 4-1 in the Student Guide.

In classical Greek the word “canon” signified “a straight rod” or “a carpenter’s rule.” Those books are *canonical* that Christians have regarded as authentic, genuine, and of divine authority and inspiration.

Why was a canon of the Bible necessary? As long as the apostles were alive, there was no pressing need for a canon of Scripture. But following the deaths of these apostles it became necessary that their writings be gathered together, in order to preserve their messages to the churches from corruption.

Another reason a canon was necessary was to preclude the possibility of additions to the number of inspired works. Numerous writings were extant and purporting to be inspired. But which of these were really inspired?

Development of the Old Testament Canon

About 200 B.C. rabbis translated the Old Testament from Hebrew to Greek, a translation called the Septuagint (abbreviation: LXX). The LXX ultimately included 46 books. The early Christians used the LXX as their Scriptures. About A.D. 100, Jewish rabbis met at the Council of Jamniah and decided to limit their canon to 39 books, since only these could be found in Hebrew.

About A.D. 400, Jerome translated the Bible from Hebrew and Greek into Latin—called the Vulgate. He knew the Jews had only 39 books, and he wanted to limit the Old Testament to these, so he left out seven books: Tobit, Judith, First Maccabees, Second Maccabees, the Wisdom of Solomon, Sirach (or Ecclesiasticus), and Baruch. He called these books apocrypha, that is, “hidden books.” But Pope Damasus wanted all 46 traditionally used books included in the Old Testament. So the Vulgate had 46 books.

Martin Luther translated the Bible from Hebrew and Greek to German. He assumed that since Jews wrote the Old Testament, their list of 39 books was the correct canon. He put the extra seven books in an

appendix that he called, like Jerome, the Apocrypha. In 1546 the Roman Catholic Council of Trent affirmed the canonicity of all 46 books.

Development of the New Testament Canon

Refer to Resource 4-2 in the Student Guide.

It was some time after Christ before any of the books contained in the New Testament were actually written. Founders of churches such as Paul, often unable to visit them personally, desired to communicate with their converts for purposes of counsel, reproof, and instruction. Thus arose the *Epistles*.

Within a short time books related to other apostles began to appear. The first and most important work of the apostles was to deliver a personal testimony to the chief facts of the life of Christ. Their teaching was oral at first, and it was not their intention to create a permanent record. Several committed this oral gospel to writing (Lk 1:1-4). Thus the Gospels came into existence, two by apostles themselves (Matthew and John), and two by friends and close companions of the apostles (Mark, a protégé of Peter, and Luke, the companion of Paul).

During the first century after the Resurrection many other Christian books were being written. For example, the *Didache* was written about A.D. 70, *First Clement* about 96, the *Epistle of Barnabas* about 100, and the seven letters of Ignatius of Antioch about 110.

In about 140, Marcion eliminated the Old Testament as Christian scriptures and included only 10 letters of Paul and two-thirds of Luke's Gospel—deleting references to Jesus' Jewishness—in his canon.

Marcion's "New Testament"—the first to be compiled—forced the Church to decide on a core canon. The Church's first core canon included the four Gospels and the letters of Paul. Twenty books were readily and universally accepted as genuine, and therefore called *homologoumena* (acknowledged). These 20 books were:

- the four Gospels
- the Acts
- the Epistles of Paul—not including Hebrews, which was later widely attributed to him
- the first Epistle of John
- Peter

According to one list, compiled at Rome about 200, the Muratorian Canon, the New Testament consisted of:

- the four Gospels
- Acts
- the 13 letters of Paul—Hebrews not included
- First and Second John
- Jude
- the "Apocalypse of Peter"—not included in the eventual canon

For a time particular churches disputed the other seven books: Hebrews, 2 and 3 John, 2 Peter, Jude, James, and Revelation. Therefore these books were called *antilegomena* (disputed). The question at issue with regard to the antilegomena was whether they were really written by the men who were called their authors.

Hebrews bore no name of its author and differed in style from the acknowledged letters of Paul. Second Peter differed in style from First Peter. James and Jude called themselves "servants" and not "apostles." The writer of Second and Third John called himself an "elder" or "presbyter" and not an "apostle." Jude mentioned apocryphal stories. For these reasons these books were not immediately allowed their place in the canon. Eventually, however, they were accepted as genuine. During the reign of Diocletian (302), persecutors of the church demanded that Scripture should be given up. The question became urgent: what did constitute "Scripture" for the Christians?

Kelly, Early Christian Doctrines, *56-60.*

The earliest existing list of the 27 books of the New Testament in exactly the number and order the Church presently has them was written by Athanasius, bishop of Alexandria, in his Easter letter of 367. By the end of the fourth century virtually all the churches accepted these as authoritative.

The Council of Florence in 1442 recognized the 27 books, though it did not declare them unalterable. At the Council of Trent, the Roman Catholic Church reaffirmed the full list of 27 books as traditionally accepted.

In his translation of the Bible from Greek into German, Luther removed Hebrews, James, Jude, and Revelation from their normal order and placed them at the end, stating that they are less than canonical. But universally, Protestants agreed with the conclusions of the Councils of Florence and Trent, as well as the Early Church, in considering the present 27 books of the

New Testament, along with the 39 books of the Old Testament, as the inspired and authoritative Word of God.

The Apocryphal Books

Jews carefully distinguished the apocryphal writings from the canonical Scriptures. The full Apocrypha contains 14 books: First and Second Esdras, Tobit, Judith, the rest of Esther, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch, the Song of the Three Children, the Story of Susannah, Bel and the Dragon, the Prayer of Manasses, and First and Second Maccabees.

Some of the Fathers of the Christian church quoted from a few of these books, but their titles were not included in any list of canonical writings during the first four centuries after the birth of Jesus. Divine authority is claimed by none of the writers, and by some it is virtually disowned—Second Maccabees 2:23; 15:38. The books contain statements at variance with other parts of Old Testament history—Baruch 1:2, compared with Jeremiah 43:6-7.

If possible read these references to the class.

These books were placed between the Old and New Testaments in Roman Catholic Bibles. In the Church of England some parts of the Apocrypha were read “for example of life and instruction” but not to “establish any doctrine.” No Protestant churches accepted these writings as a rule of faith. From a historical point of view they are of value in showing the condition of the Jewish people, and relating certain events that intervene between the closing of the Old Testament and the opening of the Christian era.

Conclusion

The canon of the Bible was established by the church. Christians understand that it was established with the guidance of the Holy Spirit based on which scriptures were used as authoritative guides to moral and doctrinal issues the church faced. Three centuries of church history sealed the selection.

Both Irenaeus and Tertullian contributed to the view that the appeal to the Bible alone was not enough, since the Scriptures could be interpreted differently. This, they feared, could lead to heretical teachings. Rather, they argued for the need to interpret the Bible within the living tradition of the church, which they and early Christians believed had actually preceded and given birth to the canonical scriptures. This living

tradition or "rule of faith" came to be known as the "consensus fidelium"—the consensus of the faithful—with the understanding that a belief or way of interpreting Scripture must have been accepted everywhere, always, and by all people.

The Church of the Nazarene is indebted to John Wesley and the Church of England for its understanding of the canon and its appreciation of the continuity of the Old and New Testaments. The Church of the Nazarene affirms the salvation-centeredness of the 66 canonical books of Scripture. Nazarenes confess that the Scriptures are given by divine inspiration and inerrantly reveal "the will of God concerning us in all things necessary to our salvation, so that whatever is not contained therein is not to be enjoined as an article of faith." That is to say, all doctrines are to be judged by Scripture.

Allow for response.

What are typical questions that laypersons have with regards to the canon of Scripture?

How can we help people to distinguish between the inspired nature of the Word of God and other "inspirational" writings?

Small Groups: Canonical Differences

(15 minutes)

Divide the class into groups of three.

Refer to Resource 4-3 in the Student Guide.

Have available Bibles that contain the Apocrypha. Also have copies of the Roman Catholic Bible.

You might pre-select portions for the groups to read.

In your group compare and contrast the differences between the table of contents of the Roman Catholic Bible and the Protestant Bible.

How are they different?

Are there advantages or disadvantages to the groupings and order?

Read portions from the writings Protestants do not accept as canonical.

Did you find passages that might be viewed as problems?

Did you find passages that might give helpful historical information?

What benefits could there be in reading the Apocrypha? What dangers?

Lecture: Reason and Revelation: Early Church Apologetics

(25 minutes)

Throughout its history the church has expressed the gospel in ways that secular culture might understand. Evangelism begins with that which is common in language and thought, bringing the message of redemption through Christ to bear on present human conditions. Without some way of speaking to culture, the gospel is "veiled," and the church stands isolated within its own walls, unable to address human needs with the gospel of Christ. It loses its dynamic mission if it cannot speak intelligibly. The task of mediating and speaking the gospel in ways that culture can stand is "apologetics."

Refer to Resource 4-4 in the Student Guide.

The aim of the apologists was to find prophecies or anticipations of Christ in Gentile writers. The apologists sought to find in history and literature persons and events that were "types" of Christ.

The Hellenistic worldview, shaped by Greek philosophers such as Plato, flourished in the Roman Empire—especially in Alexandria. This northern African city was a key intellectual center in the empire. One key concept was Logos, which Greek philosophers described as both reason and the creative force of the world. Christian theologians attached their own understandings of Christ as the Logos of God to the philosophers' understandings.

Justin Martyr (100-165)

Refer to Resource 4-5 in the Student Guide.

Justin Martyr was born in Samaria to pagan parents. Early in life, Justin traveled widely, searching for the true philosophy. He pursued Stoicism, Pythagoreanism, Aristotelianism, and Platonism.

Finding Christian philosophically and intellectually persuasive, he was converted about the age of 30. After about 135 he taught in Ephesus and then, after 155, in Rome. He considered himself a philosopher and wore the robe of a philosopher. He found in Christianity the highest philosophical truth, but sought to establish a relationship between Christianity and pagan philosophy, between the Son of God and the cosmos. Three of his works remain. *Dialogue with Trypho the Jew* defended the Christian faith based upon Scripture. Justin's first and second *Apologies*, addressed to the Roman Senate, defended the Christian faith against persecution.

Cited in Pelikan, The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition, *62.*

Wherever truth appeared, Justin believed, it belonged to Christians. “Whatever things are rightly said among all men are the property of us Christians.” There was an all-embracing truth in the meaning of existence that transcended not only culture but also religion. Likewise, wherever truth was found it was in principle included in Christianity. Wherever men and women lived according to the Logos, or reason, they were Christians—whether they called themselves that or not. Thus, pagan philosophers, though apart from God’s manifestation in Christ, participated within the Logos. To Platonism, Christianity added the truth that the Logos was the Son.

Tillich, History of Christian Thought, *27-28; Jean Danielou,* Gospel Message and Hellenistic Culture, *trans. John A. Baker (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1973), 345-51.*

In his *First* and *Second Apology*, Justin talked about truth in Socrates, and about how that indicated the prevenient work of the Logos. Socrates had knowledge, for the Logos was “in every person” even before becoming incarnate in Christ. Plato, Justin said, taught rightly about God creating the world through the Logos. Those who lived by reason, as these philosophers did, must be considered Christians since reason was the Logos, and the Logos was Christ. Likewise, any who lived not by reason, whether before or after Christ, were enemies of Christ. Plato, the Stoics, pagan poets, and historians all saw truth very well through their “participation of the seminal Divine Logos.”

Justin Martyr, Writings, *trans. Thomas B. Fall (New York: Christian Heritage, 1948), 38, 83, 97, 130, 133.*

Justin described how useful the concept of the Logos was, since the Greeks themselves saw the Logos working throughout and within the cosmos. However, Justin found it impossible, given Greek understandings of the Logos, to identify it with the redemptive work of God in Christ. Justin gave a higher power, authority, and divinity to the Father than to the Son. “The first power after God the Father and Lord of all things is the Word, who is also his Son, who assumed human flesh and became man.” The Logos was the first “work” or generation of God as Father, and as such could not be thought of as identical with God. Christians worshiped the Son after God the Father, said Justin. The Logos was of one essence with God, but was not *the* God. The Logos became human in order to share human suffering, that human beings might be healed.

Justin Martyr, Writings, *69.*

Justin Martyr, Writings, *130.*

Justin’s *Dialogue with Trypho,* aimed more to Jewish than to Hellenistic concerns, describes nevertheless in Greek terms how God had begotten of himself a certain rational power as a beginning before all other creatures. This power had various titles, including Glory of the Lord, Son, Wisdom, Angel, God, Lord, and Logos. It was called the Logos because it revealed to

men and women the discourses of the Father. The Logos was distinct from the Father, Justin said, as it was generated from the Father according to His power and will. The metaphor Justin used was fire. He showed that in substance and in number the Father remains the same and undivided.

Justin Martyr, Writings, *347-49.*

Justin sometimes described God in personal ways as the Creator, and at other times in less personal ways as Being. This reflected the Hebrew and Hellenistic tension in his thought. The Logos was the principle of the self-manifestation of God and became incarnate only in Jesus as the Christ. Because of this, Christianity is the supreme religion. Christianity embraced all the best and highest cultural expressions of reason. The Logos incarnated was the culmination not only of the yearnings of Hebrew prophets but of Greek philosophers. Wherever it existed, the Logos was the self-manifestation of God. In becoming Christ—flesh—the Logos itself is transformed, not "adopted."

Justin realized the Greek mind had difficulty understanding how an eternal principle such as the Logos could become flesh. Their polytheistic and mythological orientation gave them no trouble seeing God as human, but the issue was how Christ could claim supremacy. Greeks could accept that the Christ could contain some element or characteristic of God, but not deity itself. Justin's answer to these problems, centered in his Logos Christology, attempted to provide reasons for Christ's supremacy. In Christ, Justin affirmed that God himself, who had always been partially revealed to human beings through the eternal Logos, became human.

Yet, in his attempt to identify Jesus with the eternal Logos of the Greeks, Justin fell short of affirming his full divinity. The Father, for Justin, retained precedence above the Logos. Justin was "subordinationist," thus, in his Christology.

Justin's apologetics did not spare him the wrath of pagans. In particular, he was opposed by Junius Rusticus, a prominent Roman politician in the time of Marcus Aurelius. The state required that Justin sacrifice to the gods. When Justin refused, and confessed his faith, he was condemned by Rusticus, scourged, and beheaded.

Clement of Alexandria (d. c. 211/216)

Refer to Resource 4-6 in the Student Guide.

To Clement, philosophy was a preparation, "paving the way for the one who is perfected in Christ." God was in

everything good, and in everything good one could find God. Philosophy was a schoolmaster or "tutor to bring the Hellenic mind to Christ." Greek philosophy was similar to the Old Testament. Both were "tributaries" leading into the "river" of Christianity. To the Gentiles, Socrates played the same function as Moses. One could see the "unknown Jesus," Clement believed, in Plato's *Republic.*

Jaroslav Pelikan, Jesus Through the Centuries: His Place in the History of Culture *(New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1985), 39, 44-45.*

The Logos was the unifying principle of Clement's theology. In it he tried to reconcile not only Hebrew and Hellenist thought, but also grace and nature. He drew sources from Platonism, Philo (the Jewish philosopher who had, in turn, been influenced by the Stoics), and the New Testament. Clement defined the deity of Christ in keeping with the Logos Christology. He strove after a life lived perfectly according to the Logos: a *logikan* life. His emphasis was on a state of being rather than a state of accomplishment.

R. B. Tollinton, Clement of Alexandria: A Study in Christian Liberalism *(London: Williams and Norgate, 1914), 334; Tillich,* A History of Christian Thought, *55-57.*

The Logos brought order to the universe. God himself remained remote. God is defined in Clement more by what He is not than by what He is. The only positive statement regarding God was that He existed. Only through the Logos did God emerge into relationship. The Logos was the bond between God and the cosmos. The Logos existed before the creation and before the Incarnation. Its existence allowed the Greeks and other ancients to understand the world. Yet the Logos stood independent of the world processes.

The Logos is God, to Clement, and deserving of humanity's love and praise. Yet the Logos's mediatory position involved subordination. Clement sometimes suggested two Logoi, one in the Father and the other distinct from Him. The Logos/Christ, to Clement, was impersonal. It could be described as power, wisdom, or the activity of God. Though impersonal, these qualities were not altogether metaphysical. They related to how God communicated to the cosmos. Only through the Logos did God's solitude and absoluteness become related to the world.

Tollinton, Clement, *335, 340-64; Danielou,* Gospel Message, *369.*

The Logos was the basis for education in the world. The Logos gave rise to both the philosophy of the Greeks and the Law of the Hebrews, the intelligence of the Greeks and the will and love of the Hebrews. The Logos continued to reprove, reward, draw, and harmonize creation in the direction of God. In the Logos there was both light and joy, the Savior and the Physician.

Danielou, Gospel Message, *353-56, 361-62.*

Danielou, Gospel Message, *364-74*.

In the Logos the incomprehensible God is made comprehensible. This is the ongoing, eternal, and pre-existing work of the Logos. The begetting of the Son is the first step by which God willed to limit His own infinity.

Clement of Alexandria, "The Exhortation to the Greeks," in Clement of Alexandria, *trans. G. W. Butterworth (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1939), 145, 149, 155.*

Clement, "Exhortation," 157, 159, 163.

In his *Exhortation to the Greeks,* Clement interacted with the philosophers. Greek understandings about God, Clement believed, must have come in part from some unrecorded historical connections with the Hebrews long before the coming of Christ. In Plato he found the highest conceptualization of God. God was, as Plato described, Infinite or the Mind above the Infinite. Plato was correct, said Clement, in saying that God was indescribable. Clement also appreciated the Greek and Stoic ideal of the contemplative life. "There is a certain divine effluence instilled into all men without exception," Clement wrote, "but especially into those who spend their lives in thought." Only the Logos or reason, which is the "Sun of the soul," can show human beings the true God.

Clement, "Exhortation," 239, 249, 251.

Since Christ has come, there is no need to maintain Greek philosophy, Clement said. Through the Logos Incarnate the whole world has become as if it were an Athens or a Greece. That which the philosophers had only dimly perceived had become light in Christ. In Christ the divisions between Jews and Greeks and barbarians were obliterated. In Christ humanity is united into one. The Logos gave light to all men and women, spread truth around the world, and brought love. In the souls of men and women the "spark of true nobility is kindled afresh by the divine Logos."

Clement accepted the truth of much of Hellenist philosophy, since to him, all truth was an act of God. Philosophy in Greek culture was analogous to the Hebrew's Law. Thus it was a "handmaiden" leading people to Christ. This made faith less important in knowing truth.

Clement possessed an allegorical interpretation of Scripture. The deeper meanings were uncovered through allegorical interpretation, though he pointed out that the primary meaning must not be discarded, and meanings must also be interpreted in the light of the rest of Scripture.

After his death, the church accused Clement of Arianism for reducing the Son to a creature. Sometimes, indeed, Clement was subordinationist, but at other times he declared the full divinity of Christ. Clement's theology suggested a kind of absenteeism of

Tollinton, Clement of Alexandria, *346-47, 357-60; Danielou,* Gospel Message, *374.*

the sovereign God from the world. To Clement, the immanence of God was associated with emanation. Clement lacked a strong sense of the person of Christ and the person and work of the Holy Spirit.

Origen (182-252)

Refer to Resource 4-7 in the Student Guide.

Origen, a student of Clement, was also an apologist from Alexandria. Origen was born in Egypt of Christian parents. His father was killed during persecutions in 202. The same year, Origen became head of the Catechetical School in Alexandria. Like Clement, Origen was a faithful participant within the church. Origen lived an ascetic life of celibacy, fasting, vigils, and voluntary poverty. Origen's *On First Principles* (220) was the first systematic theology of Christianity. After many years of teaching, he was ordained a priest in 230. He underwent persecution and torture under Emperor Decius in 250.

Origen's commentaries covered almost the whole Bible. Origen believed there were three levels in Scripture that needed to be unfolded: the somatic or literal interpretation, the psychic or moral interpretation, and the pneumatic or spiritual interpretation. Like Clement, Origen used allegorical methods of interpretation.

Origen described the Logos as the inner Word and self-manifestation of God. The Son revealed the image of God. The Logos was the creative power of being, in which the whole spiritual world was united, and the unmoved universal principle effecting creation. The Logos implanted its form in all things it created. The Logos radiated eternally the divine "abyss." The Logos was generated out of divine substance and was of divine substance. However, for Origen, the Logos was less than the Father, who was *autotheos,* or God in itself.

The Logos was the highest of all generated realities, but Origen believed in contrast to his predecessors, the Son as the Logos was eternally generated and was truly and completely divine. The Logos had a substantial reality in the Godhead, Origen said, and was not merely the mode by which humans understood God. The Logos was the perpetual intermediary between God and creation, between the One and the many.

Origen clearly said the Logos of God was not a mere attribute, nor an "entity," but a separate "person." The Logos takes away all in human beings that is irrational and replaces it with that which is truly reasonable. The

Logos is the source of all that is reasonable, and dwelled in every reasonable creature. The Logos was within every seeker. To them, the Logos reported the secrets of the Father. He was the Messenger of the Father's intellect.

The Logos united itself with the soul of Jesus who, like all of humanity, in Origen's thought, possessed an eternal spirit. Only in Jesus was the Logos united with the human. The soul was the locus between the Logos of God and the body. The human soul was the "bride" of the Logos. Though incarnated, the Logos never ceased to exist also outside of Jesus, since it existed in the form of all created things. Likewise, the Logos had spiritual being after the Incarnation.

Tillich, A History of Christian Thought, *59-63; Danielou*, Gospel Message, *376-85. See Origen, "Commentary on John," in* Ante-Nicene Christian Library, *additional volume, ed. Allan Menzies (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1897), 305-8; Origen, "De Principis," in* Ante-Nicene Fathers, *vol. 6, eds. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson (Buffalo: Christian Literature Publishing, 1887), 239-40, 246-48.*

When men and women followed the example of the Logos they became *logikoi*—ones guided by meaning, reason, and creative power. The ones who participate in the Logos are in a full state of grace. To such human beings came, in union with Christ, a kind of "deification."

Danileou, Gospel Message, *381, 384.*

Christological problems remained in Origen's formulations. The Father and Son, in his thought, remained dissimilar. His idea that the Father remained above the Son was subordinationist.

Origen's descriptions of God are nearer to the passive and transcendent God of Greek philosophy than the involved and immanent God of the Old Testament. Origen finds affinities between his thought and the Greeks' contemplative ideals of life removed from the world. The assumption is that the ultimate deity of God could not stand to enter into the world. There is a realm of the ideal where God keeps himself distant from humanity. Thus the Logos, which Origen affirms is eternal, serves as the Mediator. Christ alone represents the "with-ness" of God to creation.

Analysis

Adolph von Harnack, a prominent German historian at the turn of the twentieth century, remarked that syncretism was an accomplished fact in Origen. In Origen, von Harnack says, one sees the church accommodating to the pagan tendencies of the Gentile world.

Ronald Nash, Jaroslav Pelikan, and other more recent historians, however, do not look at this part of the history of the church as one of compromise with the world. Unlike von Harnack, they do not see the church

surrendering to Platonism or Hellenism. Christian theology, as it developed as a discipline, simply employed the intellectual curiosity of the Greeks.

Pelikan, The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition, *45-49, 65; Nash,* Christianity and the Hellenistic World*, 9-10. See also Diogenes Allen,* Philosophy for Understanding Theology *(Atlanta: John Knox, 1985), 9-10.*

While Tertullian was asking, rhetorically, "What has Athens to do with Jerusalem?"—when it was suitable for him to do so—Tertullian used Stoic philosophy and cited various philosophers. The principle allowed missionaries to affirm whatever could be affirmed in the cultures and religions prevailing around them, and to see Christianity as perfecting and fulfilling indigenous expectations.

The apologists had a noble intention, to interpret and explain the gospel to the Greeks. However, their reinterpretation of the Christ event, using Logos terminology, inadequately expressed the affirmations of the church, that God himself was the Creator, that God was in Christ reconciling the world, and that Jesus was both fully divine and fully human. The apologists saw the need to express Christology so as to preserve the transcendent impassibility of God, so as not to offend Greek minds. Yet the immanence of God himself was central to Old and New Testament revelation.

Wesleyanism helps on several of the issues over which the apologists were concerned. There is a prior work of God in the world related to the work of the Holy Spirit, who woos and lures men and women to faith in Christ, and who works at all times and places in all people. As the apologists considered the Logos to be within every human being, Wesleyans would say that the Holy Spirit is striving with every man and woman to bring them to Christ.

Any theology runs into the same challenges as faced the apologists. The Christian gospel must not be compromised. Yet the gospel must be spoken in ways relevant and recognizable to the people.

Allow for response.

What are the issues of gospel and culture in the contemporary world?

What are the ways in which the Christian church in your culture today has used contemporary thought forms and/or practices?

What are some of the questions that arose from your reading?

Lecture: The First Five Councils and Early Creeds

(10 minutes)

See Acts 6:1-7, read this passage.

Early in the church's history, followers summarized what they believed in short statements of faith. The church held councils to decide questions that arose over theological and practical issues. The apostles themselves held the first council. Almost always, later councils were called for in response to heresies, or supposed heresies, and schismatic movements in the church.

One cannot understand the councils and creeds apart from understanding the heresies facing the church. The councils and creeds were attempts to define the boundaries of orthodox Christian faith. Their concise statements of faith were based on the Bible, but new theological concepts and categories were used to explain what the Bible meant.

The councils chose particular words very carefully. Each word was filled with nuances of meaning related to heretical movements and confusions in the church. Neither the councils nor creeds were "inspired" in the same way as the Bible. Nonetheless, they proved helpful to believers. Their decrees gained wide acceptance. The church believed that whatever the social and political background of the councils, their decisions were guided by the Holy Spirit.

The Western and Eastern Churches, including most Protestants, accept at least the first five councils as being authoritative in their interpretations of scriptural doctrines. They cover the period between 325 and 553.

Eight councils convened before the breakup of the Eastern and Western branches of the church, the last one taking place in Constantinople 869-870. After 869-870 there were other councils that various sectors of the church believe equally authoritative.

The last three councils Roman Catholics consider as binding upon the church are the Council of Trent that met 1545-63, the First Vatican Council that met more than three hundred years later, 1869-70, and the Second Vatican Council, which met from 1962 to 1965.

The Apostles' Creed

Refer to Resource 4-8 in the Student Guide.

One ancient statement of faith is called the Apostles' Creed, though the apostles themselves did not write it. What became known as the Apostle's Creed came into

church history only sometime after the first Council of Nicea, in the late fourth century, when it was referred to by Ambrose. At the time, there was already the legend that the apostles had composed it. Its origins may have been in Iberia or Gaul.

The Apostles' Creed is based on the shorter Old Roman Creed used in baptismal services in the church of Rome since the second century. The origins of this creed, however, are uncertain. The Christological section may have come first and may have been intended to counteract the heresies of adoptionism, monarchianism, and docetism.

Churches from various ancient cities had forms of Trinitarian creeds that were similar in composition. The Old Roman Creed may have been developed first as a catechism, answering certain basic questions regarding the faith.

The minister would have begun by asking the person desiring to be baptized, "Do you believe in God the Father Almighty?" to which the catechumen responded, "I believe in God the Father Almighty."

The next question may have been, "Do you believe in Christ Jesus, the Son of God?" to which the answer would have been, "I believe in Christ Jesus His only Son, our Lord, who was born from the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, who under Pontius Pilate was crucified, and buried, on the third day rose again from the dead, ascended to heaven, sits on the right hand of the Father, whence He will come to judge the living and the dead."

The last question would have had to do with the Holy Spirit and the church, to which the catechumen responded, "I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy church, the remission of sins, the resurrection of the flesh."

J. N. D. Kelly, Early Christian Creeds, *third ed. (Singapore: Longman, 1972), 114; 100-130.*

Like the Old Roman Creed, often the Apostles' Creed was used when adults were baptized. New followers of Jesus said "I believe" to these basic Christian beliefs. The Apostles' Creed affirms:

"The Apostles' Creed" in Sing to the Lord *(Kansas City: Lillenas, 1993)*, *8.*

I believe in God the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth;

And in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord:
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,

was crucified, dead, and buried;
He descended into hades;
on the third day he arose again from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty;
from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting.
Amen.

The Apostles' Creed tells about the work of God the Father, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit. The Father, the Creed affirms, is the Creator.

The Son is the divine-human Savior. Jesus' divine nature is affirmed in how He was conceived—by the Holy Spirit rather than by a human. His divine nature is further affirmed in His rising into heaven. It is maintained in how He now lives as God in heaven, and in how He will return to earth as Judge.

Jesus' humanity is shown in His being born to Mary. His humanity also is shown in His suffering, and in His dying. The Creed mentions that He suffered when Pontius Pilate was governor. This makes it clear that He lived and died at a particular time and place.

Like Him, the Creed says, one day Christians also will be raised from the dead. The Creed affirms the resurrection of bodies—"spiritual bodies" (1 Cor 15: 44)—when He comes again.

Christ was born in history. He redeems in history. He will come again in history.

The things mentioned in the Creed's last sentences are about the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit gives life to the Church. The Church is the fellowship of believers or "saints"—true followers of Jesus. Within the Church, through the Holy Spirit, among the believers, one finds forgiveness for sins. If they remain faithful, forgiving parts of His Church, the meaning is, Christians will have fellowship with Him and with fellow believers forever.

The Creed guarded the Church from mistaken beliefs. It offered no ideas that were not in the Bible. But it did not answer all questions. Such as, how was the Son related to the Father and the Holy Spirit?

The Apostles' Creed was simpler and shorter than the Nicene Creed, but there were similarities. Like the Nicene Creed, the Apostles' Creed was organized into three sections dealing with the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The present form used by Western churches—it is not used among Eastern churches—dates to the early eighth century. Charlemagne popularized its use later in the same century. It became the most widely affirmed creed used at baptisms in the Middle Ages and made its way into regular liturgical use.

Guided Discussion: The First Five Councils and Early Creeds

(40 minutes)

For each council discuss:
- *The principal theological issues that were debated*
- *The most important persons involved and their views*
- *The outcomes*

Use an overhead or board to chart the responses as the class gives thoughts and ideas.

Allow students to ask questions formed as part of their homework.

The church's historic understanding of the Trinity—a word that is not in the Bible—was crucial for the church. It guarded it from errors. The doctrine of the Trinity affirmed that the One God is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Some followers had made it seem that there were three Gods. They separated the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit from each other. Others mistakenly taught that the Son and the Holy Spirit were created beings and not fully God.

But the church always worshiped Jesus as Lord. If Jesus were not God, it would be wrong to worship Him. The Bible spoke of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit each as being God. Each was involved in salvation. An angel told Mary the Holy Spirit—the "power of the Most High"—would come upon her. The angel told her the "Holy One" to be born would be

called the “Son of God” (Lk 1:35). In this, with Jesus the Son conceived in Mary, the church saw the work of the Father and the Holy Spirit.

The Bible also described the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit at Jesus’ baptism. The Holy Spirit descended like a dove. A voice from heaven said, “You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased” (Lk 3:22). After His baptism Jesus was “full of the Holy Spirit” and remained in the “power of the Spirit” even after His temptations (4:1, 14).

After His resurrection, Jesus told His disciples, “I am going to send you what my Father has promised.” But, He told them, “stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high” (Lk 24:49). Jesus was referring to the Holy Spirit, whom the disciples received on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:4). Again, the church saw combined work of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

The church learned how to define and describe carefully the union of the deity and humanity in the person of the Son and the Trinity. It learned how neither to divide the person of Christ, nor confound or confuse the human and divine natures. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit shared the divine nature. Only Christ shared the human nature. Christ acted through both His human and divine natures. In one sense He was omnipresent, omniscient, and omnipotent, while, at the same time, He was localized and limited. The church learned how to avoid both modalistic dispensationalism and tritheism. The orthodox doctrine accepted by the church affirmed that Jesus was one person, fully God and fully human. But the church’s wisest theologians realized that human beings could not fully comprehend the Trinity. It remained a mystery. What is clear is that both the Bible and Christian experience make these doctrines necessary.

Analysis

While the church draws us back to Scripture, and aims for every belief to be Bible-based, decisions the church made long ago about what the Bible means continue to guide and instruct us. A right understanding of Jesus Christ and the Trinity remain crucial for the church. The conclusions of the councils set the basis for the affirmations of faith made by many Christians in their disciplines and Articles of Faith or religion.

The Church of the Nazarene, in language still indebted to the early councils, affirms the “Triune God” in the

first article of faith:

> We believe in one eternally existent, infinite God, sovereign of the universe; that He only is God, creative and administrative, holy in nature, attributes, and purpose; that He, as God is Triune in essential being, revealed as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

You may want to read one or two of these scriptures depending on the time available.

In support of this theology, the church finds these scriptures helpful: Genesis 1; Leviticus 19:2; Deuteronomy 6:4-5; Isaiah 5:16; 6:1-7; 40:18-31; Matthew 3:16-17; 28:19-20; John 14:6-27; 1 Corinthians 8:6; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Galatians 4:4-6; and Ephesians 2:13-18.

The origins of this statement were in John Wesley's Methodist Articles of Religion, based upon the Church of England's article which reads:

> There is but one living and true God, everlasting, without body, parts, or passions; of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness; the Maker, and Preserver of all things both visible and invisible. And in unity of this Godhead there be three Persons, of one substance, power, and eternity: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

The Church of the Nazarene affirms, regarding Jesus Christ:

> We believe in Jesus Christ, the Second Person of the Triune Godhead; that He was eternally one with the Father; that He became incarnate by the Holy Spirit and was born of the Virgin Mary, so that two whole and perfect natures, that is to say the Godhead and manhood, are thus united in one Person very God and very man, the God-man. We believe that Jesus Christ died for our sins, and that He truly arose from the dead and took again His body, together with all things appertaining to the perfection of man's nature, wherewith He ascended into heaven and is there engaged in intercession for us.

The church finds these scriptures helpful in understanding the person and work of Jesus Christ: Matthew 1:20-25; 16:15-16; John 1:1-18; Acts 2:22-36; Romans 8:3, 32-34; Galatians 4:4-5; Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 1:12-22; 1 Timothy 6:6-14,16; Hebrews 1:1-5; 7:22-28; 9:24-28; 1 John 1:1-3; 4:2-3, 15.

And the Church of the Nazarene affirms, regarding the Holy Spirit:

> We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Triune Godhead, that He is ever present and efficiently active in and with the Church of Christ, convincing the world of sin, regenerating those who repent and believe, sanctifying believers, and guiding into all truth as it is in Jesus.

The scriptures that the church finds supportive of this understanding of the Holy Spirit include John 7:39; 14:15-18, 26; 16:7-15; Acts 2:33; 15:8-9; Romans 8:1-27; Galatians 3:1-14; 4:6; Ephesians 3:14-21; 1 Thessalonians 4:7-8; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Peter 1:2; and 1 John 3:24; 4:13.

What is the role of Christian tradition in forming beliefs for us today?

What role does an understanding of tradition have within the Wesleyan-holiness and broader evangelical heritage?

What other questions arose as you read about the councils and creeds?

Lesson Close

(5 minutes)

Review

Call on students to respond.

Which of the creed(s) has most affected the Wesleyan tradition?

Why?

Look Ahead

In the next lesson we will explore the ministry and expansion of the church.

Assign Homework

Direct students to the Homework Assignments in the Student Guide.

Remind students that the Shelley book may not have information on all the topics.

Reading topics:

- Ministry in the Early Church
- Monasticism in the Early Church
- Expansion of the Church in western Europe
- Shelley, *Church History in Plain Language,* chapters 12 and 16

Write a two-page response giving your thoughts, impressions, and feelings about the people, events, and theology.

Write a two-three page paper discussing the following questions:

- What is the role of Christian tradition in forming beliefs for you today?
- How has this study changed your view of the creeds?

Continue working on the term projects.

Write in your journal. Reflect on and respond to the following:

AUGUSTINE'S CONFESSIONS, READING 4

BOOK THREE
The story of his student days in Carthage, his discovery of Cicero's *Hortensius*, the enkindling of his philosophical interest, his infatuation with the

Manichean heresy, and his mother's dream which foretold his eventual return to the true faith and to God.

CHAPTER I

1. I came to Carthage, where a caldron of unholy loves was seething and bubbling all around me. I was not in love as yet, but I was in love with love; and, from a hidden hunger, I hated myself for not feeling more intensely a sense of hunger. I was looking for something to love, for I was in love with loving, and I hated security and a smooth way, free from snares. Within me I had a dearth of that inner food that is yourself, my God—although that dearth caused me no hunger. And I remained without any appetite for incorruptible food—not because I was already filled with it, but because the emptier I became the more I loathed it. Because of this my soul was unhealthy; and, full of sores, it exuded itself forth, itching to be scratched by scraping on the things of the senses. Yet, had these things no soul, they would certainly not inspire our love. To love and to be loved was sweet to me, and all the more when I gained the enjoyment of the body of the person I loved. Thus I polluted the spring of friendship with the filth of concupiscence and I dimmed its luster with the slime of lust. Yet, foul and unclean as I was, I still craved, in excessive vanity, to be thought elegant and urbane. And I did fall precipitately into the love I was longing for. My God, my mercy, with how much bitterness didst you, out of your infinite goodness, flavor that sweetness for me! For I was not only beloved but also I secretly reached the climax of enjoyment; and yet I was joyfully bound with troublesome tics, so that I could be scourged with the burning iron rods of jealousy, suspicion, fear, anger, and strife.

Lesson 5

Ministry and Expansion of the Early Church

Lesson Overview

Schedule

Start Time	Task or Topic	Learning Activity	Materials Needed
0:00	Introduction	Orient	Student Guide
0:10	Ministry in the Early Church	Lecture	Resources 5-1—5-6
0:40	Ministry in the Church	Small Groups	Resource 5-7
1:00	Monasticism in the Early Church	Lecture	Resource 5-8 Resource 5-9
1:25	Monasticism	Guided Discussion	
1:35	The Expansion of the Church in Western Europe	Lecture	Resource 5-10 Resource 5-11 Resource 5-12
1:45	Homework Reading	Guided Discussion	
1:55	Lesson Close	Review, Assign	Student Guide

Suggested Reading for Instructor

Clebsch, William A., and Charles R. Jaekle. *Pastoral Care in Historical Perspective: An Essay with Exhibits*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1964.

Ferguson, Everett. *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*. Second edition, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993.

Fletcher, Richard. *The Barbarian Conversion: From Paganism to Christianity*. New York: Henry Holt, 1997.

Gannon, Thomas M., and George W. Traub. *The Desert and the City: An Interpretation of Christian Spirituality.* Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1969.

Hinson, E. Glenn. *Seekers After Mature Faith: A Historical Introduction to the Classics of Christian Devotion*. Nashville: Broadman, 1968.

Holmes, Urban T. *A History of Christian Spirituality: An Analytical Introduction.* San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1980.

Latourette, Kenneth S. *A History of Christianity*. Vol. 1, *Beginnings to 1500*. New York: Harper and Row, 1975.

Lawrence, C. H. *Medieval Monasticism: Forms of Religious Life in Western Europe in the Middle Ages*. Second edition, London: Longman, 1989.

Martin, Ralph. *Worship in the Early Church*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976.

McNeill, John T. *A History of the Cure of Souls*. New York: Harper and Row, 1951.

Niebuhr, H. Richard, and D. D. Williams, eds. *The Ministry in Historical Perspectives*. New York: Harper and Row, 1956.

Rouselle, Aline. “From Sanctuary to Miracle-Worker: Healing in Fourth-Century Gaul.” In *Ritual, Religion, and the Sacred: Selections from the Annales Economies, Societies, and Civilizations*. Edited by Robert Forster and Orest Ranum. Translated by Elborg Forster and Patricia Ranum. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982.

Lesson Introduction

(10 minutes)

Accountability

Call on one student to read his or her report from the topic reading.

Call on another student to read his or her 2– to 3-page paper.

Return and collect homework.

Orientation

This lesson reviews the development of church offices, and the roles of pastors and priests in the first centuries of the church. We will also see how monasticism began, reasons for it, and its early development.

The church expanded in Western Europe prior to A.D. 600 through such people as Martin of Tours and Patrick of Ireland.

Learner Objectives

Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.

Restating the objectives for the learners serves as an advanced organizer for the lesson and alerts learners to key information and concepts.

At the end of this lesson, participants should

- understand the opinions and insights of key early theologians regarding the ministry
- compare and contrast the ministry in their own places and time to those of the Early Church
- show the numerous factors that led to the formation of the monastic way of life
- understand and appreciate monasticism as a search for the holy life
- identify the types of monasticism in this time period and know the advantages and disadvantages of each
- give an overview of monasticism from Anthony to Benedict
- understand monasticism as a response to culture and social pressures
- understand some of the methods and strategies, as well as some of the key figures, used to expand the church in Western Europe

Lesson Body

Lecture: Ministry in the Early Church

(30 minutes)

The Ministry in the Ante-Nicene Church (to 315)

Refer to Resource 5-1 in the Student Guide.

The apostles themselves were the first leaders of the primitive church. They had been called to their work by Christ Jesus himself. The term meant "ones sent out" as authorized messengers. If they were like Paul, who recognized himself as one of the apostles, having the highest authority and responsibility for a certain segment of the church (Gal 1—2), they too were itinerant evangelists. As an apostle, Paul preached the gospel; established, visited, and supervised churches; and exhorted believers. He carried the burden for the work. He sent others, such as Timothy and Titus, as his emissaries, and appointed them as pastors. He wrote letters that gave his opinions about moral questions. He warded off schisms, corrected disorders in worship, clarified Christian teachings and doctrines, and smoothed relationships. He raised money for others and supported himself by his own work. Apparently, Paul had no wife. At the same time, he recognized that the church was greater than himself. It is apparent that others in the primitive church were acting similarly to Paul, if in lesser spheres of influence.

Paul himself listed various types of offices in the church: apostles, prophets, those who served others, teachers, those who encouraged others, those who contributed to the needs of others, those who gave generously, those who worked miracles, those with gifts of healing, those able to help others, those gifted in leadership and administration, those able to show mercy, and those able to speak in different languages (1 Cor 12:28 and Rom 12:6-8). These offices were related to the various spiritual gifts of individuals. The church had to assume full responsibility for new converts, many of whom were cut off from their family and community, and to provide for their needs.

From other sources we know that particular leaders became responsible for various duties. Some ordered the services, some entertained visitors, some settled disputes between members, some visited the sick, and others attended to the needs of the poor, orphaned, or

widowed. It was clear that none had all of these roles in the church.

There was no distinction in the Early Church between "charismatic" and "institutional" ministries. Women shared in the work. In Ignatius's time, in the early second century, the ministry roles of the deacon, presbyter, and bishop—along with the elder, apostle, prophet, and priest—were often fluid and sometimes interchangeable. All ministers were both recipients of and agents of the same Spirit. All were to be *doulos,* slaves or servants of Christ.

Refer to Resource 5-2 in the Student Guide.

Though there were no superior or inferior functions in the church, of primary rank were prophets and teachers (1 Cor 14:1 and Acts 13: 1-3).

- Prophets proclaimed the good news of God's redemption through Christ. To believers, they communicated the meaning of new life in Christ.
- Teachers instructed others, setting forth the gospel in systematic form. They transmitted the tradition or teaching *(didache)* of the apostles. In the early second century writers such as Justin Martyr considered there to be a succession of faith passed on from one generation of teachers to the next.

Both prophets and teachers centered their work in the cities and worked by extension from there.

The word for ministry, *diakonia,* meant, in common usage, "waiter." Deacons, who included women, were the church's primary helpers. The church instituted the position of deacon when it appointed and ordained, by praying and the laying on of hands, Stephen and six others to serve the neglected Greek widows (Acts 6:1-6). They were ministers who served under bishops and presbyters (Phil 1:1 and 1 Tim 3:8).

As the church developed, the tasks of deacons varied from place to place, and included reading the Scripture at the Lord's Supper, receiving the offerings, directing the prayers of the people, and collecting and distributing charitable gifts. In large cities, an "archdeacon" became the bishops' principal administrative officer.

Presbyters made up the council of elders, governing local congregations and serving as "shepherds" to the people (Acts 11:30 and 15:22, and 1 Pet 5:1-3). The church borrowed this practice from the Jewish synagogues, which were governed by sanhedrins, or councils of elders. Originally, the presbyter was synonymous with the overseer or *episcopos* (Acts 20: 17, Phil 1:1, Titus 1:5-7).

Clement of Rome drew the analogy between the Old Testament priesthood and the ministry of the leaders of churches. As the church grew, and bishops served as administrators over several local churches, presbyters pastored local congregations and had the privilege of serving the Lord's Supper. As this became a central part of Christian worship, the presbyters were looked upon as representatives of the new priesthood of Christ. The presbyters became "priests." Along with this analogy to Old Testament rites, by A.D. 190 the communion table was being called an "altar."

There were a variety of ministries but a need also for leaders. Very early in the church's history James had functioned as the leader of the church in Jerusalem. The office of the bishop emerged in the second century as the president or presider over the church's council of elders or presbyters. At Rome, in A.D. 150, the leader of the church was called the "president"—the one who presides over the church and the Lord's Supper.

Gradually, as the number of churches grew in a locality, the bishops had more of a supervisory role over several local churches. Ignatius, for instance, was an early bishop of Antioch, Onesimus of Ephesus, and Polycarp of Smyrna. Having one bishop presiding over a geographical area was widespread by A.D. 200. Their geographical area of responsibility or diocese usually encompassed a city.

Although the presbyters administered the Lord's Supper, bishops baptized all persons in their diocese. They performed a necessary leadership role for the unity and efficiency of the church, guarded the traditions, and spoke for the apostles. It became crucial, as the church faced heresies and schisms, that these bishops could trace their authority to the apostles themselves in an historical succession. By 200, the ordination of both bishops and priests was done by bishops laying hands on the ones being ordained. This act symbolized the succession of spiritual authority being passed on from the apostles in the church.

John Knox, "The Ministry in the Primitive Church," in The Ministry in Historical Perspectives, *eds. H. Richard Niebuhr and Daniel D. Williams (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1956), 1-26.*

Justin Martyr provided a glimpse of worship in Rome in the second century:

Refer to Resource 5-3 in the Student Guide.

> The memoirs of the apostles or the writing of the prophets are read as long as time permits. When the lector has finished, the president in a discourse invites us to the imitation of these noble things. Then we all stand up together and offer prayers.

> And bread is brought, and wine and water, and the president similarly sends up prayers and thanksgiving and the congregation assents, saying the Amen; the distribution and reception of the consecrated elements by each one takes place and they are sent to the absent by the deacons. This food we call Eucharist, for we do not receive these things as common bread or common drink, but as flesh and blood of that incarnate Jesus. Those who prosper, and who so wish, contribute, each one as much as he chooses to. What is collected is deposited with the president, and he takes care of orphans and widows, and those who are in bonds, and the strangers who are sojourners among us.

George H. Williams, "The Ministry of the Ante-Nicene Church (c. 125-325)," in The Ministry in Historical Perspectives, *eds. Niebuhr and Williams (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1956), 34.*

The Early Church had high expectations for holy living among its members. Baptism was supposed to signal the end of sinning. For this reason, many postponed baptism until shortly before death. But as the church increasingly practiced the baptism of the children of Christians, the expectation for sinlessness following baptism was not met.

The church established certain procedures to deal with those who sinned. Repentance demanded restitution. Some areas of the church were more rigorous than others in the requirements for restitution. Penitential discipline, as it developed, made provision for the restoration of those who had sinned.

Two concepts guiding discipline were *metanoia,* or repentance, and *exomologesis,* confession. Sometimes repentance became indistinguishable from "fruits meet for repentance." By 150 confession had become a common part of the Sunday services. Confession was done publicly, and was intentionally aimed to bring public humiliation upon the sinner.

Tertullian stressed that a Christian was given only one repentance, no more. This was the only way, he thought, to keep the church away from a too-easy disregard for the moral law. For Tertullian, confession was a discipline of "prostration and humiliation." The penitent one wore sackcloth and ashes, wept, moaned, and kneeled at the presbyter's feet to show his or her deep contrition.

Tertullian wrote:

> Repentance is a discipline which leads a man to prostrate and humble himself. It prescribes a way of life that, even in the matter of food and clothing, appeals to pity. It bids him to lie in sackcloth and

> ashes, to cover his body with filthy rags, to plunge his soul into sorrow, to exchange sin for suffering. Moreover, it demands that you know only such food and drink as is plain; this means it is taken for the sake of your soul, not your belly. It requires that you habitually nourish prayer by fasting, that you sigh and weep and groan day and night to the Lord your God, that you prostrate yourself at the feet of the priests and kneel before the beloved of God, making all the brethren commissioned ambassadors of your prayer for pardon.

William A. Clebsch and Charles R. Jaekle, Pastoral Care in Historical Perspective: An Essay with Exhibits *(Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1964), 97.*

Tertullian would not accept repentance from anyone for the capital sins of fornication, apostasy, or homicide. But others, including the bishop of Rome, Callistus, allowed repentance even for capital offenses. Tertullian criticized Callistus for his seeming laxity on sexual offenses. Nonetheless, as late as the 500s the general rule was "one baptism, one penance" over major issues.

John T. McNeill, A History of the Cure of Souls *(New York: Harper and Row, 1951), 89-93.*

Refer to Resource 5-4 in the Student Guide.

The third-century church developed a plan of advancement for the penitent through stages. They began as weepers and advanced to kneelers, standers—without taking communion, to "saints" allowed full participation in the Lord's Supper. These procedures were given sanction at the Nicean Council in 325. Some churches used "discipliners," special presbyters, to guide the penitent through these stages.

McNeill, A History of the Cure of Souls, *96-98.*

At the same time, priests and deacons consoled those going through persecution and calamity. Sometimes utilizing Stoic ideas about accepting fate, pastors gave comfort to those who faced death and promised reunion with family members in heaven.

By the early third century in Rome, the role of the bishop was to baptize, to administer the Lord's Supper, to preside over love feasts, and to ordain presbyters by the laying on of hands. By 250 the bishop was becoming a "majestic figure" claiming authority to "bind and loose on earth with heavenly power." He was thought to be a judge, an interpreter of the Law, and the "vice regent" of God.

Williams, "The Ministry of the Ante-Nicene Church," 53-54.

The presbyters headed local assemblies, administered the Lord's Supper, and served as confessors. "Presbyters prior" served larger congregations. Still, bishops rather than presbyters baptized. Deacons received ordination from bishops only but were not considered an order of clergy. "Widows" had no liturgical duties but were set apart for prayers and ministry to women. "Teachers" could be clergy or

laypersons. In addition, the Roman church employed lectors and acolytes (altar attendants), and exorcists—charged with caring for the mentally ill.

Practices varied outside of Rome. In North Africa presbyters were bowed to at a rite of repentance. Some gifted women regularly prophesied. In Alexandria, in the third century, "bishop" and "presbyter" were still used interchangeably. Teachers in Alexandria were called "doctor ecclesiae" and were autonomous. Origen, for instance, was encouraged "by God's grace to bring forth new truth."

Williams, "The Ministry of the Ante-Nicene Church," 47.

In rural areas, the church was less structured. Rural bishops, called *chorepiskopoi,* in comparison to city bishops, possessed limited powers. They could ordain presbyters only for their own dioceses. The deacons, meanwhile, often went unsupervised to rural areas.

Cyprian, who was bishop of Carthage from 249 to 253, found it necessary to call upon apostolic succession to assert his authority. Yet, Cyprian affirmed, each bishop was supreme in his own diocese.

Cyprian was faced with the problem of the restoration of the lapsed after the persecution of Decius after A.D. 250. The lapsed could be redeemed and taken back into the church, which was, after all, he said, the only "ark of salvation." There was no salvation outside of the church. The restoration of the lapsed who were genuinely troubled in conscience over their actions should be done, Cyprian believed, with discipline and order, under a bishop's guidance.

Cyprian devised works of penance the lapsed might do—some for the rest of their lives. In no case would a lapsed priest or bishop be readmitted to the clergy. However, those who had remained true during the persecution opposed these attempts of Cyprian to bring the lapsed back into communion with the church. Cyprian called these opponents schismatics and ordered their excommunication. For centuries thereafter two churches existed in North Africa: one that opposed reacceptance of the lapsed and one that found ways to welcome them back.

A subsequent question arose. Should a person's baptism in a schismatic church be considered a real baptism? Cyprian favored rebaptizing those baptized at the hands of schismatics. A Council of Carthage affirmed this decision. Rome, on the other hand, facing a similar situation, decided otherwise—to accept the

baptism of those baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Cyprian's certainty about his position on rebaptism led him to oppose the bishop of Rome and to revise his thinking on the sovereignty of Rome over all churches. Cyprian believed differing customs should be tolerated in difference dioceses, and that all churches need not follow the practices of Rome. Cyprian himself underwent imprisonment and execution under the emperor in 258.

Gonzalez, A History of Christian Thought, *1:244-51; Irvin and Sunquist,* History of the World Christian Movement, *138-40.*

Various types of preaching could be found in the church during this period. Prophets undertook "revelatory" preaching, evangelists "missionary" preaching. "Testamentary" preaching echoed of the farewell discourses of the martyrs, or Christ himself. "Cultic" preaching was directed to those entering the church or to new believers or to the faithful. It included eulogies about Christ and His passion, or the martyrs, homilies, or expository discourses, and talks on a variety of themes.

By the time of official toleration under Constantine, it may be concluded, the bishops and the presbyters—or priests—constituted the hierarchy of the church. There was already a movement toward the collective authority of bishops, and emphasis upon the strategic role of the bishops who presided over capital cities in the empire.

The Ministry in the Later Patristic Period, 314-451

Refer to Resource 5-5 in the Student Guide.

The role of the clergy changed with Constantine's Edict of Toleration. With their new duties and obligations came new temptations. The job functions of the ministers became more distinct. By this time the presbyters, who had become "priests," and the bishops together formed the *sacerdotium* or priesthood. With the deacons, who also were ordained, these three orders—and lesser orders sometimes—formed the "clergy."

Ordination itself now implied a blotting out of all carnal sin, making the clergy a higher state of Christian life. As such, celibacy was more and more a way of life for clergy, though it was imposed more strictly in certain geographic regions than in others during this time. Celibacy was endorsed at the Synod of Elvira (305) and at the Council of Carthage (390).

The bishops were the chief judges of the church. As an office, the "episcopacy," composed of the bishops, was officially established at the Councils of Nicea and Chalcedon. Ater this, bishops were chosen by a synod of bishops, not by the people. There was a widening gulf between the bishops and the people, and even between the bishops and the presbyters.

After 343 the rural office of *chorepiskopoi* ended. Church laws were increasingly codified, and the bishops served as the authoritative interpreters of law as well as dogma. Since the bishops were given civil judicial duties, the emperor became involved in their appointment. The symbols of the position of bishop became analogous to secular positions. The bishops began wearing distinctive insignia and rings, and sat on thrones imitative of the emperor's. In the West, especially, this model of ministry was patterned after the Papacy itself.

George Williams, "The Ministry in the Later Patristic Period," in The Ministry in Historical Perspectives, *eds. Niebuhr and Williams (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1956), 81.*

The deacons were assistants to the priests and were the clergy most in close contact with the people and new converts. Deaconesses, who were ordained by bishops after reaching the age of 40, were commonly from the higher classes. Sometimes they presided over the mass.

Lesser orders of ministry included the subdeacons, lectors, doorkeepers, gravediggers, exorcists, altar attendants, singers, interpreters, visitors of the sick, and servants of the parish house. Indeed the households of bishops grew into sorts of cathedral monasteries.

Refer to Resource 5-6 in the Student Guide.

By the fourth century there were various conceptions of the pastoral office. Ambrose (339-397), bishop of Milan from 374, taught that ministers should be the most exemplary embodiment of Christian ethics. The bishop was to be both a priest and a prophet in the Old Testament sense, healing and rebuking. Ambrose believed the bishop's authority rested on the apostles, and ultimately on Christ.

Yet Ambrose did not think of Peter as the chief apostle, but only as the representative one. Ambrose spoke of the priest at the altar during the Lord's Supper calling down the Holy Spirit from heaven. Ambrose also argued for the independence of the church from civil control. Ambrose was known as an able preacher and theologian. He encouraged monasticism in northern Italy. As a pastor, Ambrose extolled the Latin virtues of wisdom, justice, fortitude, and temperance.

Another particularly influential voice on the ministry was that of Chrysostom (345-407). He was educated in the law at Antioch, then he shifted to theology and felt called to monastic life. He became a hermit for eight years, 373-381. He became a deacon in 381 and a priest in Antioch in 386. He became known for his preaching, which was directed to the people of what was now only a nominally Christian city.

To them, Chrysostom stressed that "grace does not come to us randomly. It comes only to those who want it and struggle for it. In fact, it is precisely within the power of those who want it and struggle for it to become children. Unless they first yearn for it, the gift does not come, nor does it do anything in them." He further warned: "Beloved, let us not then think that faith suffices for our salvation if we do not give evidence of purity of life." In 387, when the populace in Antioch rioted against the emperor's taxes, Chrysostom both scolded them and calmed them with his oratory.

Bassett, Holiness Teaching, *186-87.*

Chrysostom opposed the allegorical exegesis then popular among those influenced by Alexandria. Chrysostom, and those from Antioch in general, preferred literal interpretations of Scripture.

Chrysostom became bishop or patriarch of Constantinople in 398. Preferring the contemplative life of a monk, he believed a bishop should be willing to perish for his "sheep" and sensed the awesome power of a bishop to loose and to unloose people from their sins. Seeing himself as a prophet, something like John the Baptist, he attempted to reform the imperial city, beginning with the rulers themselves.

Chrysostom's perceived "tactlessness" angered the Empress Eudoxia. In the meantime, Chrysostom also had won the ire of Theophilus, the patriarch of Alexandria, who charged Chrysostom with heresy and secured his condemnation at a synod in 403. Chrysostom was briefly restored to the patriarchy, only to continue his controversy with the empress. In spite of support from Pope Innocent I, Chrysostom was deposed in 404 and exiled to Antioch.

One of Chrysostom's most significant writings was *On the Priesthood,* written in 386, when he was just beginning his own ministry as a priest. It described the responsibilities of the pastor. Chrysostom believed penance should suit the person and the person's offense. The priest, as a "curer of souls," dispenses spiritual medicine. The priest has the power to

regenerate souls through baptism, which enables persons to escape from damnation.

Like Ambrose, Chyrsostom spoke of the priestly act at the Lord's Supper as one comparable to Elijah at Mount Carmel. The priest brings down not fire but the Holy Spirit from heaven. This should fill the priest with "awesome dread," to the extent that the priest must be pure—as if he were standing in heaven itself. The priest, Chyrsostom wrote, ministers salvation and has the power to loose from sin or, by means of penance, to bind.

"For if no one can enter into the kingdom of Heaven except he be regenerate through water and the Spirit," wrote Chrysostom, "and he who does not eat the flesh of the Lord and drink his blood is excluded from eternal life, and if all these things are accomplished only by means of those holy hands, I mean the hands of the priest, how will any one, without these, be able to escape the fire of hell, or to win those crowns which are reserved for the victorious?"

"On the Priesthood," in Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, *vol. 9,* Saint Chrysostom, *ed. Philip Schaff (Reprint, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979), 47. See Williams, "The Ministry in the Later Patristic Period," 67-71.*

By the fifth century private confession had replaced public confession in most areas of the church. This was made explicit by Pope Leo the Great (440-461), who condemned the practice of compelling the penitents to read detailed confessions publicly. The priest, hearing private confessions, developed skills as a spiritual counselor or "physician" of the soul. Pastors used various types of discipline, admonition, and consolation, and "tended," writes John McNeill, "to rely rather upon the enlistment of the human will than upon the life-giving experience of which the early Christians were aware." Holiness became an ascetic discipline, viewed as constant combat with besetting sins. The authority of the pastor was enhanced in the process, but the liberating power of the gospel was lessened.

McNeill, A History of the Cure of Souls, *110-11.*

Small Groups: Ministry in the Church

(20 minutes)

Divide the class into groups of three.

Refer to Resource 5-7 in the Student Guide.

In your group create a list of the duties of pastors in the first four centuries.

How do the offices of the church then line up with the church offices of today?

Discuss how the ministry today is different from the ministry of that time.

Discuss how the ministry today is the same as the ministry of that time.

Lecture: Monasticism in the Early Church

(25 minutes)

Beginnings of Monasticism

Refer to Resource 5-8 in the Student Guide.

The early Christian example of persecution set an example for holiness. Just as Christianity was gaining toleration, it was losing, in some people's minds, its call to sacrifice and piety. Monasticism was an attempt to find the Spirit by escaping from the world, especially from the city.

Thomas M. Gannon and George W. Traub, The Desert and the City: An Interpretation of Christian Spirituality *(Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1969), 24.*

One approach to spiritual formation is anchorite monasticism. Here the image is of the hermit or desert monk. John the Baptist was the prototype. Christ is perceived as in radical contrast to culture. It meant escape and withdrawal, a lonely flight from the world. Yet it was self-exalting for its time in the sense of being marked by a strong individualism.

Glenn Hinson, Seekers After Mature Faith: A Historical Introduction to the Classics of Christian Devotion *(Nashville: Broadman, 1968), 37-39.*

Anthony (250-356) was the most famous hermit monk. He had been born rich and had distributed his possessions to the poor. At age 35 Anthony moved to a desert across the Nile, going back occasionally to assist others in their monastic callings. In the desert Anthony battled and overcame demons, and performed miracles in the name of Christ, until his death past 100 years of age.

Gannon and Traub, The Desert and the City, *20, 24-26, 48; Gonzalez,* The Story of Christianity, *1:138-43.*

Anthony represented a movement of protest against the accommodation of the church to the world. In a sense he fled from the church as much as from the world. The world and all it contained seemed under the power of the Evil One. Anthony saw the utter fallenness of God's creation—humanity. Human beings possessed only the ability to descend. If "man" alone was immoral, "men" in community compounded the evil. So it was better to stand alone. Sincere Christians wanted solitude their increasingly urban life could not provide, and heard the call: "Come ye apart," and "Therefore come out from them and be separate, says the Lord. Touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you" (2 Cor 6:17).

Athanasius's *Life of Anthony,* written about 357, publicized this type of monasticism. The book became prominent partly because of Athanasius's standing in the church. Athanasius himself withdrew to the desert (356-362) in order to escape arrest at the hands of the emperor over a theological controversy. In the book,

Athanasius admonished persons to love and trust the Lord, avoid bad habits and fleshly pleasures, disdain a full stomach, be humble, pray continually, sing psalms, memorize the commands of Scripture, remember the saints, avoid anger, and undergo frequent self-examination.

The anchoritic is a "true solitary" who withdraws from the world and lives in great simplicity in order to banish anything that might prevent union with God. The anchoritic renounces all, does penance for sin, and strictly disciplines the body. The anchoritic is the rugged individual, living either physically apart or emotionally and spiritually apart from the rest of humanity. He or she stands apart, thinks apart, prays apart, exists apart.

Gannon and Traub, The Desert and the City, *27; 23-36.*

In a life of seclusion individuals must take upon themselves the heavy task of working out their own salvation by self-discipline, self-purification, study, thought, meditation, and concentration. Anchorite monasticism represented a kind of spiritual idea that was individualistic and world-rejecting. As Thomas Gannon and George Traub summarize regarding monasticism in general, anchoritism preserved two great truths: without discipline there can be no holiness, and discipline that costs nothing that is not renunciation in some form or other is valueless.

Gannon and Traub, The Desert and the City, *49.*

Soon there developed three identifiable types of monasticism:

- Eremetical or anchorite—like Anthony, centering on an individual alone
- Laural, which was a small group of monks
- Cenobitic, which was influenced by Pachomius (290-346), an Egyptian monk who drew a number of disciples. They followed a communal life, and Pachomius organized a monastery. Pachomius's monasticism stressed fellowship, worship, and work. Few of his monks were educated. They surrendered their wills to that of the monastery leader.

C. H. Lawrence, Medieval Monasticism: Forms of Religious Life in Western Europe in the Middle Ages*, second ed. (London: Longman, 1989), 8-9.*

Further Development of Monasticism

Refer to Resource 5-9 in the Student Guide.

During these centuries, the monks assumed pastoral roles whether or not they were ordained. They had the power to forgive sins, and in the eyes of the people, were esteemed more and more as they separated themselves from some of the formalities of the church and spent their lives ministering to the lowly. Likewise, they were independent of the state control that was

encroaching upon the church. They were known for their purity. They even showed pastoral love toward schismatics and shepherdless groups. They did many of the evangelizing and missionary tasks of the church, both in the cities and in the countryside.

The monks represented an ideal for ministry, including celibacy, that some priests were falling short of. As such, monasticism represented a reform movement. Homilies springing from the monastics, like those of Macarius the Egyptian (300-390), set high goals for Christian holiness and spiritual purity. In the eastern wing of the church especially, the higher clergy—such as Basil (330-379), who became bishop of Caesarea, and Chrysostom, who became bishop of Constantinople—were recruited from among the monks. However, as the monastic movement grew, their leaders, called abbots, began to assume immense power.

On Macarius the Egyptian see Bassett, Holiness Teaching*, 139-58.*

Williams, "The Ministry in the Later Patristic Period," 76-77.

Unlike the earlier Egyptian hermits, Basil (330-379) was well-educated in pagan traditions in Caesarea, Constantinople, and Athens. One of the Cappadocian Fathers, and brother of Gregory of Nyssa, Basil left the world, so to speak, in 357 to find spiritual direction. He toured Palestine and Egypt. He was most impressed with the Pachomian communities he encountered.

As a result, in 358, he entered monastic life. At first he lived as a hermit; then he concluded that communal life was a better way, and founded a community at Caesarea. This monastic community became the model for other monasteries in the Eastern Church.

During this time Basil developed a "Rule" to organize monastic life. His rule was written in the form of questions and answers. To Basil, monasticism was a means of service to God and was achieved in community under obedience. The Rule stipulated hours of liturgical prayer, manual labor, and other work. It imposed both poverty and chastity. Monks trained children and tested whether some might be called to monastic life. Monks cared for the poor.

Basil believed the monks living together formed a spiritual family, based on the social nature of human beings. Whereas the solitary life benefited one individual, communal life reflected love and charity for others. Solitary or eremitical monastic life offered no opportunity to reflect Christian virtues. "If you live alone," Basil asked, "whose feet will you wash?" Members of a monastic community must respect its head, Basil taught. Each monk surrendered his will and

became fully obedient, just as even Christ was obedient to the Father. Basil expected no fanatical ascetical practices, but he stressed the virtue of work within the monastery. Monks were taught trades, if they did not already have one, and the monastery used these skills, whether shoemaking, weaving, or farming, for the relief of the poor. In comparison to others, Basil's teachings on monasticism were moderate and rational, reflecting his broad education.

In 364, Basil was called upon by Bishop Eusebius of Caesarea to defend orthodoxy against Arianism. Six years later Basil himself became bishop of Caesarea, where he remained in the thick of church battles and debates. He defended *homoousiuos,* tried to convince the *homoiousios* party that the two were the same, stressed the unity of the Person of Christ, and helped bring an end to the Arian controversy. As bishop he was a talented organizer, and he carefully planned for relief efforts among the poor in Caesarea. He encouraged monasticism, and helped to bring it under the church's hierarchy.

Lawrence, Medieval Monasticism, *9-11.*

Basil's Rules influenced much of later monasticism, including the monasteries formed under the inspiration of Benedict of Nursia (480-550), known as the father of Western monasticism. Communal life was the essential way of holiness, these leaders demonstrated, but there must be rules for life together, including obedience to the abbot, liturgical prayers, manual labor, and quietness. The aim was obedience to a perfect following of Christ. Private prayer, spiritual reading, and work filled the day. The monastery becomes a home, Benedict said, the abbot—who was elected by the monks—the father, and fellow monks brothers. Benedict's communalism was essentially contemplative, but, unlike purely ascetic forms of monasticism, was called also to be apostolic. Various monastic groups used his Rules and gradually the Benedictine Order grew out of this movement.

Guided Discussion: Monasticism

(10 minutes)

Allow for response.

What were the reasons for monasticism?

Jesus retreated to be alone (Mt 14:13). The goal is to be freed from the contamination, decadence, and sins of the world—to be freed from humanity.

Are they relevant today?

Holiness is apartness; monasticism showed separation from the world, distance spiritually, and often spatially. The monk is someone who, by standing apart, takes up a critical attitude toward the world and its structures.

What is the ideal of holiness expressed through monasticism?

There are positive elements in anchoritism: its commitment to perseverance alone, if necessary, against the world remains a strong image for Christians living in a decaying moral era, or in a setting filled with pressures toward social conformity. Stand alone, the anchoritic calls, be a man or woman of discipline and conviction.

As for communal monasticism, faith leads to doing and doing leads back to faith. Christ and culture are in paradox. It exists with the paradox of suffering with Christ while at the same time being raised with Him, of living a life with and for others. We present ourselves as *living* sacrifices.

This type of monasticism deemphasizes that the Christian must live responsibly in society as well as the church, and the demands are sometimes in seeming conflict. Not all Christians can join monasteries.

Allow for response.

How can they be "perfect"?

Is holiness won by escape from the world into a life devoted to prayer, celibacy, and sometimes solitude?

Or is holiness right relationship?

God's people are to be clothed with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. They are to bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances they have with each other. They are to forgive as the Lord forgave them. And over all these virtues they are to put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. Christ enables this peace (Col 3).

The monastic movement of the middle ages made Christ a monk. The monks patterned themselves after Christ, and eventually, as Pelikan comments, Christ after themselves. The transforming power of this image of Christ led to waves of reformation in the church in the following centuries.

Pelikan, Jesus Through the Centuries, *110, 117.*

Lecture: The Expansion of the Church in Western Europe

(10 minutes)

This discussion is based on Aline Rouselle, "From Sanctuary to Miracle-Worker: Healing in Fourth-Century Gaul," in Ritual, Religion, and the Sacred: Selections from the Annales Economies, Societies, and Civilizations, *eds. Robert Forster and Orest Ranum, trans. Elborg Forster and Patricia Ranum (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982).*

Point out Gaul on a European map of the fourth century.

Martin of Tours and the Evangelization of Gaul in the Fourth Century

For centuries before Christianity, Gaul had its "water sanctuaries" devoted to healing and cures. The waters or baths made a cure in a traditional and ritual sense of the curative powers of water. To the pagans who used them, the curative properties of water were strictly a matter of faith on the part of the patients, physicians, and priests. Some undoubtedly were cured at these water sanctuaries.

When they journeyed to these water sanctuaries, the sick made carvings of the part of their body that was ailing. These carvings might be of deformed or ulcerated hands, arms, legs, or lungs. Other seekers were blind. Water, in pagan lore, was particularly related to sight. Some had lesions. A few were paralyzed. These were diseases that affected the mental state of both the patient and his or her family.

Before a journey was made to a water sanctuary, the ill person consulted a local healer. For many other types of ailments, water sanctuaries were not necessary. There were folk remedies made of wine or herbs. The water sanctuary cure was something of a last resort, when the condition was desperate, though not usually fatal. Therapy at the water sanctuary involved both medication and prayer.

Physicians in Gaul practiced several types of cures common at the time:

- bleeding
- purging—pharmaceutical remedies, which were applied either orally or externally
- dietary

Even nervous disorders were subject to bleedings and purging under the care of a physician. Anxiety-related illnesses were common in Gaul, given that the people lived in constant threat that Rome would increase its taxation upon them. A fourth-century Christian medical writer, Marcellus, compiled a popular handbook of cures—a "pharmacopeia" of ingredients taken from animals and plants in Gaul. He advised that cures be prescribed when the stars were in certain alignments.

This shows that physicians generally mixed popular beliefs with cures in the administering of medicines. In Gaul, in particular, a dominant pagan religion was Druidism, which was devoted to the veneration of plants and trees. A physician might fashion an object or an animal to be worn on the neck, wrist, or finger of the patient. The prayers and incantations indicated that the people believed evil powers from outside were causing an illness, and these powers could be made to depart through treatment, if so allowed by divine will.

Rouselle, "From Sanctuary to Miracle-Worker," 109-10.

The physician asked the patients themselves to pray. The cure was placed in their own hands, but the patient was not deemed responsible for the illness. The patient was "a plaything of unknown powers." Through the mediation of a physician the patients became engaged in a divine healing of themselves in body and soul. The waters were supernaturally purifying, the people believed. All this was rational in the pagan world of Gaul in the fourth century.

Refer to Resource 5-10 in the Student Guide.

Into this cultural setting stepped Martin (d. 397), who effected many conversions through his healing powers. Son of a pagan, he served in the Roman army as a medic and learned the medical practices of the time. After being discharged from the army in 360 he joined the ministry of Hilary (317-367), the bishop of Poitiers and a leading Latin theologian and defender of orthodoxy against the Arians. Hilary believed Christian words could drive out demons. Martin became an exorcist, working mostly among the unbaptized. Martin helped establish a monastery in Liguge, the first one in Gaul. Martin established another monastery in Tours, and evangelized in the vicinity.

Knowing exorcist formulas as well as medicinal cures, Martin wielded strong charismatic powers. He used the cross as a sign to ward off danger. He related dreams to make points against the devil or to relate some Christian truth. His dreams equated the pantheon of gods, Jupiter, Mercury, Venus, or Minerva, gods commonly appealed to by the local people, with the devil. Whenever he drove out demons and asked their names, they gave their names as "Jupiter," or "Mercury"—one of the most prominent gods of the water sanctuaries—or one of the other pagan gods.

In doing so, Martin put in sharp contrast the God he was serving and the ineffective and malevolent pagan gods the people had been serving. The implication was that these gods had been the *cause* of the people's illness. Paganism accounted for their maladies, including their subservience to Rome, said Martin. He

destroyed sacred pagan shrines, and wherever he did so, built a Christian church or monastery on the site.

The people successfully clamored to make Martin a bishop, and so he became in 370. He was unlike other bishops of his time, who tended to be better educated and attached to the nobility classes. One story is that one day, entering a city on a winter day, a beggar stopped Martin. He had no money to give the beggar, but he saw this man shivering, and so took off his own shabby cloak, divided it into two and gave half to the beggar. That night, Martin had a dream. He saw Jesus wearing a torn, shabby cloak. An angel asked him, "Master, why are you wearing that old cloak?" Jesus answered, "My servant Martin gave it to me."

There were two broad classes of miracles attributed to Martin. The first were those done on the basis of Martin's charismatic powers. For instance, like the prophets Elijah and Elisha, Martin, lay upon a body that had been presumed dead for three days, and brought the person back to life. Even animals seemed to obey him, as did the sea, hail, and fire.

The second class was those miracles done through medicine. Martin used the skill he had learned as an army medic. Martin cured paralysis and various eye diseases. But even here "his achievements were attributed to the God who brought about the cure thanks to Martin's prayers." Martin made use of classical cures, but in associating them with the powers of Christ over evil, he added new definitions.

Rouselle, "From Sanctuary to Miracle-Worker," 115-16.

Martin used all of his powers with missionary zeal to convert the people. His accomplishments convinced all that he was working for God. His miracles were for those who would have tried the water sanctuaries. Men and women appealed to Martin, as they had gone to the water sanctuaries, when all other channels for healing had failed.

Conversions occurred mostly through the healing, rather than through preaching. Healing converted households. Sometimes whole crowds called upon Martin to demonstrate his power. In all cases, the people believed Martin was a man possessed by God. They saw virtue in his power. A curing relation was established between a people accustomed to inanimate water sanctuaries, and a person. It almost seemed the common people had more faith in Martin than faith in Christ or God. At least, Martin was deemed a powerful intermediary between them and God. People dreamed

of Martin and his powers. In order for them to remain well, they needed to remain dependent upon God.

It seemed that all that he touched possessed healing powers. Oil that Martin had blessed was curative. The cult that developed around Martin was an indication of ways the people were making "saints" of those associated with miracles, and deemed holy. Even after he died, for several centuries his tomb seemed to permeate grace, and oil placed near his tomb was thought to possess healing powers. His tomb became in every way a substitute for the water sanctuary.

Patrick and the Evangelization of Ireland

Refer to Resource 5-11 in the Student Guide.

Patrick evangelized Ireland in the 400s (about 390-446). By 460 Ireland was largely Christianized. Irish or "Celtic" Christianity became known for its evangelistic monasticism.

Patrick was born in Britain, the son of a deacon. Though he was brought up as a Christian, he had no deep piety. At the age of 16 he was captured by Irish pirates and spent 6 years as a herder. As a slave, he not only mastered the Irish language but turned to God. Believing it was God's will, he escaped to the southeast coast of Ireland and persuaded sailors to return him to Britain. They did so, and eventually Patrick returned to his relatives. He felt God leading him to evangelize Ireland. He felt called, as few had before in Christian history, to be "a slave of Christ to a foreign people." He prepared for Christian ministry. He gained knowledge of the Latin Bible. During this time he probably made a visit to Gaul.

Richard Fletcher, The Barbarian Conversion: From Paganism to Christianity *(New York: Henry Holt, 1997), 86.*

He spent the rest of his life planting Christianity firmly in Ireland—evangelizing, establishing monasteries, educating sons of chieftains, and ordaining clergy. He prayed that God would "never allow me to be separated from his people whom he has won in the ends of the earth."

The Confession of Saint Patrick and Letter to Coroticus, *trans. John Skinner (New York: Image, 1998), 57-58.*

Patrick's *Confession* canvasses his life. It is the story of a man deeply immersed in both the Bible and the call of God to missions. Patrick recorded that "many people through me were reborn to God, and afterward confirmed and brought to perfection. And so then a clergy was ordained to care for them everywhere, to care for this people freshly brought alive in their faith. They are those whom the Lord has chosen 'from the ends of the earth".'

Patrick was able to see that whereas the people of Ireland formerly had worshiped idols and "impure things," they were "suddenly made the people of the Lord, so that they are now called children of God." He continued: "So many sons and daughters of the kings of the Irish are now proud to be counted monks and virgins of Christ."

The Confession of Saint Patrick, *60-61.*

By the time of his death, Ireland was largely a Christian country. Unlike other Christian countries, however, the monastery was more central in the life of the Irish church than the cathedral. With the exaltation of monasticism came a deep acceptance of sacrifice and mission—set by Patrick's example. A poem and prayer attributed to Patrick, though perhaps written later, has come through the history of the church:

Refer to Resource 5-12 in the Student Guide.

> I arise today in a mighty strength, calling upon the Trinity, believing in the Three Persons saying they are One, thanking my Creator.
>
> I arise today strengthened by Christ's own baptism, made strong by his crucifixion and his burial, made strong by his resurrection and his ascension, made strong by his descent to meet me on the day of doom.
>
> I arise today strengthened by cherubims' love of God, by obedience of all angels, by service of archangels, by hope in reward of my resurrection, by prayers of the fathers, by predictions of prophets, by preachings of apostles, by the faith of confessors, by shyness of holy virgins, by deeds of holy men.
>
> I arise today through strength in the sky: light of sun, moon's reflection, dazzle of fire, speed of lightning, wild wind, deep sea, firm earth, hard rock.
>
> I arise today with God's strength to pilot me; God's might to uphold me, God's wisdom to guide me, God's eye to look ahead for me, God's ear to hear for me, God's word to speak for me, God's hand to defend me, God's way to lie before me, God's shield to protect me, God's host to safeguard me: against devil's traps, against attraction of sin, against pull of nature, against all who wish me ill near and far, alone and in a crowd.
>
> I summon all these powers to protect me—against every cruel and wicked power that stands against me, body and soul, against false prophets' wild

words, against dark ways of heathen, against false laws of heretics, against magic and idolatry, against spells of smiths, witches, and wizards, against every false lore that snares body and soul.

Christ protect me today against poison, against burning, against drowning, against wounding so that I may come to enjoy your rich reward.

Christ ever with me, Christ before me, Christ behind me, Christ within me, Christ beneath me, Christ above me, Christ to my right side, Christ to my left, Christ in his breadth, Christ in his length, Christ in depth, Christ in the heart of every man who thinks of me, Christ in the mouth of every man who speaks to me, Christ in every eye that sees me, Christ in every ear that hears me.

I arise today in mighty strength making in my mouth the Trinity, believing in mind Three Persons, confessing in heart they are One, thanking my Creator.

The Confession of Saint Patrick, *78-81.*

Salvation is from the Lord. Salvation is from the Lord. Salvation is from Christ. May your salvation, three Lords, be always with us.

Guided Discussion: Homework Reading

(10 minutes)

Ask the students to share what they have learned about the advance of Christianity from their reading.

Lesson Close

(5 minutes)

Review

Do you have any additional thoughts about this lesson?

Look Ahead

In the next lesson we will study Augustine and the formation of the Papacy and Eastern Christianity.

Assign Homework

Direct students to the Homework Assignments in the Student Guide.

Reading topics:

- The rise of the Papacy
- The rise of Eastern Christianity
- Shelley, *Church History in Plain Language,* chapters 13, 14, and 15.

Write a two-page response giving your thoughts, impressions, and feelings, about the people, events, and theology.

Read Resource 5-13. Prepare at least three discussion questions from this reading to share with the class.

Work on the term projects.

Write in your journal. Reflect on and respond to the following:

AUGUSTINE'S CONFESSIONS, READING 5

BOOK FOUR
This is the story of his years among the Manicheans. It includes the account of his teaching at Tagaste, his taking a mistress, the attractions of astrology, the poignant loss of a friend that leads to a searching analysis of grief and transience. He reports on his first book, *De pulchro et apto,* and his introduction to Aristotle's *Categories* and other books of philosophy and theology, which he mastered with great ease and little profit.

CHAPTER I

1. During this period of nine years, from my nineteenth year to my twenty-eighth, I went astray and led others astray. I was deceived and deceived others, in varied lustful projects—sometimes publicly, by the teaching of what men and women style “the liberal arts”; sometimes secretly, under the false guise of religion. In the one, I was proud of myself; in the other, superstitious; in all, vain! In my public life I was striving after the emptiness of popular fame, going so far as to seek theatrical applause, entering poetic contests, striving for the straw garlands and the vanity of theatricals and intemperate desires. In my private life I was seeking to be purged from these corruptions of ours by carrying food to those who were called “elect” and “holy,” which, in the laboratory of their stomachs, they should make into angels and gods for us, and by them we might be set free. These projects I followed out and practiced with my friends, who were both deceived with me and by me. Let the proud laugh at me, and those who have not yet been savingly cast down and stricken by you, O my God. Nevertheless, I would confess to you my shame to your glory. Bear with me, I beseech you, and give me the grace to retrace in my present memory the devious ways of my past errors and thus be able to “offer to you the sacrifice of thanksgiving.” For what am I to myself without you but a guide to my own downfall? Or what am I, even at the best, but one suckled on your milk and feeding on you, O Food that never perishes? What indeed is any man, seeing that he is but a man? Therefore, let the strong and the mighty laugh at us, but let us who are “poor and needy” confess to you.

Looking Ahead

In the next lesson two videos are suggested for viewing. You will need to acquire, preview, and have them ready to be shown.

Augustine *from the video series* Cloud of Witnesses, *available from Nashville: Graded Press.*

The History and Holy Sacraments of Orthodox Christianity *as part of a three-tape series available from GOTELECOM, New York: Greek Orthodox Telecommunications. (1-800-888-6835)*

Lesson 6

The Formation of the Papacy and Eastern Christianity

Lesson Overview

Schedule

Start Time	Task or Topic	Learning Activity	Materials Needed
0:00	Introduction	Orient	Student Guide
0:10	Augustine	Guided Discussion	
0:30	Augustine	Video	Video
1:00	The Rise of the Papacy	Lecture	Resource 6-1 Resource 6-2
1:15	The Rise of Eastern Christianity	Lecture	Resource 6-3 Resource 6-4
1:25	The History and Holy Sacraments of Orthodox Christianity	Video	Video
1:55	Lesson Close	Review, Assign	Student Guide

Suggested Reading for Instructor

Brown, Peter. *Augustine of Hippo*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1967.

Chadwick, Henry. *The Early Church*. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1967.

Dudden, F. Homes. *Gregory the Great: His Place in History and Thought*, 2 vols. New York: Longmans, Green, 1905.

Gontard, Friedrich. *The Chair of Peter: A History of the Papacy*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1964. www.freepres.org/papacy

Gonzalez, Justo. *A History of Christian Thought*. Vol. 1, *From the Beginnings to the Council of Chalcedon*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1970.

_____. *A History of Christian Thought.* Vol. 2, *From Augustine to the Eve of the Reformation*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1971.

Jones, W. T. *A History of Philosophy*. Vol. 2, *The Medieval Mind*. Second edition, New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1969.

Kelly, J. N. D. *The Oxford Dictionary of Popes*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986.

Levenson, Carl. "Distance and Presence in Augustine's *Confessions*." *Journal of Religion* 65 (October 1985): 500–512.

Lowith, Karl. *Meaning in History*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1949.

Portalie, Eugene. "Augustine." *The Catholic Encyclopedia*. Vol. 2. New York: Robert Appleton, 1907. www.newadvent.org

Lesson Introduction

(10 minutes)

Accountability

Call on two of the students to read his or her paper from the topic reading.

Return and collect homework.

Orientation

Augustine helped to shape the whole history of Christian theology. His understandings on sin and grace, and his interpretation of Paul, influenced not only the Roman Catholic Church, but also Reformed Protestant theology. Yet Augustine fused dogma with Platonist philosophy.

The bishop of Rome began to assume greater and greater powers and prestige in the Early Church. This lesson will extend until the time of Gregory the Great (590-604).

The church in the Eastern part of the empire assumed different characteristics and emphases than the church in the West.

Learner Objectives

Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.

Restating the objectives for the learners serves as an advanced organizer for the lesson and alerts learners to key information and concepts.

At the end of this lesson, participants should

- review the life of Augustine, using excerpts from his *Confessions*
- explain the two positions of Augustine and Pelagius on grace in relation to the Articles of Faith
- explain that Augustine's thinking became the dominant characteristic of Western theology
- understand the reasons for the preeminence of the bishop of Rome
- understand how the leadership of Gregory the Great strengthened the Papacy and contributed to the church's theology
- explain the beginnings of Eastern Orthodoxy
- explain distinctive theological patterns emerging in the East

Lesson Body

Guided Discussion: Augustine

(20 minutes)

Guide the students in a discussion based on the questions they were to prepare as homework from their reading of Resource 5-13.

We see in Augustine many of the antecedents of both Roman Catholic and Protestant theology. John Calvin was especially indebted to Augustine's understanding of predestination and election.

Meanwhile, Pelagius was uniformly condemned not only by Augustine and the Early Church but by Jacob Arminius, John Wesley, and holiness theologians. Their objection to Pelagius lay not in the aspirations he had for holiness, but in his denial of original sin. When John Wesley described original sin and human beings apart from grace, he did so with as dark and dire descriptions as John Calvin or Augustine.

John Wesley, "Original Sin," in The Works of John Wesley, *vol. 2,* Sermons II: 34-70, *ed. Albert C. Outler (Nashville: Abingdon, 1985), 170-85.*

With this background, Wesley fully agreed with the Church of England's Articles of Religion on "Original or Birth Sin" and "Free Will," which descended in its very language, from Augustine's own writings against Pelagius. The Church of England's position was that "original sin standeth not in the following of Adam (as the Pelagians do vainly talk), but it is the corruption of the nature of every man, that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam, whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and of his own nature inclined to evil, and that continually."

Article Seven.

Article Eight states that "the condition of man after the fall of Adam is such that he cannot turn and prepare himself, by his own natural strength and good works, to faith, and calling upon God; wherefore we have no power to do good works, pleasant and acceptable to God, without the grace of God by Christ preventing us, that we may have a good will, and working with us, when we have that good will."

This Article of Religion was in essence a denial of natural free will in human beings in their present state and an affirmation of free grace. It emphasized that because of human depravity, no good work could come from human beings, apart from the active work of Christ in them to enable them to will the good.

Thomas C. Oden, Doctrinal Standards in the Wesleyan Tradition *(Grand Rapids: Francis Asbury Press of Zondervan, 1988), 140-42. See also the footnotes to Wesley's writings in Robert E. Chiles*, Theological Transition in American Methodism, 1790-1935 (*Reprint, Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1983), 116-23, 145-53.*

Wesley strenuously defended the doctrine of original sin, but Wesley and his followers understood the Eighth Article of Religion to affirm prevenient grace, the grace that gives all human beings freedom in grace to choose salvation. The Seventh Article of Faith in the Church of the Nazarene, on "Prevenient Grace," had its origins in the statements of the Church of England, and its wording remains very close to them.

Video: Augustine

(30 minutes)

Have the video set up and ready to start. You may want to do excerpts and have some time for discussion.

"Augustine" *from the video series* Cloud of Witnesses *available from Nashville: Graded Press.*

Lecture: The Rise of the Papacy

(15 minutes)

Refer to Resource 6-1 in the Student Guide.

The Early Centuries

Paul's independence from Jerusalem, and the missionary movement of Christianity into the Roman Empire, were important aspects of moving the church's center westward. By 160 the church at Rome had monuments to Paul and Peter. Rome, being the capital of the empire, quickly became the strategic center of the church. The bishop of Rome considered himself first among equals. In a controversy over baptism (about A.D. 250) Stephen, bishop of Rome, used Matthew 16:18 to justify his own authority over Cyprian, bishop of Carthage. This was perhaps the first time the text was used to justify, on the basis of Jesus' words to Peter, the supremacy of the bishop of Rome, his supposed successor. But it did not convince Cyprian.

The term "pope" originated in the Latin word "papa," meaning father. Originally, it applied to all teachers and ministers, but soon became limited to bishops and abbots. By 300 it was even more confined to the bishops of the ancient sees, including Rome.

Claims to Authority Increase

Theological controversies indicated need for central authority. Toleration under Constantine legitimized the centrality of both Constantinople and Rome as centers

of church authority, but the church in Rome claimed historical precedence. The church at Rome collected the laws and codes of the church from throughout the empire. It began to place these in a system so churches could understand precedents for action. Often churches throughout the empire called upon the Roman bishop to arbitrate disputes and to interpret and apply the precedents.

Meanwhile, the general councils of Nicea and Constantinople (381) weakened the authority of local synods. Damasus, who was bishop of Rome from 366 to 384, saw requests and inquiries to Rome as similar to appeals made to the emperor. Damasus's letters became decrees. Roman liturgical customs were widely copied in the West. The Constantinople Council in 381 referred to Rome as the first see and Constantinople as the second, but based this on political realities, not scriptural authority. It also transferred Thessalonica to Constantinople's jurisdiction.

Claims to authority increased under Leo I, who was bishop of Rome from 440 to 461. He brought grandeur and a sense of the imperial to the Papacy. He thought himself to be Peter speaking and writing. His influence increased when the tome he issued prior to the Chalcedon Council (451) was favorably received, though not because it was from Rome, but because it was consistent with tradition and earlier councils. Yet the Chalcedon Council also lifted Constantinople to a place equal to Rome, and widened the gulf between East and West. In 452 Leo personally met with Attila the Hun and persuaded him to refrain from attacking southern Italy. When Vandals invaded Rome from Africa in 455 Leo met with the leader and persuaded him not to set fire to the city or to torture and massacre its inhabitants. At the same time, Leo helped console the populace.

Leo was the first to use officially the term "pope," which had been adopted by one of his predecessors in the late fourth century. The term was not exclusively confined to the bishop of Rome until the eleventh century.

The pope again became symbolic of political, social, and religious stability as the Ostrogoths moved into Italy in the 470s. In 476 the last Roman emperor was dethroned and Ostrogoth rule began. As a result of missionary work the previous century by Ulfilas, an Arian, the Ostrogoths already were Christian. The pope formed alliances with Arian Gothic rulers.

As claims to the authority of Rome increased, the church of the East increasingly resented the interference of the West and the pretensions of the pope. In the 490s Pope Felix II excommunicated both the bishop of Constantinople and the Eastern emperor for consorting with Monophysitism. Felix's successor, Pope Gelasius, argued that the emperor himself and all civil powers were to obey the pope. Emperor Justinian reunited the empire, 527-565, and with this the power of the pope temporarily subsided.

Gregory the Great

Refer to Resource 6-2 in the Student Guide.

Gregory (b. c. 540) was pope 590-604 and is considered one of the "doctors," along with Ambrose, Augustine, and Jerome, of the Catholic Church. Under him the power of the Papacy reached a new height.

Gregory was born to a wealthy, patrician family. He entered a monastery in 574. He proceeded to establish six monasteries on family-owned land. Gregory became a deacon in 578.

The pope sent him as his emissary to Constantinople in 579. He stayed for several years, becoming an expert on Eastern Church affairs. He returned to a monastery in Rome in 585 and became advisor to Pope Pelagius II. During this time he saw slaves from England being sold in Roman markets. Because of their light hair and complexion he called them "angels" and developed a desire to see them evangelized.

Bede, A History of the English Church and People, *trans. Leo Sherley-Price, rev. R. E. Latham (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1970), 99-100.*

He was reluctant to accept election as pope, since it would lead him away from the contemplative life. Gregory was the first pope to have been a monk. As pope, Gregory's chief advisors were monks. He described himself as "servant to God's servants." As pope he was forced to assume civil responsibilities. Roman citizens were starving and under threat of the Lombards, a German tribe, partly Arian in religion, that had established a kingdom in northern Italy.

Gregory established alliances with other states and worked out treaties with the Lombards, whom he also attempted to convert. At the same time, Gregory was responsible for rebuilding the old Roman aqueducts of the city. He reorganized the vast estates now controlled by the Papacy in Italy, Sicily, Gaul, and North Africa. He sought to provide accountability for their administration and effect a more efficient, humane management of the citizens of these states.

In other reform measures, Gregory established codes for election and conduct of bishops. He also enforced clerical celibacy. Some priests had taken to living under the same roof with women. The church still, in this time and place, allowed married priests. If a priest had been married before his ordination, he could remain married. But a rule was decreed by local councils since the early fourth century that married priests could not live with their wives. Their wives were expected to enter convents. But this rule was often broken, and Gregory aimed to enforce it among bishops, priests, and deacons.

F. Homes Dudden, Gregory the Great: His Place in History and Thought, *2 vols. (New York: Longmans, Green, 1905), 1:388-91. See also Bassett and Greathouse*, The Historical Development, *110-18.*

Gregory guarded the prerogatives of the church to discipline its own clergy, rather than having them go before civil tribunals. At the same time, he refused the restoration of lapsed clergy to clerical orders.

Outside of Rome, Gregory argued for supremacy of the Roman bishop vis à vis Constantinople. He also strengthened ties between the Papacy and churches in Spain and Gaul.

The pope worried about the overzealousness of the Irish missionaries, who possessed ancient Christian customs not always in accord with Roman practices. He sensed that the Irish missionaries would dominate and weaken loyalty to Rome. In 596 or 597 Gregory sent a well-educated monk, Augustine (d. 604), along with 40 other monks, to evangelize England. They settled in the Kingdom of Kent in 597. Within a few months, King Ethelbert—whose wife, Bertha, was already a Christian—accepted the faith. Augustine sent missionaries to other parts of England.

King Ethelbert gave Augustine charge over the cathedral of Canterbury. But his fellow monks became weary of evangelizing the English. Gregory sent the discouraged monks a letter:

> Gregory, Servant of the servants of God, to the servants of our Lord. My very dear sons, it is better never to undertake any high enterprise than to abandon it when once begun. So with the help of God you must carry out this holy task, which you have begun. Do not be deterred by the troubles of the journey or by what men say. Be constant and zealous in carrying out this enterprise which, under God's guidance, you have undertaken: and be assured that the greater the labour, the greater will be the glory of your eternal reward.

Bede, A History of the English Church, *67. See pp. 66-100.*

Gregory instructed that English converts could keep their old, pagan places of worship if they were consecrated with holy water.

Gregory introduced changes in liturgical music. He popularized the plainsong, the traditional music of the Latin church, which was based on older Roman chants. It became known as the Gregorian chant. The chant was "monodic," made up of one part only. It was purely vocal, needing no instrumental accompaniment. The chant was founded on verbal prose-rhythms, and so lacked musical time values. Its scales or modes, instead of running from C or A—as does modern music—ran from D through G. The chants were eventually printed with square notes.

Among the hymns attributed to Gregory himself is one entitled "Morning":

If you have access to any recordings of Gregorian chants, it would be beneficial to play one rather than to read the words of one.

> Father, we praise Thee, now the night is over;
> Active and watchful, stand we all before Thee;
> Singing, we offer prayer and meditation: thus we adore Thee.
> Monarch of all things, fit us for Thy mansions.
> Banish our weakness, health and wholeness sending;
> Bring us to heaven, where Thy saints united joy without ending.
> All holy Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
> Trinity blessed, send us Thy salvation;
> Thine is the glory, gleaming and resounding through all creation. Amen.

The Hymnal *(Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Christian Education, 1944), 24.*

Gregory also encouraged art. "Painting," he said, "can do for the illiterate what writing does for those who can read."

Quoted in John McManners, "Introduction," in The Oxford Illustrated History of Christianity, *ed. John McManners (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 11, 13.*

Gregory was also a practical writer. One of his most important works was *Pastoral Rule*—or *Pastoral Care*—written in 591. It became the textbook of the medieval pastorate. Gregory admonished that the priestly office is to care for souls. The pastor must be compassionate and selfless in devotion. He must be a physician, ready to meet moral diseases by a variety of methods.

The authority or government over souls, said Gregory, was the "art of arts." It required humility and selfless devotion. The pastor was to be the model or example. That was more important than the precepts he might teach. The priest must be compassionate to all, but superior in spiritual qualities. He is the shepherd of their souls. The *Pastoral Rule* provided a kind of psychology, listing contrasting personality traits, with

corresponding warnings. Aiming to help people guard against vice, Gregory listed seven deadly sins: Pride, Envy, Anger, Dejection (low spirits), Avarice (greed), Gluttony, and Lust.

As a theologian, Gregory developed a theology of prevenient grace. On original sin, Gregory closely followed Augustine. But Gregory understood that God set the will free from its bondage to sin and made it possible for to choose the good. God assisted the will, once freed, to will the good. Gregory stressed the free action of the will as an original agent, not merely as an instrument of God. To Gregory, the will can refuse to cooperate with God's grace. Free will and grace, said Gregory, were two independent and necessary factors necessary for sanctification. Gregory cited 1 Corinthians 15:10 in this regard.

The good we do belonged both to grace and to ourselves. Subsequent grace enabled human beings actually to carry out the good they willed, for without this subsequent outpouring of grace we could not carry out the good we will, and no merits, no good works were possible apart from grace. Yet, said Gregory, merits do derive from our acting and cooperating with grace. It is truly our righteousness, and not God's alone, and God imputes this righteousness wholly to us alone. Gregory rejected the idea of irresistible grace.

Gregory taught that baptism alone delivered from the guilt of original sin. He developed a doctrine of purgatory based on the idea that no sin can go unpunished, and that those who go to purgatory have sins that can be cleansed by its "fire," aided by the prayers of the faithful, who may offer mass for the dead.

Dudden, Gregory the Great, *2:395-98.*

Gregory has become highly regarded by historians for his noble attempts to see the church reformed. His "servant of the servants" mentality was genuine. The prestige of the Papacy grew. However, lesser bishops of Rome were less noble in their intentions and more apt to abuse the power the Papacy had attained.

Lecture: The Rise of Eastern Christianity

(10 minutes)

Refer to Resource 6-3 in the Student Guide.

Constantinople became an important and prominent center of Christianity almost as soon as Constantine moved the capital of the empire from Rome to the city of Byzantium, which he renamed Constantinople, in honor of himself, in 324. Like the apologists earlier in

the church's history, and even more than in the West, the Eastern churches retained the Greek language and promoted the integration of Christianity and Hellenism.

In 379 Theodosius, the newly crowned emperor, went farther than Constantine had, in declaring Christianity the state religion. Like Constantine, Theodosius wanted the Christian church to establish one determined form of Christological orthodoxy.

Philosophy and Theology in the East

While theology in the West remained influenced by Paul's writings, Roman law and terminology, and Augustine, theology in the East moved in more mystic and Johannine ways. It understood itself as a Semitic religion in a Greek setting, attempting to combine charity, a Hebrew virtue, with reason, a Greek value. Longer than in the West, the Eastern Church continued the study of Plato and Aristotle. Partly as a result, the East stressed the immortality of the soul.

One significant Eastern theologian was Gregory of Nyssa (330-395). He became bishop of Nyssa in 371 but was deposed by a party of Arians in 376. He regained his bishopric in 378. Along with his older brother, Basil, and Gregory of Nazianzus, Gregory was one of the Cappadocian Fathers who defended the Nicean faith and opposed Arianism at the Council of Constantinople in 381. He was known as an eloquent preacher. Though his theology was influenced by Origen, it was ardently Trinitarian.

Of particular interest is Gregory's understanding of Christian perfection. He understood perfection to be a virtue that, though unattainable, is the highest goal of the Christian. "It may be," he said, "that human perfection lies precisely in this—constant growth in the good." The Christian should be growing and maturing in goodness. The ability to improve increasingly transforms the soul. In particular, our growth is toward Christlikeness. "None can accurately be called a Christian if his mind assents but his body does not harmonize with his declared way of life."

Quoted in Bassett and Greathouse, The Historical Development, *81.*

In Bassett, Holiness Teaching, *130.*

Gregory understood the process of perfection to begin at baptism and to be sustained by the Eucharist. It depended on the gracious act of God in Christ. The alternative to growth toward perfection is to succumb to the world. Gregory's understanding of perfection as a dynamic growth process was quite a different

Bassett and Greathouse, The Historical Development, *79-87; Bassett,* Holiness Teaching, *119-36.*

emphasis from others, influenced by Platonism, who considered perfection as a static ideal.

Timothy Ware, The Orthodox Church *(Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1963), 72-73; Pelikan*, The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition, *221-24.*

Gregory's influence upon Eastern thought lay also through his emphasis upon the inscrutability of God. Not only is God invisible, but He is incomprehensible. The only way to speak of God was by "way of negation," saying what He was *not*. Yet this way of negation was a means toward mystical union with God.

Another leading Eastern theologian who undertook theology as a "way of negation" was a person known only as Pseudo-Dionysius, who lived about A.D. 500. He was probably a Syrian. Dionysius spoke of a hierarchical world that formed the basis of a hierarchical church. He sought ways to find union with God. The three ways an individual may come to God, explained Dionysius, were purgative—cathartic, illuminative, and finally, unitive. Dionysius typified the Eastern church's mysticism.

Much of this section is indebted to Gonzalez, A History of Christian Thought, *2:74-85.*

Continuation of Christological Controversies

Refer to Resource 6-4 in the Student Guide.

In 451 the Council of Chalcedon affirmed that Jesus was not divided, but was one person in two natures—truly God and truly human. It confessed that the deity and humanity of Jesus were not changed into something else. Numbers of Christians in the East rejected this creed and held that Jesus possessed but one nature, in which divine life and human were indistinguishable. This one nature teaching was an important factor contributing to the breaking away of the Monophysite churches from the rest of Eastern Orthodoxy.

Yet opposition to Chalcedon's understanding of Christ as one person in two natures—human and divine—remained in the East, where Monophysitism was strong. Monophysitism preferred to understand Christ as having one incarnate nature. Emperor Zeno—who ruled from 474 to 491—attempted mediation. He issued an "Edict of Union" or "Henoticon" in 482. It refuted the Chalcedon conclusions but affirmed the Nicene Creed and earlier councils. But this was not accepted in the West for ecclesiastical as well as theological reasons. The Henoticon diminished Rome's authority and elevated that of Acacius, who was patriarch of Constantinople from 471 to 489. Pope Felix excommunicated Acacius. This act led to the "Schism of Acacius" (484–519), during which time the Eastern

and Western branches of the church were broken apart.

During this time, Severus (465-538), patriarch of Antioch from 512 to 518, espoused a moderate position he hoped would mediate between the Monophysite and Chalcedonian understandings. Against strict Monophysites and Docetists, Severus affirmed the true, bodily incarnation, as well as the divinity of Christ. He taught the consubstantiality of both natures in one. However, the emperor deposed Severus in 518. The Eastern Church then returned to the formula of Pope Leo, which had preceded the Chalcedon Council's conclusions, and repealed the Henoticon. But "verbal" Monophysitism, which affirmed the consubstantiality of both the human and divine in one incarnate nature, remained the position of the Coptic or Egyptian Church.

Another controversy separating Western and Eastern understandings was the theopaschite controversy, which centered on whether it was more correct to say the deity of Christ suffered, or only the humanity of Christ. It was prompted by a Greek liturgical phrase—known as the *trisagion*—"Holy God, Holy and strong, Holy and immortal, have mercy on us." It implied that since Christ was both God and human united, God himself suffered.

So, to the *trisagion* the East added, "who was crucified for us." The understanding was acceptable to Monophysites. At the same time, certain monks from Southern Russia and Persia defended the idea that "one of the Trinity suffered—or was crucified—in the flesh." This phrase seemed to oppose the Chalcedon formula since it implied that the divine and human natures of Christ were infused with each other. The phrase was rejected by both the patriarch of Constantinople and by Pope Hormisdas. But the position was defended by Hormisdas's successor, Pope John II (533 to 535), and Emperor Justinian.

Justinian (483-565), who ruled from 527 to 565, was the most important political figure of the time. He reconquered North Africa and Italy from the Vandals and Goths, closed the philosophical academy in Athens, built impressive churches, and sought to unify Christianity. He persecuted Montanists and attempted to reconcile the Monophysites. Justinian strengthened the position of the patriarch of Constantinople, whom the churches now revered as successor to the apostle Andrew, brother of Peter.

Justinian called for the theopaschite issue to be addressed at the Fifth Ecumenical Council, which met in Constantinople in 553. In an attempt to win back the verbal Monophysites following Severus, the council approved the theopaschite position, which Justinian favored, that God himself suffered on behalf of humanity. In addition, the council condemned both Origen as a heretic and Antiochene Christology, which separated too severely the human and the divine natures of Christ.

Ecclesiology

In the East, bishops were known as metropolitans and archbishops were known as Patriarchs. The metropolitans were bishops of prominent cities, while the patriarchs were leaders of prime cities representing large geographic areas. The East, more than the West, maintained a sense of the union of the church and state. While in the West often there were conflicts over the supremacy of the pope and the church over kings and emperors, in the East the church more easily accepted the leadership of the Emperor. The Eastern Church believed it possessed an unbroken chain of tradition. Like the Western churches, the East could trace its own apostolic succession extending from the apostles to bishops and priests and deacons.

Video: The History and Holy Sacraments of Orthodox Christianity

(30 minutes)

Have the video ready to be viewed.

"The History and Holy Sacraments of Orthodox Christianity" as part of *a three tape series available from GOTELECOM, New York: Greek Orthodox Telecommunications. (1-800-888-6835)*

Lesson Close

(5 minutes)

Review

Do you have any questions or comments concerning this lesson?

Look Ahead

In the next lesson we will look at the early Middle Ages—the time period of 600 to 1000.

Assign Homework

Direct students to the Homework Assignments in the Student Guide.

Remind students that they may need to look beyond the Shelley book for information for their reading assignment.

Reading topics:

- Church and ministry in the Early Middle Ages (600-1000)
- The spread of Christianity
- Expansion Eastward
- Shelley, *Church History in Plain Language,* chapters 17 and 18

Continue working on the term projects.

Write in your journal. Reflect on and respond to the following:

AUGUSTINE'S CONFESSIONS, READING 6

BOOK FIVE
A year of decision. Faustus comes to Carthage and Augustine is disenchanted in his hope for solid demonstration of the truth of Manichean doctrine. He decides to flee from his known troubles at Carthage to troubles yet unknown at Rome. His experiences at Rome prove disappointing, and he applies for a teaching post at Milan. Here he meets Ambrose, who confronts him as an impressive witness for Catholic Christianity and opens out the possibilities of the allegorical interpretation of Scripture. Augustine decides to become a Christian catechumen.

CHAPTER III
3. Let me now lay bare in the sight of God the twenty-ninth year of my age. There had just come to Carthage

a certain bishop of the Manicheans, Faustus by name, a great snare of the devil; and many were entangled by him through the charm of his eloquence. Now, even though I found this eloquence admirable, I was beginning to distinguish the charm of words from the truth of things, which I was eager to learn. Nor did I consider the dish as much as I did the kind of meat that their famous Faustus served up to me in it. His fame had run before him, as one very skilled in an honorable learning and pre-eminently skilled in the liberal arts. And as I had already read and stored up in memory many of the injunctions of the philosophers, I began to compare some of their doctrines with the tedious fables of the Manicheans; and it struck me that the probability was on the side of the philosophers, whose power reached far enough to enable them to form a fair judgment of the world, even though they had not discovered the sovereign Lord of it all. For you are great, O Lord, and you have respect unto the lowly, but the proud you know afar off. You draw near to none but the contrite in heart, and canst not be found by the proud, even if in their inquisitive skill they may number the stars and the sands, and map out the constellations, and trace the courses of the planets.

Lesson 7

Early Middle Ages

Lesson Overview

Schedule

Start Time	Task or Topic	Learning Activity	Materials Needed
0:00	Introduction	Orient	Student Guide
0:10	The Church and Ministry in the Early Middle Ages	Lecture	Resource 7-1
0:25	The Church and Ministry	Small Groups	Resource 7-2
0:45	The Spread and Development of Christianity in Europe	Lecture/Discussion	Resources 7-3—7-6
1:25	Expansion Eastward	Lecture/Discussion	Resource 7-7
1:45	Reading Topics	Guided Discussion	
1:55	Lesson Close	Review, Assign	Student Guide

Suggested Reading for Instructor

Bainton, Roland. "The Ministry in the Middle Ages." In *The Ministry in Historical Perspectives.* Edited by H. Richard Niebuhr and Daniel D. Williams. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1956.

Gonzalez, Justo. *A History of Christian Thought*. Vol. 1, *From the Beginnings to the Council of Chalcedon*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1970.

Klimkeit, Hans-Joachim, ed. and trans. *Gnosis on the Silk Road: Gnostic Texts from Central Asia*. San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1993.

McNeill, John T. *A History of the Cure of Souls*. New York: Harper and Row, 1951.

Moffatt, Samuel. *A History of Christianity in Asia*. Vol. 1, *Beginnings to 1500*. San Francisco: HarperSan Francisco, 1992.

Mungello, D. E. *Curious Land: Jesuit Accommodation and the Origins of Sinology*. Reprint, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1989.

Neill, Stephen. *A History of Christian Missions*. Revised edition, London: Penguin, 1986.

Stewart, John. Nestorian Missionary Enterprise: The Story of a Church on Fire. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1928.

Lesson Introduction

(10 minutes)

Accountability

Call on two students to read their papers from the reading topics.

Return and collect homework.

Orientation

Ministry in the church was affected by the close attachment of the church to the state and to the fact that the church represented the most stable institution in European culture. Confession became more prominent in the church. Penance, in relation to confession, arose as a part of the pastor's desire to help alleviate the guilt of parishioners. Manuals for pastors, originating in Ireland, helped to guide pastors' responses to the sins and misdeeds of their people.

Christianity continued to expand in Europe. It experienced intellectual stirrings in the ninth century. At the same time, differences between the East and the West deepened.

This lesson will review the eastward advance of Nestorian Christianity to China.

Learner Objectives

Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.

Restating the objectives for the learners serves as an advanced organizer for the lesson and alerts learners to key information and concepts.

At the end of this lesson, participants should

- understand pastors' duties in the context of the times
- identify the geographic spread of Christianity in Europe during this time period
- identify with early missionaries
- discuss the methods by which Europe was Christianized
- discuss theological issues of the ninth century
- analyze the increasing rift between the Eastern and Western churches
- debate the evangelistic success of groups of Christians considered heretical by looking at the connections between the Nestorian theological controversy and its missionary movement
- describe the beginnings of Christianity in China, its political context, and reasons for its decline

Lesson Body

Lecture: The Church and Ministry in the Early Middle Ages

(15 minutes)

Refer to Resource 7-1 in the Student Guide.

The clergy became increasingly involved in the social life and affairs of medieval culture. The typical parish priest had a low level of education. Some had no knowledge of the meaning of the Latin words they were using in the mass. Yet, they were the best-educated persons in society. Illiterate laity could see in the mass a drama that reenacted the passion of Christ. The gospel was reduced to one central event, the Passion or death of Christ. Through the death of Christ came forgiveness of sins and communion with God.

Priests became involved in trade, business, and politics. Even in cases of military action, priests went into battle. War came to be considered blessed, and knights eventually came to be inducted in religious ceremonies into kinds of monastic orders. The pope himself set the example. The pope made treaties and agreements with various rulers. He became a great business administrator, caring, so it seemed, more for his estates than for the cure of souls. In 754 King Pepin of the Franks handed the keys of 10 cities to the pope for his civil rule. With continued sporadic invasions of Rome and these papal states, the pope provided protection and public order for those under his care.

Point these places out on a map.

In Gaul and Germany, the church controlled vast estates making up between one-third and one-half of various kingdoms. These lands were vested personally in bishops and abbots. The church distributed food all over the empire, sending wheat, for instance, from North Africa to Constantinople. At the same time, the rulers used priests and monks, being the most educated members of their societies, as advisors, tutors, and civil servants.

Even the monk enlarged his functions, and the distinctions between monasticism and the regular clergy became blurred. Monks served as evangelists and missionaries. Though they ran hospitals and places of refuge, monks emphasized their role in scholarship and maintaining culture, more than poverty. Monks became squires, with their lands producing wine, wool, grain, and other commodities. Monasteries used the

labor of peasants, called serfs, who were indentured to the land. In some places the monasteries struggled with the bishops over control and revenue of a territory.

The church built great cathedrals in urban centers. Laypeople organized guilds to build the churches. Many of the cathedrals also served as monasteries—with the bishop serving as abbot—and schools. Rural churches were under lay control, sponsored by feudal lords.

Reform impulses in the church remained, nonetheless. There were principally two during this period. The first was for the church to be independent of lay control, meaning, from the control of monarchies and gentry. The pope argued that clerical sins of any kind should be left totally to the church—which was generally less severe in its punishments. In fact any sort of sin, since sin was "spiritual," could be left to the church's deliberations.

The church effectively used the threat of excommunication to discipline laity, since the laity believed salvation could only be found within the church. The church created a dependency upon itself for salvation. In order for the power of the monarchs over the churches to be diminished, the power of the pope, the reformers believed, should be augmented. The pope began to consider himself, as head of the universal church, also the leader over the monarchs. This brought the popes into serious conflicts with various rulers.

The second reform also emphasized the distance between the clergy and the laity. The dress of the clergy distinguished them from the laity. During communion, the priest was to stand, and the people should kneel. Only the priest partook of both elements. The laity was given only the bread.

The increased enforcement of celibacy upon the clergy further marked separation between them and the laity. Actually, the celibacy of the clergy was only partial. Many priests refused to abandon their wives simply at the church's decree.

The evangelization of the world continued. In Europe, there still were many pagans among the German tribes. Their religion was polytheistic and animistic. Sometimes evangelists taught a system of punishments and rewards rather than the gospel. Typically, conversions came to people groups rather

Roland Bainton, "The Ministry in the Middle Ages," in The Ministry in Historical Perspectives, *eds. H. Richard Niebuhr and Daniel D. Williams (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1956), 82-109.*

than to individuals. That is, the conversion of a king led to the whole kingdom becoming nominally Christian.

Penance and confession became increasingly important aspects of the role of the clergy. Through it, the priests probed the hearts of their parishioners. After a moral cross-examination, the priest would impose catharsis-producing penances.

Private confession and penance was frequent and common to all by 600. British and Irish monks wrote the earliest manuals, which by 700, were circulating widely throughout Europe. These manuals served as handbooks for ministers. There was a connection between the pre-Christian Irish idea of a “soul friend” and the role of a confessor. The penances were inspired by monasticism and asceticism. Confessors were often monks and, sometimes, especially in the East, laypersons and women.

The principles of penance were based on contraries. For instance, patience took away wrath; kindliness, envy. Penalties included fasting, recitation, beating, and flogging. Clergy were treated more severely than laypersons. Throughout, pagan practices and ideas remained, and there were other weaknesses in the penitential system. Payments often might be made in lieu of penances. Penances might include gifts of land to the church or sponsorship of buildings. There were discrepancies among people. Sometimes a rich person might hire someone to do his or her penance—a “vicarious” penance.

Nonetheless, people flocked to the church to do penance. Indeed priests declared they would cut off from the church any laypersons who did not confess and do penance. The busy times of penance were Christmas and Lent—the 40 days preceding Easter. Priests were supposed to admonish a penitent as a fellow sinner: “Brother, do not blush to confess thy sins, for I also am a sinner, and perchance I have done worse deeds than thou hast.” Priests realized there was moral peril in intimate contact with the penitent, and peril in asking about certain sins so as to incite them! For this reason, the priest was not to look directly upon the penitent.

Granting forgiveness—on the basis of John 20:23 and Matthew 16:19—led to confession becoming the sacrament of absolution. This led to the formal establishment of confession at the Fourth Lateran Council by Pope Innocent III in 1215.

On the basis of the confessional, priests would bring the word of God to bear upon the present conditions of people. Preaching was not exegetical. It relied on telling stories with a moral point. Often it included stories about saints and their miracles. Many times, preaching was left to the monks. Some monks became itinerate preachers. The monks' sermons, in contrast to the priests', were more fervent. Monks were less afraid to denounce sins.

What do you see as strong points of the confessional?

What might be the problems?

Small Groups: The Church and Ministry

(20 minutes)

Divide the class into groups of three.

Refer to Resource 7-2 in the Student Guide.

During the early Middle Ages the priests and monks became active in the politics of their area.

Should ministers today become involved in politics?

What would be the advantages?

How might it fulfill the call to the ministry?

What would be the distractions from the ministry?

The Church of the Nazarene has taken the position that missionaries should not be involved with the politics in the area where they have been assigned.

What are the advantages of this position?

What are the disadvantages?

The priests and monks also became involved with compassionate ministries during this time.

How did this affect their ministry?

How does it affect pastors today?

Lecture / Discussion: The Spread and Development of Christianity in Europe

(40 minutes)

Refer to Resource 7-3 in the Student Guide.

Growth of the Church in Western Europe

By the sixth century the Roman Empire was breaking apart. There was a vast movement of peoples across

Eurasia that upset traditional patterns of life. Invaders included the Huns and the Goths.

Point out these places on a map.

Resource 7-4 is a map that the students can fill in during this lecture.

Another major threat to Christianity came in the rise and rapid spread of Islam—from 622. Into Muslim hands quickly went major historic centers of Christianity, including:

- Jerusalem, 638
- Caesarea, 640
- Alexandria, 642
- the Persian Empire, 650
- Carthage, 697
- Spain, 715
- Sicily, 902
- Constantinople, 1453

Only the Battle of Tours in 732 prevented the spread of Islam into Western Europe. It meant that Christianity was, more and more, a religion confined to Europe.

Christians, members of ancient and historic churches, struggled under Muslim rule. The most affected churches were those of the Eastern rites that had split over Christological doctrines.

Samuel H. Moffatt, A History of Christianity in Asia, *vol. 1,* Beginnings to 1500 *(San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1992), 324-61; and Irvin and Sunquist,* History of the World Christian Movement, *260-88.*

In the first generation under Muslim rule, Christians were for the most part tolerated. In some places, they retained important positions. However, the church was not allowed to proselytize. They could not marry Muslims unless they themselves became Muslim. In time, the Christians were taxed more heavily than Muslims, and other restrictions were placed on their civil liberties. Many Christians converted to Islam. In some localities, churches continued to exist as lonely outposts in a now-alien culture.

At the same time, Christianity spread to the West and North. Missionaries from Ireland spread the gospel in northern Britain and Scotland. In particular, Columba (521-597), a priest trained in Irish monasteries, founded several churches and monasteries in Ireland itself. About 563 he left Ireland with 12 companions and sailed to the island of Iona. There and in neighboring islands they established additional monasteries and evangelized the people. Columba was in charge of the region. He was able to convert Brude, king of the Pitcts.

The Irish and British sent missionaries to Europe. Irish missionaries included Columbanus (543-615), who settled in Gaul about 590. He set up monasteries and introduced Celtic church customs. This upset the hierarchy. Columbanus defended the Celtic customs at

local councils and in Rome. His monks were sent out of Burgundy in 610 for their rebukes of the royal court, and began to work among the Alemanni pagans. However, when Burgundy expanded later that decade, they were expelled again, and settled in Bobbio in Northern Italy. Their monastery there became a great center of learning.

But the Irish customs of the churches these missionaries established had some differences with Roman practices, which had been introduced by Gregory the Great's emissary, Augustine of Canterbury. The Synod of Whitby (663-664) decided in favor of Roman positions, against the Irish. Ecclesiastical order in Britain was established by the late 600s.

Another missionary, Willibrord (658-739), became known as the "Apostle to Frisia." Born in England, he was a monk in Ireland 12 years before venturing out as a missionary with several companions in 690. He received papal support for this work on a trip to Rome in 693. The pope consecrated him archbishop of the Frisians and bishop of Utrecht. Willibrord served as bishop until 735. Under the protection of King Pepin of the Franks, Willibrord established churches and monasteries in Luxemburg, the Netherlands, and Belgium.

Another important British missionary was Boniface (680-754), known as the "Apostle of Germany." Boniface made his first trip to the continent, to Frisia, in 716, but was unsuccessful in planting churches. He went to Rome, where he secured papal authority to evangelize Germany. Returning to Germany in 719, he was successful in Bavaria and Thuringia, converting many Hessians. Pope Gregory II was pleased. Boniface returned to Rome in 722 and received Gregory's fullest support. In turn, Boniface's loyalty to the pope strengthened Rome's control over the German church.

Returning to Germany, Boniface displayed courage in felling the Oak of Thor at Geismar. Soon he laid the foundations for an ecclesiastical organization in Germany. The account from the eighth century is that:

> Many of the people of Hesse were converted [by Boniface] to the Catholic faith and confirmed by the grace of the spirit; and they received the laying on of hands. But some there were, not yet strong of soul, who refused to accept wholly the teachings of the true faith. Some men sacrificed secretly, some even openly, to trees and springs. Some secretly

practiced divining, soothsaying, and incantations, and some openly. But others, who were of sounder mind, cast aside all heathen profanation and did none of these things; and it was with the advice and consent of these men that Boniface sought to fell a certain tree of great size, at Geismar, and called, in the ancient speech of the region, the oak of Jove [Thor].

The man of God was surrounded by the servants of God. When he would cut down the tree, behold a great throng of pagans who were there cursed him bitterly among themselves because he was the enemy of their gods. And when he had cut into the trunk a little way, a breeze sent by God stirred overhead, and suddenly the branching top of the tree was broken off, and the oak in all its huge bulk fell to the ground. And it was broken into four parts, as if by the divine will, so that the trunk was divided into four huge sections without any effort of the brethren who stood by. When the pagans who had cursed did see this, they left off cursing and, believing, blessed God. Then the most holy priest took counsel with the brethren: and he built from the wood of the tree an oratory, and dedicated it to the holy apostle Peter.

From A History of Christianity: Readings in the History of the Church, vol. 1: The Early and Medieval Church, *ed. Ray C. Petry (Reprint, Grand Rapids, Baker, 1981), 205-06.*

After 741—the death of Charles Martel—Boniface received authority to reform the Frankish Church, which he did by calling a number of successive councils. In 747 he became archbishop of Mainz. After a few years however, he resigned and returned to "front-line" missionary work, to his old mission in Frisia, where he was killed by barbarian pirates.

Boniface and other missionaries did not attempt to destroy the old religions of Europe so much as to transform them. They sacralized ancient religious spots, seasons, and festivals, bringing them into relation to the Christian calendar and liturgy. Though they maintained the use of Latin in the mass, they also promoted the use of vernacular languages.

Stephen Neill, A History of Christian Missions, *rev. ed. (London: Penguin, 1986), 66-67; 53-67.*

The Scandinavian countries remained pagan in spite of the efforts of the archbishop of Hamburg, Anskar (d. 865), in the mid-ninth century, to bring the gospel to them.

Hungary, made up of the Magyars, descendants of the Mongolians, were defeated in 955 by Emperor Otto II. The country was truly Christianized under King Stephen, who ruled from 975 to 1038.

Refer to Resource 7-5 in the Student Guide.

Intellectual Flourishing Under Charlemagne

France was becoming the new, strongest center of Europe. The pope crowned Charlemagne—Charles the Great—ruler of the Holy Roman Empire in 800. Charlemagne was the son of Pepin III, who had taken the title "King of the Franks" in 752. Charles began as king of part of his father's kingdom, shared with his brother, upon his father's death in 768. His brother's death three years later left Charles ruler of the entire kingdom.

Charles extended the kingdom. He subdued Lombardy, and then began campaigns against the Saxons that lasted for over 20 years (782-804). He conquered Bavaria in 778 and Pannonia the next decade.

Those whom he conquered were converted to Christianity. He conquered all of Germanic and Roman Europe except for Scandinavia and England. His first attacks against the Pyrenees failed, but later he gained a strip of northern Spain. He captured Barcelona in 801. Otherwise he was unsuccessful against the Umayyad Emirate in Spain. The advance of the empire into northern Italy aimed to drive away piracy and raids along the coasts of the Mediterranean.

Charles created a strong, consistent, centralized government and standardized laws. He encouraged both the development of the arts and sciences and ecclesiastical reform. He employed Alcuin of York (735-804) to advise him on both educational and religious matters, and to argue against the adoptionist heresies of Felix of Urgel.

Alcuin became abbot of Tours in 796 and set up an important library and school. Other British scholars aided in the flourishing of scholarship, though it did not produce theologians of the caliber of the early history of the church. Charlemagne's efforts brought about the "Carolingian Renaissance" in philosophy and theology that continued for decades after his death in 814.

In a climate of intellectual curiosity and vitality, old and new controversies emerged. An old heresy, adoptionism, emerged in Spain under Muslim rule. Bishop Felix of Urgel (d. 818) taught that the Son's filiation to the Father was by adoption. By grace the human is adopted, whereas the divine in Christ is always the Son. The divine is most inherent to His nature. Felix's position was close to the old Antiochan

point of view. Opponents of Felix emphasized that the Son of God cannot be so divided, and accused Felix of Nestorianism. The controversy ended in the early ninth century.

Another controversy dealt with the perpetual virginity of Mary. There was an increasing cult to Mary growing in the church among the common people. In order to protect the virginity of Mary, folk theology spoke of Mary giving birth in a miraculous way. Jesus "broke forth" rather than was "born."

However, this was opposed by Ratramnus of Corbie (d. 868) who saw the danger of Docetism in this notion. Paschasius Radbertus (790-865) argued that the birth was a miracle in itself and Mary was not tainted by Eve's sin, but that this miracle was unexplainable. He said, "Jesus came to us even while the womb was closed, just as he came to his disciples while the doors were closed."

Meanwhile, Rabanus Maurus (780-856), the abbot of Fulda and archbishop of Mainz, was responsible for the continued evangelization of the Germans. He zealously promoted learning among monks and clergy. But he also argued that "predestination" was merely foreknowledge. Hincmar (806-882), the archbishop of Reims, furthermore insisted on free will. He argued that it was the will of God that *all* be saved. If God determined that some were to be damned, argued Hincmar, it would make God the author of sin. John Scotus Erigena, the most prominent philospher of the times, supported Hincmar's views on rational rather than scriptural grounds.

In contrast, Ratramnus, a monk of Corbie (d. 868), and especially Gottshalk (808-868), a German monk, taught extreme predestination. Christ died, Gottshalk said, only for the elect. Gottshalk argued for the complete corruption of free will. He taught that God had predestined some to be damned as well as some to be saved. He seemed even to rejoice that those who opposed his views must be among the damned! In 848 the Synod of Quiercy not only condemned Gottshalk's views but stripped him of his orders, beat him, and sentenced him to life imprisonment. Gottshalk continued to defend his views from prison.

Many of these same theologians and churchmen also expressed different views in relation to the Eucharist. King Charles the Bald asked whether there was a real change in the elements. Paschasius Radbertus argued for a realistic interpretation. That is, he said the bread

and wine became the same flesh that was born to Mary, but that this was seen only through the eyes of faith. Ratramnus of Corbie, on the other hand, argued for a figurative interpretation. Though Christ is really present, His presence is "internal." He is really in the sacrament, but the bread is not the real body of Christ, only His spiritual body in a way not accessible to the senses.

Similarly, Ratramnus also argued that the human soul is incorporeal, not related to the body. He refuted the idea that universals were real. Rather, he said, against Plato, they were only concepts.

The leading intellect of the times was John Scotus Erigena (810-877), an Irishman brought to the court of Charles the Bald. He attempted a synthesis of Christian and Neoplatonist ideas. He divided nature into four divisions: creating and uncreated; created and creating; created and uncreating; and uncreated and uncreating.

Erigena believed God was unknowable and could not be limited by any definitions. Yet he agreed that God was in His most basic attribute Triune. God is the source of all being, the Son is Wisdom in whom all things were made, and the Spirit was the source of universal order. Erigena gave only a secondary role to Christ. His views of Christ tended toward Docetism.

Humanity was formed as an ideal in the mind of God and was designed only for a spiritual body. As a result of the Fall, humanity came to inhabit physical bodies. The souls of human beings are in the image of the Creator.

This description of theology in the Carolingian renaissance is based on Gonzalez, A History of Christian Thought, *2:103-35.*

All creation is being led back to the Creator for final restoration. There the consequences of sin will be destroyed, and all will find their fulfillment in God.

The Development of the Church in the Eastern Empire

Refer to Resource 7-6 in the Student Guide.

The Eastern and Western wings of the church continued to grow apart during these centuries. Constantinople remained the center of Greek culture, while the West was Latinized. Relations between East and West also were complicated by Islam, which inhibited communication. In the West, the pope increasingly dominated the political scene, whereas in the East, the church remained closely controlled by the emperor.

At the same time, the Eastern Church rejected the later addition to the Nicene Creed, the clause that said the Holy Spirit proceeded from both the Father and the Son. The Eastern Church maintained the original form of the creed, which mentioned the procession only from the Father.

Theological controversies during these centuries indicated the priorities of the Eastern Church. The Eastern Church, in particular, was faced with controversy over the use of icons. These were flat pictures, usually on wood. Christians believed the saints exercised benevolent powers through them. The icons instructed and assisted the faithful in prayer. They "translated" the mystery of God. Icons had become integral to the Eastern Church's practices. Icons, to the Eastern Church, also affirmed the artistic heritage of humanity.

One strong defender of icons was John of Damascus (675-749), the Eastern Church's leading theologian. John began his ministry in territory under the Muslims. He became a monk in Jerusalem, and then a priest. His writings, which dealt principally with philosophy, heresies, and orthodoxy, were widely read. John referred to Islam as a heresy but argued that the God of Mohammed was *not* the God whom Christians knew as the Father of Christ Jesus.

Irvin and Sunquist, History of the World Christian Movement, *1:280.*

An Easter hymn of John of Damascus celebrated what God's redemption meant for all:

The day of resurrection!
Earth tell it out abroad
The Passover of gladness,
the Passover of God.
From death to life eternal,
from this world to the sky,
Our Christ hath brought us over
with hymns of victory.

Our hearts be pure from evil,
that we may see aright
The Lord in rays eternal
of resurrection light.
And, listening to his accents,
may hear, so calm and plain,
His own "All hail!" and, hearing,
may raise the victor stain.

Now let the heavens be joyful,
let earth her song begin.
Let the round world keep triumph,

The Hymnal*, 166.*

and all that is therein.
Let all things seen and unseen,
their notes of gladness blend,
For Christ the Lord hath risen,
our joy that hath no end. Amen.

John emphasized, in regards to icons, that the believer is not worshiping but only venerating them. He discounted the connection between icons and Old Testament idols. The Incarnation, John said, let human beings know that God can reveal himself through visible means. The church must beware, John warned, of Manichaean dualism, which would consider matter in itself to be evil.

Gonzalez, A History of Christian Thought, *2:198-200.*

Yet Emperor Leo II condemned icons as idols. Emperor Leo III, who ruled from 717 to 740, further believed icons inhibited the conversion of Jews and Muslims, and in 726 ordered their destruction. Those who condemned icons were called iconoclasts. Monks held onto icons, whereas priests were divided as to their use.

The Seventh Ecumenical Council, which met in Nicea in 787, dealt with icons. Since the Western Church used similar images of the saints in worship, the Roman pope indicated his support for icons. The council came to this conclusion, and condemned iconoclasm. Icons were—as Empress Irene said—"windows to heaven."

The Eastern Church remained very strongly influenced by Monasticism. Through Monasticism, the church maintained a sense of "martyrdom" through voluntary self-denial and seclusion.

The rise of Charlemagne in 800, and his attempt to resurrect the old Roman Empire, was not welcomed in the East. Neither was the West's seeming intrusion upon the East. The Eastern Empire had a stake in keeping the Slavs out of Roman control. The Eastern Church sent missionaries to Slavs. Emperor Michael sent the brothers Methodius (815-885) and Cyril (826-869) to Moravia.

Since Constantinople, more than Rome, encouraged the use of vernacular languages in worship, Cyril created a Slavonic alphabet and script, and translated the Scriptures and liturgy into Slavic. Cyril and Methodius went to Rome to secure support and sanction for their work. In 869 the pope consecrated Methodius a bishop and allowed the use of Slavonic in liturgy. A subsequent pope, however, withdrew this permission. In the meantime, German bishops tried to

take over the work. These actions brought the Eastern Church into conflict with the West.

Another controversy arose in 858 in regards to Emperor Michael III's deposing of Constantinople Patriarch Ignatius and his appointment of Photius, then a layperson, as patriarch of Constantinople. Ignatius refused to abdicate, and Pope Nicholas I refused to recognize Photius. This interference of the pope angered the Eastern Church. A synod in Constantinople in 861, to which Nicholas sent emissaries, ratified Michael's appointment, but a subsequent synod in Rome in 863 declared Ignatius still patriarch.

Acting as patriarch, Photius argued against the primacy of Rome. He criticized Rome for sending missionaries to Bulgaria, since the Eastern Church had already sent its own missionaries to the region. Furthermore, theologically, Photius criticized the *filioque* clause and accused the West of adding this clause later to the creed. Photius espoused the view that the Spirit did not proceed from the Son, but only from the Father. Photius succeeded in having the pope denounced at the 867 Council at Constantinople.

However, when Basil became emperor in 867, he attempted to heal the breech with Rome. The Eighth Ecumenical Council that met in Constantinople, 869-870, condemned Photius and reinstated Ignatius. Photius returned to the patriarchy upon Ignatius's death in 877, only to be forced out again upon the ascension of Emperor Leo VI in 886.

Gonzalez, A History of Christian Thought, *2:202-04.*

The Eastern Church, unlike the West, was decentralized religiously. The Eastern Church set up ecclesiologically *autocephalous* or autonomous national churches. At the same time, Greek civilization accompanied Christianization. Bulgaria became a strong center of the Eastern Church after the conversion of Czar Boris in 864. Through Bulgaria, Slavonic culture spread to Romania and Russia.

Russia was made up of many tribes and ethnic groups. Constantinople had attempted to win the Russians to Christianity in the ninth century, to no avail. A significant event was the baptism in 957 of Olga, the ruler of Kiev. This did not, however, effect mass conversions, and her son probably became Muslim.

Finally, the church was firmly planted under Vladimir (980-1015), who was baptized about 988. Vladimir, the story goes, was searching for the best religion for his people and sent emissaries to Muslims, Jews,

Roman Catholics, and Eastern Christians in Constantinople. His emissaries were impressed with the churches of Constantinople. The missionaries whom the Eastern Church sent to Russia were largely Greek, but they initially used Slavic in liturgy. It was natural, when Cardinal Humbert excommunicated the patriarch of Constantinople in 1054, that Russia sided with the East.

Allow for response.

What were some of the various methods and means used to spread the gospel?

Write responses on the board or overhead.

What means were appropriate?

What means were inappropriate?

What means are appropriate today?

What means might not be appropriate today?

Lecture / Discussion: Expansion Eastward

(20 minutes)

Refer to Resource 7-7 in the Student Guide.

Historians can never say for sure who first brought Christianity to the great civilization of China. The first recorded missionary was Aloben—or, as it has been commonly spelled, Alopen—who reached China in the seventh century, during the reign of the second T'ang Dynasty Emperor, T'ai Tsung. Aloben is known from a monument that can be dated in A.D. 635. He was a Nestorian missionary bishop who entered China at a fortuitous time, yet the planting of Christianity in China proved to be only transitory.

Aloben was a Nestorian Christian. The Nestorian controversy arose in the Christian church in the fifth century over the relationship between Christ's humanity and divinity. Particularly, Nestorius of Antioch objected to Mary being called the 'Mother of God,' or even the 'bearer of God,' preferring the designation 'bearer of Christ.' To Nestorius, Mary bore Christ's humanity but not His divine nature. Nestorius spoke of the "conjunction" rather than the "union" of Christ's nature. Cyril of Alexandria opposed Nestorius's position as dividing the essential unity of Christ, but in Cyril's Christology the human nature of Christ became obscure. The debate raged, each side accentuating its differences. Finally, the Council of Ephesus in 431 branded Nestorius a heretic, and the church forced him into exile, first in Antioch, and later in Egypt.

Point out these countries on a world map.

Certain Eastern bishops remained loyal to Nestorius and separated from the rest of the church. Many Nestorian Christians, faced with persecution, fled to Persia. In the early fifth century this church began an aggressive missionary program into Arabia, India, and eventually China. Aloben's mission came at a high point in the Nestorian church's history. The Nestorian Patriarch Isho-Yahb may have appointed a metropolitan for China sometime between 628 and 643, which, if so, implies there was both a number of Christians in China and a well-organized church.

After Muslims overran Persia, beginning in 636, Nestorians persisted in Persia and even attained positions of leadership under Muslim rule.

Aloben may have been preceded by any number of Christian traders who traversed the "silk road" and other ancient land and sea routes to China. Even a first-century introduction is conceivable. On the other hand, it may be that the name of Jesus first reached the borders of China via the Manichaeans in the third century. They spoke of Jesus in Gnostic terms, as the Emissary of Light. Later, the Nestorian church was known as the "Luminous Religion."

The church knows of Aloben through a marker, recovered in 1625 in the town of Hsian in Shensi Province, and examined by Jesuit missionaries, who had entered China a few decades before. It proved immediately that Christianity was of ancient origin in China, and this helped Jesuits in the seventeenth century to defend it more adequately.

The monument or table was nine feet in height, three-and-one-half feet wide, and one foot thick. It was written in both Syriac and Chinese. Though scholars have debated the genuineness of the marker, today it is considered authentic. The marker itself dates to about 780 and mentions Aloben as arriving in Ch'ang-an in 635, bringing sacred Scriptures.

These Scriptures were of great interest to government officials. The early years of the T'ang Dynasty were favorable to foreign influences. The Chinese accepted Buddhism and Islam as well as Christianity until problems arose in the late eighth century.

The first part of the monument's inscription is theological. It presents the ideas of a personal God, the Creator, the Fall, the Incarnation, the Trinity, and the Ascension. Although this led some scholars to consider the type of Christianity Aloben introduced to

be void of the gospel, it may also be said that the theology on the marker does not indicate anything unorthodox or particularly Nestorian in Christology.

The second part of the inscription is historical, describing the arrival of Aloben and the growth of the "Luminous Religion"—Ching-chiao—with imperial favor. The tablet states that the emperor gave Aloben the title "great patron and spiritual lord of the empire." Indeed the marker pays flattering attention to the various emperors, to whom it credits support for the religion since its introduction. The third part of the inscription contains prayers.

Nevertheless, even during the days of Aloben, the Emperor Kao-tsung began to favor Buddhism rather than Christianity. This was under the influence of his concubine and later Empress Wu Hou, who is known in history for her ruthlessness. She after Kao-tsung's death until 705 and officially declared Buddhism the state religion. This set off persecutions against Christians. Some historians have suggested that the church persisted only among the expatriate community of Persians who sought asylum in China after the Arabs took over their own country.

A Nestorian bishop, Chi-leh, reached China in 713. In the mid-eighth century the Nestorian church thrived. Church buildings destroyed under the earlier time of persecution were restored.

Nestorian missionaries frequented the imperial palace, even to say mass. One Nestorian priest, Issu, served as a general in the Chinese army. His son, Ching-ching, or Adam, served as a bishop and was known for his scholarliness regarding Chinese literature and language. However, the dynasty itself was crumbling.

Later documents, discovered long after the monument, revealed that Christianity during this period in China was theologically orthodox. One document attributed to Aloben himself stated clearly that only "through the Messiah can all people be saved." At other times, however, the Nestorians used Buddhist, Confucian, and Daoist terms to articulate Christian faith. Frequently they used the name "Buddha" for "God." Ching-ching helped a Buddhist missionary from India translate Buddhist scriptures into Chinese.

In 845, under the influence of Confucianists, Emperor Wu-tsung decreed that all foreign missionaries must leave China and that all monks must enter secular life. Although directed primarily against the Buddhist

monks as well as Manichaeans, the decree included Christians as well.

This effectively ended more than two centuries of overt Christian presence. In fact, the most likely explanation for the disappearance of Christianity from China at this time is that its fortunes rested too completely upon imperial favor. When the T'ang Dynasty could no longer control the country, its patronage became useless.

This may be the biggest lesson to learn from the Nestorian mission in China, in fact: that it identified too completely with the ruling class and did not identify enough with the common people.

Christianity persisted among the outlying tribes, including the Mongols, who became rulers of China as well as much of Asia in the thirteenth century. When Franciscan missionaries reached China in the same century, they described still-functioning Nestorian churches in at least 15 towns in the Western provinces.

Reprinted from Floyd Cunningham, "Aloben and Beginnings in China," Word and Ministry 5 *(January, February, March 1997): 15-17.*

Allow for response.

What are the advantages of reaching out to the ruling class in a country or community?

What are the advantages of reaching out to the common people?

Guided Discussion: Reading Topics

(10 minutes)

What other interesting information have you found in your reading for this lesson?

Lesson Close

(5 minutes)

Review

Call on several students to answer this statement.

Name an important lesson we have learned today.

Look Ahead

In the next lesson we begin to look at the High Middle Ages, particularly as the church interacted with culture.

Assign Homework

Direct students to the Homework Assignments in the Student Guide.

Remind students that the Shelley book may not have all the information that they need.

Reading topics:

- Reason and revelation: Scholasticism
- The Crusades
- Church and Papacy—Popes Gregory VII, Urban II, and Innocent III
- Shelley, *Church History in Plain Language,* chapter 19

Write a two-page response giving your thoughts, impressions, and feelings about the people, events, and theology.

Continue working on the term projects.

Write in your journal. Reflect on and respond to the following:

AUGUSTINE'S CONFESSIONS, READING 7

BOOK SIX
Turmoil in the twenties. Monica follows Augustine to Milan and finds him a catechumen and women in the Catholic Church. Both admire Ambrose but Augustine gets no help from him on his personal problems. Ambition spurs and Alypius and Nebridius join him in a confused quest for the happy life. Augustine becomes engaged, dismisses his first mistress, takes another, and continues his fruitless search for truth.

CHAPTER IV
6. I was also glad that the old Scriptures of the Law and the Prophets were laid before me to be read, not

now with an eye to what had seemed absurd in them when formerly I censured your holy ones for thinking thus, when they actually did not think in that way. And I listened with delight to Ambrose, in his sermons to the people, often recommending this text most diligently as a rule: “The letter kills, but the spirit gives life,” while at the same time he drew aside the mystic veil and opened to view the spiritual meaning of what seemed to teach perverse doctrine if it were taken according to the letter. I found nothing in his teachings that offended me, though I could not yet know for certain whether what he taught was true. For all this time I restrained my heart from assenting to anything, fearing to fall headlong into error. Instead, by this hanging in suspense, I was being strangled. For my desire was to be as certain of invisible things as I was that seven and three are ten. I was not so deranged as to believe that [this] could not be comprehended, but my desire was to have other things as clear as this, whether they were physical objects, which were not present to my senses, or spiritual objects, which I did not know how to conceive of except in physical terms. If I could have believed, I might have been cured, and, with the sight of my soul cleared up, it might in some way have been directed toward your truth, which always abides and fails in nothing. But, just as it happens that a man who has tried a bad physician fears to trust himself with a good one, so it was with the health of my soul, which could not be healed except by believing. But lest it should believe falsehoods, it refused to be cured, resisting your hand, who hast prepared for us the medicines of faith and applied them to the maladies of the whole world, and endowed them with such great efficacy.

Looking Ahead

In the next lesson there is a section for viewing a video on the Crusades. There are several possibilities. One is in the series by Zondervan, That the World May Know, *Volume 3, Lesson 7, “Misguided Faith.” This video segment is only 13 minutes long and would allow a time for discussion.*

Another alternative is Crusades *in the series* Cloud of Witnesses, *from Nashville: Graded Press.*

Lesson 8

Interaction of Church and Culture

Lesson Overview

Schedule

Start Time	Task or Topic	Learning Activity	Materials Needed
0:00	Introduction	Orient	Student Guide
0:10	Reason and Revelation: Scholasticism	Lecture/Discussion	Resources 8-1—8-4
0:35	The Crusades	Lecture	Resource 8-5 Resource 8-6
0:55	The Crusades	Video/Discussion	
1:30	The Church and the Papacy	Lecture/Discussion	Resource 8-7 Resource 8-8
1:55	Lesson Close	Review, Assign	Student Guide

Suggested Reading for Instructor

Bassett, Paul M., and William M. Greathouse. *Exploring Christian Holiness.* Vol. 2, *The Historical Development.* Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1985.

Deanesly, Margaret. *A History of the Medieval Church, 590-1500*. Reprint, London: Routledge, 1994.

Gonzalez, Justo L. *A History of Christian Thought.* Vol. 2, *From Augustine to the Eve of the Reformation*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1971.

Jones, W. T. *A History of Western Philosophy.* Vol. 2, *The Medieval Mind.* Second edition, New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1969.

Latourette, Kenneth S. *A History of Christianity*. Vol. 1, *From the Beginnings to 1500*. Revised edition, New York: Harper and Row, 1975.

Lowith, Karl. *Meaning in History.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1949.

Southern, R. W. *The Making of the Middle Ages*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1953.

Lesson Introduction

(10 minutes)

Accountability

In pairs have the students read each other's homework papers.

Return and collect homework.

Orientation

Christian thought was renewed in the High Middle Ages (1000-1300), especially through the writings of Thomas Aquinas.

The Crusades altered relations between Christians and Muslims, and Western and Eastern Christians. The Crusades affected the very nature of Western Christianity.

Papal power and authority increased over these 300 years.

Learner Objectives

Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.

Restating the objectives for the learners serves as an advanced organizer for the lesson and alerts learners to key information and concepts.

At the end of this lesson, participants should

- explain scholasticism in the Western tradition during the Middle Ages
- describe the theology of the sacraments that had developed by the High Middle Ages
- discuss the relations between church and society by looking at how European Christians related to their neighbors
- describe the various Crusades
- discuss current Christian–Muslim relations in light of the Crusades
- describe the differences between Northern and Southern Christianity during this time period
- understand the political events that led to the rise of papal power and authority
- characterize the shape of papal authority in the church
- appreciate the stand taken by Thomas à Becket

Lesson Body

Lecture: Reason and Revelation: Scholasticism

(25 minutes)

Refer to Resource 8-1 in the Student Guide.

Pope Innocent III ushered in the thirteenth century by asserting and strengthening papal authority and power. This century was remarkable for its theology, and its theology accompanied the building of great cathedrals, the rise of universities, and the recovery of Aristotle.

Medieval Scholasticism placed emphasis upon the rational justification of religious belief and the systematic presentation of those beliefs. While Scholasticism was forming a method for organizing theology, popes were tightening the ecclesiastical system. Scholasticism's method led it, sometimes, to degenerate into concern for trivial theological issues. But at its best, Scholasticism affirmed the role of reason and logic in theology. Scholarly work was carried on in monasteries such as St. Germain, France, and in Cathedral schools, which were led by monks.

Scholars of the period included Gilbert of Auvillac (940-1003), who became Pope Sylvester II in 999. He had studied and later taught at Reims, which was devoted to the seven liberal arts:

- the trivium—grammar, rhetoric, and dialectic
- the quadrivium—music, arithmetic, geometry, and astronomy

Gilbert was among the first scholars to use Aristotle's logic within the system of education. Among Gilbert's students was Fulbert (960-1028), who became chancellor of the cathedral school in Chartres in 990. He helped to make the school an intellectual center of Europe. Fulbert, who became bishop of Chartres in 1007, distinguished between the "inner substance"—the body and blood of the Lord—and "outer substance"—the bread and the wine—of the Eucharist.

Berengar of Tours (1010-1088), who studied at Chartres, denied that the bread and wine were even inwardly transformed in the Eucharist. The body of Christ was present only "intellectually." The bread and the wine did not cease to exist, and the body of Christ born to Mary was not physically present on the altar, Berengar said. The body of Christ does not descend when the priest raises the bread to heaven. They are a sign only that the Lord is truly present.

Gonzalez, A History of Christian Thought, *2:145-51.*

Jesus, Berengar taught, was sacrificed once, for all. Communion is the memorializing of His death, not its reenactment. Berengar, who also taught that the image of God in human beings is reason, was widely criticized in his own time for his views on the Eucharist. Among his chief opponents was Lanfranc (1010-89), the archbishop of Canterbury. The most common opinion remained that the bread and the wine were actually transformed into the body and blood of Christ.

Refer to Resource 8-2 in the Student Guide.

One of Lanfranc's successors as archbishop of Canterbury, Anselm (1034-1109), accepted reason as well as tradition to answer theological questions. Like previous apologists, Anselm started with presuppositions acceptable to unbelievers. He worked out an argument for the existence of God based on reason alone. God as "that-than-which-nothing-greater-can-be-thought" must exist in order for this concept to even appear in human minds.

That which is greater than what exists as a category in human minds is that which exists in reality as well as in a mental construct. God cannot even be thought not to exist. This was called the ontological—from *ontos,* being—argument for the existence of God.

Anselm further affirmed that what is conceived to be perfect must also be conceived to exist. Anselm's logic met objection from Gaunilo, a monk, who pointed out that an atheist might have no concept of God in mind, and that what might exist in mind had no necessary relation to reality. Nonetheless, theologians often used Anselm's arguments.

Anselm attempted rational defenses of other doctrines, including the Trinity and the Incarnation. His doctrine of the Atonement became especially influential in Western theology. He argued against the idea of a ransom paid to the devil and rejected the images of victory and triumph in favor of ones more suited to Latin and Western legal language and concerns.

Rather than a payment to the devil, Anselm said, the payment is made to God, who could not simply forgive a debt without any satisfaction, since this would be surrendering to disorder.

While Anselm worked out rational explications of theology, he still maintained that belief or faith must precede true wisdom. A prayer indicated this:

> I confess, Lord, with thanksgiving that you have made me in your image, so that I can remember

you, think of you, and love you.

But the image is so worn and blotted out by faults, so darkened by the smoke of sin, that it cannot do that for which it was made, unless you renew and refashion it.

Lord, I am not trying to make my way to your height, for my understanding is in no way equal to that, but I do desire to understand a little of your truth which my heart already believes and loves.

I do not seek to understand so that I may believe; But I believe so that I may understand; and what is more, I believe that unless I do believe I shall not understand. Amen.

The Prayers and Meditations of St. Anselm, *trans. Benedicta Ward (Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin, 1973), 243-44.*

While Anselm seemed to argue neatly and rationally for church traditions, the thought and life of Peter Abelard (1079-1142) was more turbulent. Abelard studied under William of Champeaux (1070-1121), one of the leading realists of the time, and became a teacher in Paris.

Refer to Resource 8-3 in the Student Guide.

While a teacher in Paris, Abelard met and secretly married Heloise. They had a son, but Heloise's family found the situation scandalous. In 1118 Abelard was forced out of his teaching position and entered a monastery in St. Denis. Heloise entered a convent. They wrote love letters to each other for the rest of their lives. Abelard was able to resume his teaching career in Paris in 1136.

Abelard rejected William's realism, the understanding that abstract concepts or universals had a transcendent and real existence. Instead, influenced in part by Aristotle, Abelard championed nominalism or conceptualism, the view that what was considered a "universal" was but a "meaningful sound" with no objective existence outside the mind.

Abelard's theological method was *sic et non*. He showed that the church Fathers had given sometimes completely opposed and contradictory opinions on theological issues. This cast doubt on the authority of tradition and the church.

In contrast to Anselm's satisfaction theory of the Atonement, Abelard argued—especially in his commentary on Romans—for Christ's "moral influence." Abelard's view of the Atonement was subjective. Christ, Abelard said, was the great Teacher and Example. Abelard emphasized that the love Christ showed

impelled men and women to be more loving in their own actions. They could believe, when they looked at Christ, that God forgave them. Abelard emphasized that intention, rather than acts in and of themselves, determined a person's guiltiness.

Some of Abelard's thoughts on heaven come to us in the way of a hymn:

O what their joy and their glory must be,
those endless Sabbaths the blessed ones see;
Crown for the valiant, to the weary ones rest;
God shall be All, and in all ever blest.
Truly Jerusalem name we that shore,
"Vision of Peace," that brings joy evermore;
Wish and fulfillment can severe be ne'er,
nor the thing prayed for come short of the prayer.
There, where no troubles distraction can bring;
we the sweet anthems of Zion shall sing;
While for Thy grace, Lord, their voices of praise
Thy blessed people shall evermore raise.
Low before Him with our praises we fall,
of whom and in whom and through whom are all;
Of whom, the Father, and through whom, the Son;
in whom, the Spirit, with these ever One.

The Hymnal*, 430.*

Unlike Anselm's theory, Abelard's views of the Atonement had no lasting impact on medieval thought. In fact, in his own lifetime, Abelard was soundly criticized. His chief opponent was Abbot Bernard of Clairvaux (1090-1153), who had Abelard condemned in 1140 for teaching that Christ did not take upon himself flesh to save us from the devil, that free will of itself suffices to do some good, that human beings did not inherit the guilt of Adam, but only penalty. Bernard criticized Abelard's moral influence theory of the Atonement.

Aulen, Christus Victor, *95-97; Gonzalez*, A History of Christian Thought, *166-71.*

Refer to Resource 8-4 in the Student Guide.

Bernard, a member of a contemplative monastic order, understood that the aim of theology was to aid devotion. Theology brought self-transcendence and pure objectivity. Likewise, Bernard believed, love did the same. God is the initiator, sustainer, and goal of Christian love. Sharing in God's nature was sharing in His love. Bernard understood Christian love to be intellectual, but leading one to love humanity. Love moved men and women from the mundane—loving with all the heart—to what was higher, the rational—loving with all the soul.

Bassett and Greathouse, The Historical Development*, 119-28; see also, Jean Leclercq,* The Love of Learning and the Desire for God: A Study of Monastic Culture, *trans. Catherine Misrahi (New York: Fordham University Press, 1961), 214-17.*

William of Champeaux founded the school of theology at St. Victor's in Paris about 1110. It was known for its defense of realism, and in particular the idea that three

in one essence is present in individuals of the same "species." Among the theologians to follow at St. Victor was Hugh (1097-1141), who delineated the seven sacraments: Baptism, Confirmation, Communion, Penance, Extreme Unction, Marriage, and Ordination. "The person who finds his homeland sweet," Hugh once wrote, "is still a tender beginner. He to whom every soil is as his native one is already strong. But he is perfect to whom the entire world is a foreign place."

Another influential Parisian theologian was Peter Lombard (1100-1160), who was professor of theology at Notre Dame. His *Sentences* was a compilation of material on various theological issues drawn from earlier theologians. It became the basic theological textbook for the remaining centuries of the Middle Ages.

A more controversial theologian was Joachim of Fiore (1131-1202). Joachim is said to have experienced a conversion to an "interior life" after a visit to the Holy Land as a young man. He entered the Cistercian Order and became abbot of Corazzo in 1177. Shortly thereafter, he resigned to devote himself to writing. He founded a monastery of his own at Calabria, which received papal blessing in 1196. This became the Order of Saint John. By 1202 the order had grown to 60 houses, most in southern Italy.

Joachim was primarily a biblical commentator. He used a prophetic-historical method of allegorical interpretation. He emphasized the future-telling role of Scripture and centered his attention on the Book of Revelation. From the Bible he drew a theological interpretation of history.

He believed in a Trinitarian conception of history. Under the age of the Father, humankind lived under the Law. This lasted until the end of the Old Testament dispensation. This was the age of the laity. The second age was that of the Son, which is lived under grace and covers the New Testament dispensation, which Joachim believed, would last for 42 generations of 30 years each. This was the age of the clergy. Thus—as followers of Joachim pointed out—this period would end in the year 1260.

The third dispensation is the age of the Holy Spirit and the Eternal Gospel. This was the age of the monks, since they had reached a state of piety and "perfection." Joachim was looking forward to a desecularized church restored to its spiritual fervor. A pure and spiritual church would arise. Under this new

dispensation, new religious orders would go out to convert the entire world.

Karl Lowith, Meaning in History *(Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1949, 145-59); George Tavard, "Apostolic Life and Church Reform," in* Christian Spirituality: High Middle Ages and Reformation, *ed. Jill Raitt (New York: Crossroad, 1988), 4-6.*

Church officials saw Joachim's ideas as a challenge to ecclesiastical authority. Later, some orders, including the Dominicans, and especially the Spiritual Franciscans, believed they fulfilled what Joachim prophesied. The Fourth Lateran Council in 1215 rebuked Joachim's doctrines, yet his teachings continued to provoke great interest.

Conclusion

Scholastics believed we ascend toward God through the intellect, so they emphasized theology. For them, *theoria* preceded *praxis*. There was confidence in the orderedness of the world. Human philosophy, reason, and logic were implicitly Christocentric. The Word is in the heart of the world, so a natural theology is possible. There is an optimistic view of God's creation, humanity, and its ability to ascend toward God.

Cf. Pelikan, Jesus Through the Centuries, *57-70.*

Allow for response.

How has our denomination benefited from this time period?

What lessons have we learned from this time period?

Lecture: The Crusades

(20 minutes)

In order to regain lands lost, and in particular, to take control of the Holy Lands, Western Christians launched attacks upon Muslims. One crusade turned against Eastern Christians. The violence perpetrated by the Christians etched itself in Muslims' memory. In the end, the Crusades were a disaster. No lands were permanently reclaimed, and animosities between Western Christians and both Eastern Christians and Muslims became more intense.

The Relations of Latin Christendom with the Outside World

R. W. Southern, The Making of the Middle Ages *(New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1953), 27.*

The Western Empire experienced no great threat from the East after the defeat of the Magyars by Otto the Great in 955. Still, in Christian lands, especially in the North, "ancient heathendom," as R. W. Southern put it, was only "slowly dissolving." The Church was gradually bringing northern Europe into its web of relations, and kingdoms grew closer through the intermarriage of nobility.

The Normans conquered England in 1054 and took Southern Italy and Sicily away from the Eastern Empire in a series of invasions 1059-91.

Meanwhile, Islamic civilization took deeper roots. By 1100 Muslim scholarship, especially in astronomy and mathematics, was notably useful to Europeans.

Constantinople remained the trading center of the region, a hub of both caravan and sea routes. With the rise of Anglo-Flemish wool and clothing industries, Europeans had something to trade with the rest of the world.

The Crusades

Refer to Resource 8-5 in the Student Guide.

The motives of the Crusades were not entirely religious. Christians sought to recapture the Holy Land from the Muslims, to destroy Islam, and to stop the potential advance of Turkish Muslims into Europe. At first, they saw themselves as protectors of the Eastern Empire and church, and thought of the Crusades as a means of healing the rift between the two wings of Christendom.

Crusaders sought to conquer in the name of Christ. This gave rise to a strange type of monasticism linked to military action. Crusaders also joined the campaigns for the simple escape it offered from the tedious drudgery of everyday life. The Crusades offered adventure. Many Europeans were poverty stricken. Poor and noble alike saw the Crusades as a means toward economic gain. They offered knights a chance to prove their chivalry in battle.

Divisions among the Muslims gave the Christians reason to hope for success. Land routes to the Holy Lands had become common after the conversion of the Hungarians to Western Christianity during the reign of King Stephen early in the eleventh century. Europeans were beginning, after advances in Spain and Sicily against the Muslims, to hope they could be defeated. The monastic reform movements were taking hold of the people and increasing their devotion.

Margaret Deanesly, A History of the Medieval Church, 590-1500 *(Reprint, London: Routledge, 1994), 105-6.*

Sentiment for a Crusade was initiated from Rome among monks and the sons of great ruling families. Pope Urban II called for the First Crusade in 1095 at the Council of Clermont. “God wills it” (*Deus* vult), Urban announced. Increasingly, Europeans who had been making pilgrimages to Jerusalem saw those whom they considered the enemies of Christ triumphing. Urban also saw a united campaign as a means of overcoming Europeans’ infighting. He hoped to turn

their restlessness into constructive action. He also granted an indulgence to any who would join the Crusade.

Peter the Hermit (1050-1115) roused popular enthusiasm, and when an army was raised, joined the Crusade. The First Crusade included five armies, totaling 50,000 men. The Crusaders looted and pillaged towns on the way, and turned against Jews. After crossing into Asia Minor, two of the armies were massacred by the Muslim Turks.

Professional soldiers and knights joined in the Crusade. They captured Antioch in 1098 and Jerusalem in 1099. When Europeans reached Jerusalem they slaughtered the inhabitants. Godfrey of Bouillon became “Protector of the Holy Sepulchre,” and later his brother became “King of Jerusalem.” They established a feudal political regime along with the Church. The Christians’ action left hatred and antagonism. Though the Church’s reputation was tarnished, this Crusade was a collaborative act that created a sense of European identity.

Military monastic orders, taking vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, rose to aid the Crusade. The Templars, founded in 1119 in Jerusalem itself, pledged to defend the Holy Land. The Templars became wealthy through various gifts. Another group, the Knights of Saint John, or Hospitallers, established a hospital in Jerusalem. But it became a military rather than a healing order.

Refer to Resource 8-6 in the Student Guide.

The Second Crusade began after the city of Edessa fell to Muslims in 1144. Bernard of Clairvaux promoted the idea of a renewed attack upon the Muslims. But many Europeans who joined the effort perished before reaching Syria. Others were defeated at Damascus. In 1187 Muslims pushed Europeans out of Jerusalem.

In an attempt to retake Jerusalem, Europeans launched the Third Crusade in 1198. It was led by the emperor and kings, including Richard the Lion-Hearted of England. Europeans recaptured the city of Acre and achieved some other minor successes, but could not conquer Jerusalem.

The Fourth Crusade began in 1202 upon the call of Pope Innocent III. Its goal was Egypt, but spurred by a conniving merchant of Venice, who was transporting the troops, in 1204 the Crusaders turned against and conquered and plundered Constantinople. Venice and Constantinople were rivals for trade. Baldwin of

Flanders was declared emperor. A Latin Patriarch loyal to Rome replaced the Greek patriarch, but Eastern churches refused to pay allegiance to this usurper.

The Western powers occupied the Eastern Empire for 60 years. This brought hatred and estrangement, and weakened the Eastern Empire's capacity to stand against the Muslims. In 1261 the Eastern rulers were strong enough to push the Latin rulers out of the city.

A pitiful Children's Crusade was launched in 1212. Many of the children who joined it ended up as slaves in Egypt. It was the worst failure of the Crusades.

The Fifth Crusade was led by Emperor Frederick II, who went without papal support. Frederick obtained a treaty with Egypt in 1229 giving him control over Palestine and the adjacent region. Muslims at this time were weakened by the Mongols. Frederick became "King of Jerusalem." However, the Muslims retook Jerusalem in 1244.

The Sixth Crusade, in 1270, was led by the rulers of France and England. It ended a failure. Even the one Christian stronghold remaining in the Near East, Acre, fell to Muslims in 1291.

The crusading spirit continued and was directed against both pagans and Jews in Europe, Muslims in Iberia, and heretics such as the Cathari. The crusading heritage represented a complete reversal from the early Christian stand on war. Not only were some wars now "just," they were "holy."

Latourette, A History of Christianity, 1:408-15.

The Crusades stimulated the growth of Italian commerce and in general brought Europeans into closer contacts with Asians. But they utterly failed to achieve their primary objectives. Instead, the Crusades weakened the Eastern empire and church, which became easy prey to the Muslims. The rift with the Western Church deepened. Bitterness between Christians and Muslims intensified. The Crusades lowered the moral stature of Christendom.

The Crusades united European monarchs against a common foe. At the same time, they increased the power and prestige of the pope.

The Crusades opened Europe more to the size and scope of the unconverted outside world. The Crusades increased the traffic of ideas, especially from the Arabians. Crusaders brought news of Christendom from beyond. This included a mysterious letter received in

1175 from one “Prester John.” The pope sent a letter and emissary to find John and his kingdom, but the emissary disappeared.

Video / Discussion: The Crusades

(35 minutes)

Have the video ready to play.

There are several video possibilities for this segment. One is in the series by Zondervan, That the World May Know, *Volume 3, Lesson 7, “Misguided Faith.” This video segment is only 13 minutes long and would allow a time for discussion.*

Another alternative is Crusades *in the series* Cloud of Witnesses, *from Nashville: Graded Press.*

What is your impression of the Crusades after doing the reading and viewing the video?

What stood out to you?

How important is it to be sensitive to the words and language that we use in communicating to the Muslim world and people from the Middle East?

How do we overcome the centuries of anger and hurt, and the misperceptions of Christianity?

Lecture / Discussion: The Church and the Papacy

(25 minutes)

The Church, the Papacy, and the States in the High Middle Ages

While the church was a unifying force throughout Europe, differences were obvious among the Western European states. In particular the northern, Germanic states, which had been less influenced by the rule of the old Roman Empire, possessed distinct languages, cultures, and religious customs. Monastic and other reforms were implemented in the Latin states of France, Italy, and Norman England.

Refer to Resource 8-7 in the Student Guide.

At the beginning of this period, much of Rome was vacated and in ruins. There was little commerce. It was the resting place of saints. Ancient churches contained the relics of saints. Though churches from other places sometimes purchased these relics, and thus they were scattered throughout Europe, Christians from throughout Europe still undertook pilgrimages to Rome.

The rulers of European countries chiefly responsible for filling church offices. This was termed “lay investiture,” since the kings were not clergy. The monarch gave a ring and a staff to the selected bishop when he was

inducted into office. The clergy had become little more than officers for the monarchs. The morals of the clergy degenerated.

Wealthy families of Europe controlled church property and divided ecclesiastical as well as political offices. Families sometimes bought top church offices for their children. One brother might be a count, another a bishop. In local cathedrals, lay offices transferred from one generation to the next. "Custodians" earned a degree of the profits or tithes brought by the people.

In the mid-eleventh century the pope began to move against some of the abuses of buying church offices—called "simony." In 1049 Pope Leo IX met church leaders at Rheims. The bones of the patron saint Remigius were placed on the altar to send a degree of fear among those gathered. The pope asked which of the bishops present had paid money to attain their offices. One bishop confessed that his parents had bought the office for him. He laid down his staff and the pope gave him another. One bishop who disappeared in the night was excommunicated. Another bishop was reduced to the priesthood. These actions strengthened the pope's authority and moral influence.

Southern, The Making of the Middle Ages, *118-39.*

By a decree issued in 1059 by Pope Nicholas II, the election of popes was to be left to the College of Cardinals. The pope himself, this reform intimated, must be free of the influence of patrons.

But even after the church began to move against such abuses in the mid-eleventh century, lay investiture remained a problem, creating tensions between the rulers and the pope.

Gregory VII (1072-1085)

Refer to Resource 8-8 in the Student Guide.

A reformer became pope in 1072. Hildebrand, as he had been known, had been an influential advisor to the popes since 1049, and an agent of reform. Upon becoming pope, he took the name Gregory VII. Though he had been allied with the new urban families of Rome (its financiers and traders) Gregory, as historian R. W. Southern put it, was "eaten up with one burning passion to restore the glory of the Apostles." He believed the way to reform the church was to strengthen papal power. He immediately issued degrees against simony and clerical immorality.

Southern, The Making of the Middle Ages, *139.*

Gregory found a document known as the "Donation of Constantine." Supposedly written by the fourth-century emperor, it gave the church rights over large Italian

lands. It made the pope a temporal as well as religious and spiritual leader. Later, the document was proven to be a forgery.

The pope also held regular business sessions that established policies; for instance, in regards to the jurisdiction and running of monasteries. The real power of Rome was demonstrated in the provinces. Gregory relied on papal legates or representatives, who traveled, held councils, and pronounced judgments in the name of the pope.

In 1074 Gregory prohibited priests' marriages and ordered married priests to dismiss their wives or give up presiding over the Lord's Supper. In 1075 Gregory forbade lay investiture. As the pope saw it, this practice had brought secular control over the church and unsuitable persons to positions of leadership in it. The pope believed he and the church, rather than monarchs, needed the primary obedience and loyalty of the bishops and other office-holders in the church. Being laity, the monarchs, in the pope's opinion, should hold no power over the clergy.

The monarchs, on the other hand, believed they had God-given responsibilities for the church in their realms, and saw the pope as an outsider and foreigner attempting to control internal affairs. The monarchs preferred the union of church and state. This measure disestablishing lay investiture was violently opposed by the monarchs, especially those of Germany, France, and England. As a result, the French church saw a nearly complete change in its leadership. However, the Norman King of England, William the Conqueror, simply avoided the decree, and continued to appoint his own clergy.

In Germany, the pope was most opposed. After Gregory suspended some bishops in Germany, Henry IV, the Holy Roman Emperor, called a council at Worms to declare the pope deposed—releasing his subjects from allegiance to the pope. In return, Gregory excommunicated Henry and freed his subjects from his authority. In 1077, fearing for his throne, Henry crossed the Alps in winter and met Gregory. Henry repented by presenting himself three days in the snow, barefoot, before the castle where the pope was staying. Gregory lifted the excommunication.

However, the conflict continued. The pope excommunicated Henry again in 1080. In return, Henry set up an "antipope" and marched against and besieged Rome. Gregory called in Norman soldiers to protect

him, but the Roman populace turned against him for this, and Gregory fled into exile.

Pope Urban II

In 1095, under Pope Urban II, the same Council of Clermont that called for a Crusade also defined a clear separation of the church and the world, forbidding clerics to affirm their loyalty as vassals to monarchs or other laypersons. The church would no longer pay homage to secular rulers. The church asserted its divine origin and rights over the state. Laypersons were not to be dispensers of holy things. The clergy were declared to be immune from secular jurisdiction. The special position of church lands was recognized.

Various kings struggled for control over the church in their own countries. In 1162 King Henry II of England appointed his friend and Chancellor, Thomas à Becket (1118-70), as archbishop of Canterbury to lead the church in England. But upon becoming archbishop, Thomas took his new responsibilities seriously and refused to be compliant to the king's wishes.

Particularly, he opposed Henry's desire to increase taxes and to bring clerics charged with crimes before secular rather than church courts. Henry pressed bogus charges against Thomas, by which Thomas fled to France. Thomas deposed two bishops and placed England under an interdict, prohibiting the faithful from partaking of the sacraments. Fearing his citizens, King Henry invited Thomas to return in 1169. The people welcomed him as a hero.

But Thomas refused to reinstate bishops who had sided with the king unless they swore allegiance to the pope. For this continued opposition to him, Henry uttered some words that led four knights to assassinate à Becket—in the cathedral itself. News of this action soon spread throughout Europe. In 1174 Henry did penance at Thomas's tomb, which already had become a center for pilgrimages. This episode only strengthened the role of the church in the minds of the people and weakened the moral authority of rulers.

Complex church laws developed to handle incoming cases. Vast amounts of litigation flowed to Rome. Even secular rulers sent matters to Rome to be decided there. Matters were delegated to small committees appointed by the pope. Increasingly, Europe witnessed a rise in the power of the ecclesiastical bureaucracy gathered in Rome.

Innocent III

Under Innocent III, the Papacy reached the apex of its power. The church claimed authority over all spheres of life. Innocent believed the Papacy was heir to the Davidic promises of a kingdom. All earthly kings received their authority from the church, he declared. The Papacy was entitled to both "swords," the spiritual and the temporal. Innocent further declared himself to be not only Vicar of Peter, but Vicar of Christ—Christ's representative on earth.

Innocent participated in settling secular as well as religious disputes throughout Europe. He became regent over Sicily. Europeans responded to Innocent's call for a Fourth Crusade. As a result of this crusade's attack upon Constantinople rather than the Muslims, Innocent extended his influence over the Eastern Church.

Innocent exerted authority over the rulers of Germany, France, and England. His preference for Frederick over Emperor Otto in Germany led to Otto's excommunication and being deposed. Innocent required King Philip Augustus of France to reunite with his wife, whom he had divorced, and return church land, which he had confiscated.

When King John of England refused to accept Stephen Langton as archbishop of Canterbury and seized church property, Innocent excommunicated John and transferred the monarchy to Philip Augustus. In order to retain his crown, John surrendered his kingdom to the pope and received it back as a papal vassal.

In order to reform the church and to decide theological issues, Innocent III called for a council, which met in the Lateran, the papal residence in Rome, in 1215-16. This Fourth Lateran Council was among the most significant councils of the church. It established transubstantiation as the theology of the church pertaining to the Lord's Supper. That is, in the mass, through the prayers of the priest, there was a real transformation of the bread and the wine into the body and blood of Jesus.

The council condemned Joachim's Trinitarian doctrines. It encouraged the expansion of knowledge and the better education of clergy. It declared that no new monastic orders be created. The council instructed the faithful to confess privately to a priest and partake of communion at least once a year. It voided appointments to ecclesiastical offices made by secular

Latourette, A History of Christianity, *1:482-86; Gonzalez,* A History of Christian Thought, *2: 220-21.*

rulers. The Council forbade Christians from extracting interest and condemned the Jews for doing so. It warned Christians not to have commerce with Jews. The council gave the pope exclusive rights to introduce new relics, and it ratified his call for a new Crusade.

While the Papacy was strengthened as a means of reforming the church, with its increased power came the increased temptation for the abuse of power. Monarchs resented papal power and influence within their states, but for a while acquiesced. The pope's control over temporal lands and interventions in political affairs drew his attention away from spiritual matters. While the pope wrested control over church offices away from monarchs and laity, the Papacy itself was controlled by Italian families and trapped by the clerical bureaucracy of the Roman see.

Allow for response.

What are the positive aspects of the rise of papal authority?

What are the negative aspects?

Could it have been a reforming force or was it destined toward authoritarianism?

For students interested in this time period of history, you might suggest they read Murder in the Cathedral *by T. S. Eliot.*

Lesson Close

(5 minutes)

Review

Call on several students to answer the question.

What have you learned from this lesson?

Look Ahead

In the next lesson we will discuss the tensions within the church.

Assign Homework

Direct students to the Homework Assignments in the Student Guide.

Remind students that the Shelley book will not have all the information that they need.

Reading topics:

- The schism: East and West go their separate ways
- Monasticism and spirituality—Cistercians and Franciscans
- Shelley, *Church History in Plain Language,* chapter 21

Write a two-page response giving your thoughts, impressions, and feelings about the people, events, and theology.

Term Project #1—A Rule of Life.

Write in your journal. Reflect on and respond to the following:

AUGUSTINE'S CONFESSIONS, READING 8

CHAPTER XI
20. While I talked about these things, and the winds of opinions veered about and tossed my heart hither and thither, time was slipping away. I delayed my conversion to the Lord; I postponed from day to day the life in you, but I could not postpone the daily death in myself. I was enamored of a happy life, but I still feared to seek it in its own abode, and so I fled from it while I sought it. I thought I should be miserable if I were deprived of the embraces of a woman, and I never gave a thought to the medicine that your mercy has provided for the healing of that infirmity, for I had never tried it. As for continence, I imagined that it depended on one's own strength, though I found no

such strength in myself, for in my folly I knew not what is written, “None can be continent unless you grant it.” Certainly you would have given it, if I had beseeched your ears with heartfelt groaning, and if I had cast my care upon you with firm faith.

CHAPTER XV

25. Meanwhile my sins were being multiplied. My mistress was torn from my side as an impediment to my marriage, and my heart that clung to her was torn and wounded till it bled. And she went back to Africa, vowing to you never to know any other man and leaving with me my natural son by her. But I, unhappy as I was, and weaker than a woman, could not bear the delay of the two years that should elapse before I could obtain the bride I sought. And so, since I was not a lover of wedlock so much as a slave of lust, I procured another mistress—not a wife, of course. Thus in bondage to a lasting habit, the disease of my soul might be nursed up and kept in its vigor or even increased until it reached the realm of matrimony. Nor indeed was the wound healed that had been caused by cutting away my former mistress; only it ceased to burn and throb, and began to fester, and was more dangerous because it was less painful.

Lesson 9

Tensions within the Church

Lesson Overview

Schedule

Start Time	Task or Topic	Learning Activity	Materials Needed
0:00	Introduction	Orient	Student Guide
0:20	The Schism: East and West Go Their Separate Ways	Lecture/Discussion	Resource 9-1 Resource 9-2
1:40	Monasticism and Spirituality	Lecture	Resources 9-3—9-6
1:25	Monks and Glergy	Discussion/Small Groups	Resource 9-7
1:45	Hymn Singing	Class Activity	Hymnals
1:55	Lesson Close	Review, Assign	Student Guide

Suggested Reading for Instructor

Bassett, Paul, and William Greathouse. *Exploring Christian Holiness*. Vol. 2, *The Historical Development*. Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1985.

Bassett, Paul, ed. *Great Holiness Classics.* Vol. 1, *Holiness Teaching: New Testament Times to Wesley*. Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1997.

Bynum, Caroline W. *Jesus as Mother: Studies in the Spirituality of the High Middle Ages*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1982.

Gonzalez, Justo L. *A History of Christian Thought.* Vol. 2, *From Augustine to the Eve of the Reformation*.

Nashville: Abingdon, 1971.

Lawrence, C. H. *Medieval Monasticism: Forms of Religious Life in Western Europe in the Middle Ages*. Second edition, London: Longman, 1989.

Southern, R. W. *The Making of the Middle Ages*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1953.

Ware, Timothy. *The Orthodox Church*. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1963.

Lesson Introduction

(20 minutes)

Accountability

Call on each of the students to read his or her Rule of Life.

Allow the students to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of each of the different Rules.

Return and collect homework.

Orientation

Eastern and Western Christianity divided in 1054. The East continued to develop in its distinct way after the schism.

We will do an overview of the development of monasticism and popular religious devotion between 1000 and 1300.

Learner Objectives

Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.

Restating the objectives for the learners serves as an advanced organizer for the lesson and alerts learners to key information and concepts.

At the end of this lesson, participants should

- describe the growing estrangement between East and West and list reasons for the schism
- know and understand the events that shaped the development and reforms in monasticism
- understand the people involved—such as Bernard, Francis, Clare, Dominic—and identify their various contributions
- know the difference between the various types of mendicant orders and other new orders in the time period
- contrast monks and their work to the pastoral ministry of the regular canons
- compare the Franciscans to their own denomination's goals and methods

Lesson Body

Lecture / Discussion: The Schism: East and West Go Their Separate Ways

(40 minutes)

The factors that led to the division between the Roman and Eastern churches had been centuries in the making. The issues were ones not only of church practice and theology but also of culture and politics. The Muslim invasions in the 600s and 700s weakened the Eastern churches. The Muslims also brought particular theological issues regarding idolatry and the Trinity to the forefront.

Factors Leading to and Sealing the Schism—1054

Refer to Resource 9-1 in the Student Guide.

In retrospect, the schism between the Eastern and Western churches was likely from the time that Constantine moved the capital of the empire from Rome to the East in 330. The Roman Empire was divided in 395. Various other issues over the next seven centuries heightened tensions leading to schism.

By 190, Latin rather than Greek was used in the Roman Church. By 450 few in the West spoke Greek, and by 600 few in the East spoke Latin.

Generally, the East was more Johannine, the West more Pauline; the East more mystical, the West more practical and legalistic. The East talked of union with God and the "deification" of humanity; the West talked of communion and redemption.

The bishop in Rome claimed primacy from the time of Pope Damasus (366-384) and Pope Leo I (440-461). But this was never accepted among the other principal sees of Christendom, including the important Eastern ones of Antioch and Alexandria. The East espoused a "pentarchy" made up of five patriarchs, rather than a papacy.

In the East, the patriarch was subservient to the emperor—called Caesaropapism. In the West, the pope gained more and more authority over secular rulers.

The requirement that priests be celibate was common—though not universal—in the West from about 385, but not in the East. The Eastern Church

required only that bishops be celibate, not priests. At the same time, priests in the East wore beards, and those in the West typically did not.

Another differing practice was that unleavened bread was used in the West during the Lord's Supper, but the East used leavened bread.

In the East the Monophysite tendencies to deny the full incarnation or humanity of Christ had led to the schism of 484, when Pope Felix excommunicated the patriarch of Constantinople. This lasted until 518, when the East reaccepted the common creeds of the church.

However, the *filioque* phrase in the Nicene Creed, that the Holy Spirit proceeds from both the Father and the Son, remained a point of contention. The West used the phrase only when it began to recite routinely the Nicene Creed in the liturgy of the Lord's Supper from about 590. The phrase was not used at all in the Eastern Church.

One debate that concerned the Eastern Church was the monothelite controversy, or "monergism." In an attempt to win over the many Monophysites remaining in the East, Patriarch Sergius (d. 638) used the term "activity" or "energy" to speak of the single nature or person of Christ. Finding opposition to this teaching, Sergius, in consultation with Pope Honorius I—who served from 625 to 638—dropped the phrase and substituted it with "monothelite," that Christ possessed one single will. But by now the Monophysite churches in the East were under Muslims, and the issue became less crucial.

Nonetheless, the Sixth Ecumenical Council (Constantinople, 680–681) condemned monothelitism and its supporters. It favored the understanding of two wills in Christ, still bound in a single "hypostasis." The Sixth Council thus condemned the views of Pope Honorius. Later this became an argument against the doctrine of papal infallibility.

From the 600s and 700s, relations between the East and the West were complicated by Islam, which slowed direct communication. Bearing in mind their Islamic neighbors' views against images of God, there were many in the Eastern Church who opposed icons. The physical representation of Christ became problematic. In 756 Emperor Leo III ordered the destruction of an image of Christ.

The Seventh Ecumenical Council, which met in Nicea in 787, dealt with the practice of venerating icons. The West, which used statues and images of the saints, opposed iconoclasm. Those who supported the use of icons noted that they were not worshiping the object, only venerating it.

The Incarnation, supporters affirmed, implied that God revealed himself through matter. The church must beware of Gnostic and Manichaean dualism, the view that matter is evil. The purpose of icons was to teach and remind the faithful of the great events of salvation, supporters of icons believed. The council condemned iconoclasm, thus upholding the use of icons. Yet, in spite of this, many in the Eastern Church opposed icons.

In 858 Emperor Michael deposed Ignatius as patriarch of Constantinople and installed Photius (810-895). However Ignatius refused to abdicate. Michael and Photius called upon the pope to convene a council in Constantinople to decide between the two patriarchs and to further debate the issue of icons.

The pope's representatives to the Constantinople Council in 861 agreed to the installation of Photius as patriarch. At a synod at Rome in 863, however, the pope annulled the decisions of the 861 Council, declared Ignatius still the patriarch, and deposed all priests supporting Photius.

Meanwhile, Photius denounced the presence of Latin missionaries in the East, particularly in Bulgaria, the *filioque* clause of the Latin creed, and the primacy of Rome. In 867 a council called by the Eastern church excommunicated the pope himself. However, Michael assassinated the new Emperor, Basil, who favored Ignatius.

This effected reconciliation with the West. Photius became patriarch when Ignatius died in 877. His accession was approved by the pope. A new emperor, however, in 892, deposed Photius, again revealing the power of the state over the church in the East and igniting tensions with the West.

The final schism came in 1054 when the pope's delegate to the East, Cardinal Humbert, placed a sentence of excommunication upon the patriarch on the high altar of the Saint Sophia Cathedral in Constantinople.

Further Developments in the East

Refer to Resource 9-2 in the Student Guide.

From earliest times, monasticism was deeply imbedded in the East. Monasticism was a reaction, a response to state acceptance of Christianity. It maintained a sense that self-denial, seclusion, and martyrdom accompanied what it meant to be a Christian.

Eastern monks were responsible for evangelizing the Slavs. In their attempts to convert the Slavs, Brothers Methodius (815-885) and Cyril (826-869) developed an alphabet. They emphasized the vernacular, the translatability of the gospel. The “civilizing” of the Slavs inseparably accompanied their Christianization. The Bulgarian Czar, Boris, was baptized in 864. Almost immediately, the church in Bulgaria faced a heretical sect, called Bobomilism, which mingled Christian teachings with Manichaeanism.

The Eastern Church favorably impressed Emperor Vladimir of Russia, who was looking for a religion to unify his realm, and sent emissaries to look over the various religions. In 988 Vladimir was baptized. He established Christianity as the official religion of Russia and brought priests from the Byzantine or Eastern Empire, who took with them their liturgy and practices. At first the liturgy of the Russian church was in Slavic.

Early Russian theology interpreted the Bible as a vast allegory. Two centuries later, the Mongol conquest left the Russian Church in chaos and ended much theological discourse. But gradually Moscow gained ascendancy. Eastern Orthodoxy became the symbol of Russian unity and nationalism. Russia saw itself as the heir of Constantinople, and hence, Rome. Monasticism flourished. But there were no new theological movements, only legends about the saints. In some places there were reversions to pre-Christian practices of confessing sins to the earth.

When the Eastern and Western churches finally separated in 1054, the church in Russia became the center of Eastern Orthodoxy. Though Russia maintained traditions and hagiographic legends, the Bible itself only barely survived, and it was mixed with apocryphal and pagan literature.

As these churches developed, the Eastern system of having ecclesiologically “autocephalous” or national churches took form. Each national church had its own leaders and hierarchy, and each was responsible to secular rulers.

In 1204 the Fourth Crusade of the West, which was supposed to fight the Muslims, instead turned against the Eastern Church. Western rulers set up a Latin kingdom. Only in 1261 did Emperor Michael VIII, who reigned from 1259 to 1282, recover Constantinople from the Western powers.

Yet the Eastern Church continued to face the peril of Muslim Turks, and Michael sought the support and protection of the Papacy. In this context, the Council of Lyons was called in 1274 to attempt reunion. The Eastern Church, under pressure, recognized papal claims and agreed to recite the Nicene Creed using the *filioque* clause. However, the Eastern laity and priests never accepted the council's decisions, and Michael was condemned as a heretic and apostate, and refused a Christian burial.

While the West continued to develop theologically, the East drew upon the ancient Greek Fathers. Eastern theology placed emphasis on the mystical life to be found in Christ and the sacraments. The East stressed two ways of seeking to know God: the Way of Negation and the Way of Union. The Way of Negation spoke of God in negative terms. God cannot really be apprehended by human thought. God was incomprehensible. This way emphasized God's transcendence.

The Way of Union was the means of quietness—Greek *hesychia*. It offered immediate knowledge of God in personal union. This way could be entered through prayer, which was an act of the whole person—body as well as soul and spirit. A "prayer of the heart" filled one's entire consciousness. The "Jesus Prayer," which was simply, "Lord Jesus Christ Son of God, have mercy on me," was linked to bodily postures and breathing techniques. Those praying were to fix their eyes on their hearts. This was thought to help concentration. The culmination of the prayer was a vision of heavenly light.

Behind this practice was a hesychast theology that emerged from the monastic movement in the East, especially those situated at Mount Athos. Hesychasm emphasized that men and women were single, united wholes. The body was not an enemy, but a partner and collaborator with the soul, just as Christ took human flesh and saved the whole person, body as well as spirit. So all who pray to Him may experience his "energy."

God himself enters into immediate relation with humankind. It is the grace of God imparted, a direct manifestation of the living God. “Saints” are as all Christians may be, “deified” by their experience with God. God remained “wholly other,” while at the same time, immanent.

Hesychasm was attacked from the West by Barlaam, a monk from Calabria, who said that God cannot be known immediately, but only mediately. Barlaam accused the East of holding to a materialistic view of prayer.

Gregory Palamas (1296-1359), archbishop of Thessalonica—after 1347—defended Hesychasm. He agreed that in prayer persons cannot experience the essence *(ousia)* of God, but they may experience the “energy” of God. Gregory’s position was ratified by Eastern councils of 1341 and 1351—both held at Constantinople. The Eastern Church considers these the Eighth and Ninth Ecumenical Councils.

Ware, The Orthodox Church, *71-81.*

Last Attempts to Restore Unity

The Council of Florence, which met 1438 to 1439 to attempt reunion, also met under the Eastern Church’s pressure from the Muslims. The council reaffirmed the West’s commitment to both the objectionable *filioque* clause and the supremacy of the Papacy.

The council was attended by both the Eastern emperor and patriarch. The East accepted papal claims—though left ambiguous whatever powers were attached to this—and the *filioque* clause of the Nicene Creed.

The Western Church allowed the East to continue some of its customs, including the use of leavened bread at the Lord’s Supper. However, like the Lyons Council’s decisions, the acts of the Council of Florence could not be imposed upon the people in the East. One Eastern Grand Duke stated, “I would rather see the Muslim turban in the midst of the city than the Latin mitre.”

Quoted in Ware, The Orthodox Church, *81.*

That is essentially what happened. The East received little help from the West when the Muslims attacked in 1453. Constantinople fell. On May 29, 1453, the last Christian service was held in Saint Sophia, this great center of the church, and the cathedral became a Muslim mosque.

Allow for response.

The issue of filioque *was perhaps the single greatest controversy that separated East and West.*

What do you see as the biggest obstacle the church faced to remain united?

Was there any way the schism could have been avoided?

How do we as Protestants respond to some of the issues that divided the church?

Lecture: Monasticism and Spirituality

(25 minutes)

The Monastic Ideal

Refer to Resource 9-3 in the Student Guide.

Monasticism expressed corporate religious ideals. For the laity the monasteries represented the highest form of Christian life, devotion, and holiness. The world was evil, and the monasteries were the only repositories of good. Many relied on the prayers of monks for themselves and their loved ones. Monarchs often used monks in matters of state, since they were often more highly educated. Wealthy families sent some of their children to monasteries. Meanwhile, the rules that governed individual monasteries became more and more minute.

Until this time, monasteries were intensely local in interests and ministries, and there was no connection between monasteries and a broader religious order. The greater organization of monasticism began in the tenth century. The Cluny monastery in Burgundy was established under the auspices of Duke William of Acquitaine and under the leadership of Abbot Berno in 909, in an attempt to reestablish strict obedience to the *Rule* of Benedict. William gave the monks complete freedom to select their leader and placed the monastery under the pope himself.

Cluny became highly developed under Odilo, abbot of the monastery from 994 to 1049, and Hugh, abbot from 1049 to 1109. Kings and princes sought its prayers and made pilgrimages to it. Cluny exemplified the high order of communal life.

By the eleventh century the Cluny monastery in Burgundy represented an ideal form of monasticism. Built with the donations of wealthy patrons, its buildings at Cluny were grand in architectural style, including a huge basilica with 15 towers and 5 chapels. Its halls and rooms were decorated with imported

marble and lined with sculptures, rich tapestries, paintings, manuscripts, and books. Cluny represented monasticism at its highest, in medieval eyes. It established daughter monasteries throughout Europe, each grandly designed and loyal to the abbot of the mother house at Cluny.

Lawrence, Medieval Monasticism, *86-110.*

The Cistercians

Cluny, with its grand pretensions, did not please everyone. Robert of Molesme (1027-1111), an abbot, sought to return to a simpler and stricter form of monastic life. He and his followers founded a monastery at Burgundy, Citeaux, in 1098 in order to return to the Benedictine *Rule* and a more austere monastic life.

Citeaux represented the uneasy conscience of the church regarding its growing wealth and power. It had strict rules on diet and required both silence and manual labor. In fact, it pioneered some farming techniques. Cistercians were not to be involved in the affairs of the world. They emphasized meditation and spiritual friendship. It was a call away from worldliness.

Cistercian abbots advised monks, “be mothers” in their care for each other and for those who came seeking their ministry. Both God’s grace and free will were to bestow a love that produced good fruit. The Cistercians won approval from the pope in 1119.

Southern, The Making of the Middle Ages*, 166.*

As in other orders, lay brothers were admitted to the Cistercian houses. These brothers, who outnumbered the regular monks, could not read or take part in many aspects of communal worship. The monks did not see it as their calling to educate these or others, but rather to pray and “lament.” The lay brothers were given more menial tasks within the monastery. Times of famine saw the monasteries admitting more and more of these “converts.”

Lawrence, Medieval Monasticism, *174-82.*

Bernard (1090-1153), a Cistercian, became the leading religious figure of his time. In 1112, with 30 other young noblemen of Burgundy, including his own brothers, Bernard entered the monastery of Citeaux, the mother house of the Cistercian order. Instructed by the abbot of Citeaux to found a new monastery, Bernard established one at Clairvaux.

This monastery became one of the centers of the Cistercian order. Personally, Bernard became known for his austerity, self-discipline, and saintliness. He was

immersed in the Bible. In his own time, his prestige in the Christian Church was immense.
He obtained recognition for the Rules of the new order Knights Templar in 1128. In a dispute over the Papacy in 1130, Bernard supported the one who won, Innocent II. The Cistercian order became favored by the pope and the Cistercian order grew rapidly. Bernard was a champion of orthodoxy. Bernard succeeded in having Abelard condemned at the Council of Sens in 1140. A Cistercian and former pupil became Pope Eugenius III in 1145—increasing Bernard's influence. Bernard roused support for the Second Crusade of 1147 and founded the military order of Knights Templar.

Bernard conceived of theology as serving devotional purposes, as within a monastic cloister. He developed a practical, not a systematic, theology that expressed the relation of the believer to God in terms of marriage. The greatest of all "love affairs" was the one initiated by God and moved along by grace, which kindled desire for God within human beings. "The reason we love God is God." He "gives power to love. He draws yearning to its consummation."

Quoted in Bassett and Greathouse, The Historical Development, *120.*

God is the initiator, sustainer, and goal of Christian love. Bernard united love and perfection. Through this action of divine love, human love can be perfected in this life, Bernard taught. The essence of both sanctification and perfection, for Bernard, is love.

Bernard emphasized the love and the grace of God. He understood Christian love to be both intellectual and sensual, trying to move away from the strictly legal and abstract concept the Latin word for love, *caritas,* had taken on. For Bernard, love was without self-interest. It moved the person from a "mundane" loving with all the heart, to a "rational" loving with all the soul.

> Bernard possessed optimism in both God's grace and human response. He remarked: "Remove free will and there is nothing to be saved; remove grace, and there is left no means of saving. The work of salvation cannot be accomplished without the co-operation of the two." The hindrance to the highest love is not humanity as such. The body or flesh of humanity may be made fully subject to the Spirit if God is loved supremely. "And thus," Bernard wrote, "we must set our love on him, little by little conforming our will to his."

Quoted in F. L. Cross, ed., Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church, *rev. ed. (New York: Oxford University Press,* 1983), *162.*

Quoted in Bassett and Greathouse, The Historical Development, *124.*

This grace perfecting love began at baptism, in Bernard's view. Then at confirmation, the Spirit came

to dwell, and this coming in of the Spirit opened up spiritual possibilities and privileges in the believer. The agent of perfection is the Spirit; the standard of perfection is Christlikeness. Though ultimate perfection lies beyond this life, there is more than simply imputed righteousness to be known here, Bernard affirmed.

Bassett and Greathouse, The Historical Development, *119-28. See also Bassett,* Holiness Teaching, *215-46.*

The devotion and Christ-centeredness of Bernard, and the monks of Clairvaux in general, is evident in songs written by Bernard. Among them:

Refer to Resource 9-4 in the Student Guide.

JESUS, THE VERY THOUGHT OF THEE

Jesus, the very thought of Thee
with sweetness fills my breast;
But sweeter far Thy face to see,
and in Thy presence rest.

No voice can sing, no heart can frame,
nor can the mem'ry find
A sweeter sound than Thy blest name,
O Savior of mankind!

O Hope of every contrite heart,
O Joy of all the meek,
To those who fall, how kind Thou art!
How good to those who seek!

But what to those who find? Ah, this
Nor tongue nor pen can show:
The love of Jesus, what it is
None but His loved ones know.

Jesus, our only joy be Thou,
as Thou our prize wilt be;
Jesus, be Thou our glory now,
and through eternity.

Sing to the Lord, *139.*

O SACRED HEAD, NOW WOUNDED

O sacred Head, now wounded,
with grief and shame weighed down,
Now scornfully surrounded,
with thorns Thine only crown;
O sacred Head, what glory,
what bliss till now was Thine!
Yet, tho' despised and gory,
I joy to call Thee mine.

What Thou, my Lord, hast suffered,
was all for sinners' gain.
Mine, mine was the transgression,
but Thine the deadly pain.

Lo, here I fall, my Savior!
'Tis I deserve Thy place.
Look on me with Thy favor,
and grant to me Thy grace.

What language shall I borrow,
to thank Thee, dearest Friend,
For this Thy dying sorrow,
Thy pity without end?
O make me Thine forever;
And, should I fainting be,
Lord, let me never, never
outlive my love for Thee.

Sing to the Lord, *249.*

The Franciscans

Refer to Resource 9-5 in the Student Guide.

Francis of Assisi (1181-1226) was another example of self-abnegation and humiliation. Francis was the son of a wealthy cloth merchant, who educated him well. He became dissatisfied with a life of ease and devoted himself to prayer. After a pilgrimage to Rome, Francis began ministering to lepers and helping to repair the local church.

Matthew 19:21

Around 1208, upon hearing Jesus' words to the rich young man, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me," Francis took the commandment literally. To his father's ire, he took off his fine clothing and set out to obey Christ.

By 1209, a band of followers gathered behind him. In 1210 Francis received approval for a monastic order from Pope Innocent III. Clare, a follower of Francis, founded a Second Order of St. Francis, or the Order of Poor Ladies, upon Francis's ideals in 1212.

From Francis's Later Rule*, quoted in J. A. Wayne Hellmann, "The Spirituality of the Franciscans,"* Christian Spirituality, *vol. 2:* High Middle Ages and Reformation, *ed. Jill Raitt. New York: Crossroad, 1988, 32.*

Francis won men and women more by deeds than words. His views toward monasticism were radical. He wished his followers to become "voluntary beggars." His *Rule* stated, "The brothers shall not acquire anything as their own, neither a horse nor a place nor anything else. Instead, as pilgrims and strangers in this world who serve the Lord in poverty and humility, let them go begging for alms with full trust."

At the same time, Francis loathed idleness or sloth and rejected all social barriers. He championed the poor. His order was called "Fratas Minores," after the "little people." He induced the rich to contribute to the poor. Francis was distrustful of learning because it took him away from action. He believed Christ was to be followed literally.

In an age that saw otherwise, Francis rejected the idea of Crusades against the Muslims. He admonished Franciscans not even to engage in arguments or disputes with Muslims. In 1219 Francis himself, along with eleven companions, visited Eastern Europe and Egypt. Francis realized he lacked the skills for administering the growing order, and upon his return from his trip abroad, leadership of the order passed to others. The *Rule* of Francis was approved by Pope Honorius in 1223.

Francis's devotion to both the good of people and to nature is summarized in two well-known verses:

Refer to Resource 9-6 in the Student Guide.

Lord, make me an instrument of Thy peace:
where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek
to be consoled as to console,
to be understood as to understand,
to be loved as to love;
for it is in giving that we receive;
it is in pard'ning that we are pardoned;
it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

Sing to the Lord, *734.*

Francis's sense of oneness with nature is characterized in this verse, still sung today:

ALL CREATURES OF OUR GOD AND KING

All creatures of our God and King,
Lift up your voice and with us sing:
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Thou burning sun with golden beam,
Thou silver moon with softer gleam,
O praise Him! O praise Him!
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Thou rushing wind that art so strong,
Ye clouds that sail in heaven along,
O praise Him! Alleluia!
Thou rising morn, in praise rejoice,
Ye lights of evening, find a voice!
O praise Him! O praise Him!
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Thou flowing water, pure and clear,
Make music for thy Lord to hear.
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Thou fire so masterful and bright,
Thou givest man both warmth and light!
O praise Him! O praise Him!
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

And all ye men of tender heart,
Forgiving others, take your part.
O sing ye! Alleluia!
Ye who long pain and sorrow bear,
Praise God and on Him cast your care!
O praise Him! O praise Him!
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Let all things their Creator bless,
And worship Him in humbleness.
O praise Him! Allelulia!
Praise, praise the Father, praise the Son,
And praise the Spirit, Three in One!
O praise Him! O praise Him!
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Sing to the Lord, *77.*

Francis and his followers possessed missionary zeal. By preaching and showing repentance and brotherly love they intended to sow peace. The Franciscans' "cloister" was the whole world. The Franciscans won the hearts and loyalty of the people, but did not inspire the friendship of bishops.

After 1227, the Franciscans were granted the right to hear confession. This led, soon, to their clericalization.

Return to Resource 9-5.

Among Franciscans, Christ is the Liberator and the Transformer of culture. The emphasis is on praxis rather than right theology. *Praxis* precedes *theoria*. Holiness is right action. "Go ye into" is the call. There is concern about social righteousness in anticipation of the Kingdom.

Gannon and Traub, The Desert and the City, *89.*

Franciscans emphasized the humanity of Christ and attempted to be like Him in good deeds, not words. They see Jesus as a great model and example. Their vision of Christ was of Him crucified, and this led them toward asceticism, but it was an active or teleological asceticism. They took vows of poverty, as Gannon and Traub write, in order "to remove the obstacles that might prevent the full flowering of love."

Like the Franciscans, holiness people of the Wesleyan tradition tried to correct the worldliness creeping into the church. Like Franciscans, ministers in the holiness

tradition, in a certain way, take vows of poverty. Even though sometimes material blessings might come our way, we do not seek them and do not cling to them.

Unlike Dominicans and later Jesuits, Franciscans were not known for their theological acumen. Rather, they were known for their deeds. The fine points of Christian doctrine and dogma for them and for holiness ministers must finally get around to the question, "What does this mean for me and for others as we attempt to live out the Christian life together?"

Allow for discussion and response.

Let's pause and answer that question: *What does this mean for me and for others as we attempt to live out the Christian life together?*

There is a practical bent to this thought. Holiness people are like the Franciscans in trying to be examples of holiness in an unholy world, and to be such by works of mercy, forgiveness, and compassion to others, which emanate out of pure love. We were raised up like the Franciscans to "preach" the good news to the poor by deeds more than by wisdom. Radical "Franciscans" do not appease the world; but they are willing to take the lowliest positions in the church. Trained ministers communicate and apply their knowledge to the simplest men and women.

Bonaventure (1217-74) led the order from 1257 to 1274. Highly educated, Bonaventure taught in Paris from 1247 until assuming the leadership of the order. He attempted to reconcile radicals in the order, called "spirituals," who wished to keep strictly to Francis's ideals of poverty, and others who saw the necessity of establishing houses like other orders.

Bonaventure saw in Francis the force for renewal in the church alluded to in the work of Joachim. As a theologian, Bonaventure rejected the popular notion of the immaculate conception of Mary. Bonaventure took an active role in church politics and became a cardinal the year before he died.

The Little Flowers of Saint Francis, *ed. Raphael Brown (Garden City, NY: Image, 1958).*

About 1330, 100 years after Francis's death, Brother Ugolino di Monte Santa Maria recorded stories about Francis from some of his followers and published *The Little Flowers of Saint Francis*. It described apparitions and miracles, some of them amusing, which surrounded the life of Francis. The book emphasized the miracles more than the ideals and values of poverty, service, and obedience that characterized Francis and the movement he created. It included description of the *stigmata,* or five wounds of Christ

crucified, that were imprinted in Francis's body in 1224 while he was contemplating the Cross. The *Little Flowers* became a classic in the history of Christian spirituality.

Spirituality among the Regular Canons

Caroline W. Bynum, Jesus as Mother: Studies in the Spirituality of the High Middle Ages *(Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1982), 22.*

Beginning in the eleventh century, a foundational change took place in people's thinking regarding the conception of the Christian life. There was a new emphasis on obligation to one's neighbor, and a new sense that Christ wished followers to care for others.

While new religious orders were being developed, the regular clergy of the church also were experiencing renewal and changes in their approach to ministry. Like the orders, the priests evidenced pastoral concern, preached, evangelized, and contemplated God. The regular clergy argued that their office was prefigured by Aaron and the Levites. The church still was not entirely clear, even at this late date, on what constituted "clerical" status, but there was a distinction on a number of issues that separated the monks from the priests.

For monks, the focus was on personal virtue. They were not so concerned about the affect of their lives or words upon others. Their only concern was for God and personal union with Him. Regular clergy's lives, on the other hand, were devoted to others, as a pattern, *forma,* and *exemplum*. Regulars were to be both teachers and learners, both *verbo et examplo*. They attempted to edify by both word and example, to demonstrate the gospel by their lives to others, and to be edified for the sake of others. While the monks were learners only, their lives lived solely to God, the priests were teachers.

For the monks, conversation was not considered educational and silence was an end in itself, drawing them closer to God. Reasons they gave for silence—given by Peter of Celle in the late twelfth century—included tranquillity, profession, keeping the peace, quieting the heart, withdrawal from secular things, scrutiny of the law of God, and contemplation. For regular clergy, conversely, silence was preparation for speech.

To govern their lives, monks relied on sources such as the *Rule* of Benedict, which suggested that outward behavior was entirely an aspect of personal virtue. Preaching was not intrinsically "monastic." Sharing the

wisdom of Christ with others, in monks' eyes, was a sign of conceit.

The regular clergy, on the other hand, saw behavior as a means of edifying others. The priests' spirituality emphasized that behavior was a support to effective verbal teaching and an agent in moral education. They were to exemplify Christ by both life and doctrine: *vita et doctrina*. They espoused a new conception of individuals having responsibility for others. Their commitment to pastoral care was educational in a way not limited to preaching. Likewise, their commitment to evangelization was not limited to preaching. They sought to evangelize by example as well as by speech.

Bynum, Jesus as Mother, *22-58.*

Small Groups: Monks and Clergy

(20 minutes)

Divide the class into groups of three.

In your small group contrast and compare the monks and the regular clergy.

Refer to Resource 9-7 in the Student Guide.

Make lists of the strengths and weaknesses of each.

Look at ministry areas such as preaching, compassion, education, shepherding, community awareness, and others.

What are the greatest contributions of each?

If there is time, have the groups report.

Where do you find yourself in relation to the two groups? Which has the greater appeal?

Class Activity: Hymn Singing

(10 minutes)

The four hymns read in this lesson can be found in Sing to the Lord.

Sing at least one verse from each of the authors.

"Jesus, the Very Thought of Thee," 139

"O Sacred Head, Now Wounded," 249

"Lord, Make Me an Instrument," 734

"All Creatures of Our God and King," 77

Lesson Close

(5 minutes)

Review

Call on each student to respond.

State one question you have as a result of this lesson—something you know you need to learn more about.

Look Ahead

In the next lesson we will discuss the rise of scholarship.

Assign Homework

Direct students to the Homework Assignments in the Student Guide.

Remind students that the Shelley book may not have all the information that they need.

Reading topics:

- The Dominicans and Thomas Aquinas
- The rise of the universities
- Biblical interpretation
- Shelley, *Church History in Plain Language,* chapter 20

Write a two-page response giving your thoughts, impressions, and feelings about the people, events, and theology.

Term Project #2—Analysis of an Early Church individual.

Write in your journal. Reflect on and respond to the following:

AUGUSTINE'S CONFESSIONS, READING 9

BOOK SEVEN
The conversion to Neoplatonism. Augustine traces his growing disenchantment with the Manichaean conceptions of God and evil and from this, he comes finally to the diligent study of the Bible, especially the writings of the apostle Paul. His pilgrimage is drawing toward its goal, as he begins to know Jesus Christ and to be drawn to Him in hesitant faith.

CHAPTER XXI
27. With great eagerness, then, I fastened upon the venerable writings of your Spirit and principally upon the apostle Paul. I had thought that he sometimes contradicted himself and that the text of his teaching

did not agree with the testimonies of the Law and the Prophets; but now all these doubts vanished away. And I saw that those pure words had but one face, and I learned to rejoice with trembling. So I began, and I found that whatever truth I had read [in the Platonists] was here combined with the exaltation of your grace . . . For although a man may "delight in the law of God after the inward man," what shall he do with that other "law in his members which wars against the law of his mind, and brings him into captivity under the law of sin, which is in his members"? You are righteous, O Lord; but we have sinned and committed iniquities, and have done wickedly. Your hand has grown heavy upon us, and we are justly delivered over to that ancient sinner, the lord of death. For he persuaded our wills to become like his will, by which he remained not in your truth. What shall "wretched man" do? "Who shall deliver him from the body of this death," except your grace through Jesus Christ our Lord; whom you have begotten, coeternal with yourself, and didst create in the beginning of your ways—in whom the prince of this world found nothing worthy of death, yet he killed him—and so the handwriting which was all against us was blotted out? The books of the Platonists tell nothing of this. Their pages do not contain the expression of this kind of godliness—the tears of confession, your sacrifice, a troubled spirit, a broken and a contrite heart, the salvation of your people, the espoused City, the earnest of the Holy Spirit, the cup of our redemption. In them, no man sings: "Shall not my soul be subject unto God, for from him comes my salvation? He is my God and my salvation, my defender; I shall no more be moved." In them, no one hears him calling, "Come unto me all you who labor." . . . These thoughts sank wondrously into my heart, when I read that "least of your apostles" and when I had considered all your works and trembled.

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Lesson 10

The Rise of Scholarship

Lesson Overview

Schedule

Start Time	Task or Topic	Learning Activity	Materials Needed
0:00	Introduction	Orient	Student Guide
0:20	The Dominicans and Thomas Aquinas	Lecture	Resource 10-1 Resource 10-2
0:40	Compare and Contrast Francis of Assisi and Dominic	Small Groups	Resource 10-3
0:55	The Rise of the Universities	Lecture	Resource 10-4
1:15	Universities Yesterday and Today	Small Groups	Resource 10-5
1:30	Biblical Interpretation	Lecture/Discussion	Resource 10-6
1:55	Lesson Close	Review, Assign	Student Guide

Suggested Reading for Instructor

Bright, John. *The Authority of the Old Testament*. Reprint, Grand Rapids: Baker, 1975.

Brubacher, John S. *A History of the Problems of Education*. Second edition, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1966.

Bruce, F. F. “The History of New Testament Study.” In *New Testament Interpretation: Essays on Principles and Methods*. Edited by I. Howard Marshall. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977.

Cannon, William R. *History of Christianity in the Middle Ages: From the Fall of Rome to the Fall of Constantinople*. Reprint, Grand Rapids: Baker, 1983.

Geisler, Norman L. *Thomas Aquinas: An Evangelical Appraisal*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1991.

Grant, Robert M., and David Tracy. *A Short History of the Interpretation of the Bible*. Second edition, Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984.

Hollister, C. Warren. *Medieval Europe: A Short History*. Second edition, New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1968.

Mickelsen, Berkeley. *Interpreting the Bible*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1963.

Schaff, Philip. *History of the Christian Church*. Vol. 5, *The Middle Ages*. Reprint, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1967.

Smalley, Beryl. *The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages*. Reprint, Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1964.

Volz, Carl A. *The Medieval Church: From the Dawn of the Middle Ages to the Eve of the Reformation*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1997.

Lesson Introduction

(20 minutes)

Accountability

In pairs have the students read each other's papers on an Early Church individual.

Return and collect homework.

Orientation

The Dominicans were a reforming monastic order aimed at routing out heretics. One Dominican, Thomas Aquinas, became one of the most significant theologians of the church.

Universities developed as Christians pursued intellectual questions about their faith and the world around them.

We will pay attention to how the Bible was being interpreted at various stages of history.

Learner Objectives

Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.

Restating the objectives for the learners serves as an advanced organizer for the lesson and alerts learners to key information and concepts.

At the end of this lesson, participants should

- know and be able to compare and contrast the Dominicans and the Franciscans, and describe their founders
- discuss the reasons for and purpose of the Dominican order
- describe the theology of Thomas Aquinas
- describe the medieval universities
- compare methods the church used to implement its mission in history through education, with present attempts to meet challenges facing the church today
- identify the four methods of interpreting a biblical passage during this time period, and discuss the weaknesses of each

Lesson Body

Lecture: The Dominicans and Thomas Aquinas

(20 minutes)

Refer to Resource 10-1 in the Student Guide.

The Founding of the Order of Preachers: The Dominicans

Dominic (1170-1221), born in Spain to a prominent family, donated all his possessions to the poor during a famine in 1191. In 1199 he joined the clerical staff of his diocese, which strictly followed the *Rule* of Augustine. In 1203 Dominic went with his bishop on a preaching tour against a heretical group known as the Albigenses. Based in southern France, the Albigenses worried church leaders.

The bishop's mission expanded to include a kind of halfway house for women in danger of being influenced by the heretics. In 1208 the Albigenses apparently murdered a papal emissary sent to them. In response, Pope Innocent III called for a crusade against the Albigenses not unlike the Crusade being launched against the Muslims, and began an inquisition to root out heretics.

Pope Innocent III admonished Dominic to lead this work. In 1214 Dominic planned to initiate a special order, sending preachers out two by two, especially for the purpose of debating with heretics. Volunteers joined. In 1215 Dominic requested permission to form a new order, called the Order of Preachers, since that was their primary mission.

Though the Fourth Lateran Council banned the establishing of new orders, in 1216 Dominic received formal sanction from Pope Honorius III for this order based on the fact that it would *use* the Augustinian *Rule,* and make this the basis of the order, unlike other orders in which members vowed to *obey* a *Rule*. However, Dominic demanded obedience from members of the order toward their superiors alone. There was less communalism and more room for personal freedom and responsibility among the Dominicans than other orders.

Three times Dominic refused a bishopric. Instead he journeyed throughout Italy, Spain, and Paris to set up monasteries and establish the order. The first general conference of the order was held in 1220 in Bologna.

The conference affirmed, "Our order is known to have been founded from the beginning for the sake of preaching and the salvation of souls, and our efforts ought above all to be directed primarily and enthusiastically towards being able to be useful to the souls of our neighbors." Dominic died the next year after a mission trip to Hungary.

Quoted in Simon Tugwell, "The Spirituality of the Dominicans," Christian Spirituality, *vol. 2:* High Middle Ages and Reformation, *ed. Jill Raitt (New York: Crossroad, 1988), 15.*

Given its mandate, the Dominicans possessed a scholarly bent and interest. They made no effort to encourage manual labor over study, or quiet contemplation over active engagement with the world. They needed thorough education in sound doctrine. The Fourth Lateran Council had affirmed ministerial education as one of the great needs of the church. Dominic sent his preachers to be educated at the University of Paris under the finest professors the church had to offer, and the order, in turn, began to attract some of the brightest minds in Europe.

The Dominicans recruited university students to enter their order and set up their own houses as places of study in connection to the schools. Dominicans quickly became influential teachers at the universities of Paris and Oxford. Hence, Dominicans tended to come from and represent the aristocracy. Some enlightened bishops encouraged the Dominicans to establish themselves in their own diocese. The affect was to lift the standards expected of both friars and parish priests.

The previous sections are based much on Tugwell, "The Spirituality of the Dominicans," 15-26.

The Dominicans were tasked with rooting out all heretics in the church. To do so, they relied on books with Truth. They were urban-oriented and zealously educated themselves for their task. They accepted both tradition and reason, and emphasized education.

The Dominicans' mission, to destroy heresy, required an obsession with secular knowledge as a path to Truth. They used logic and sound argumentation against the heretics. They found Aristotelian logic especially effective. For the Dominicans, spiritual practices, even prayer and the sacraments, were subordinate to preaching. It was an "intellectual apostolate," as Simon Tugwell put it. The Dominicans' vow of obedience was to their own superiors. They did not need to live in monasteries. The nature of their task necessitated independence and personal responsibility.

Tugwell, "The Spirituality of the Dominicans," 18. See also Gannon and Traub, The Desert and the City, *96-102.*

Tugwell, "The Spirituality of the Dominicans," 15-26.

Dominic refused to allow this order to own its own land, and admonished members to seek alms for their support. He expected the Order of Preachers to be constantly on the move, debating, preaching, and

evangelizing. By the mid-thirteenth century the order had given up begging and the prohibition about owning land in order to fulfill its preaching mission.

By 1277 there were 404 Dominican houses throughout Europe. Famous Dominican scholars included Albertus Magnus (1200-1280) and Thomas Aquinas (1225-74). By the fourteenth century the Dominicans, too, had built fine monasteries and schools.

Thomas Aquinas (1225-74)

Besides Augustine, no other theologian in Christianity wrote more than Thomas Aquinas.

Refer to Resource 10-2 in the Student Guide.

The son of an aristocrat, Thomas lived a rather uneventful life. He entered a Benedictine monastery at the age of five or six, and joined the Dominicans at age 19. From 1245 to 1248 Thomas studied in Paris under Albertus Magnus, an early follower of Dominic, and one of the leading theologians of the era. Albertus introduced Thomas to Aristotle's philosophy. With Albertus, Thomas helped to found a Dominican school in Cologne, where Thomas stayed until 1252.

Thomas studied and taught in Paris until 1259, and again from 1269 to 1272. He taught at several different schools in Italy from 1259 to 1269. In 1272 he moved to Naples to set up a Dominican school. In the last two years of his life, at Naples, he worked diligently on his *Summa Theologica,* the most important of his writings.

Gonzalez, A History of Christian Thought, *2:258-82. See also W. T. Jones*, A History of Western Philosophy, *vol. 2:* The Medieval Mind, *second ed., (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World, 1969), 208-86.*

Thomas understood there to be two means of knowledge: philosophy and theology. He realized that philosophy dealt only with truths reason could attain, whereas theology deals with revealed truths and articles of faith. Reason, Thomas believed, was a reliable means of attaining truth and knowledge. The highest revealed truths were compatible with reason, since both philosophy and theology pursued the same Truth. Complete knowledge, from wherever it was derived, is a gift of God.

In metaphysics, Thomas taught there was a difference between what he termed the "substance" and the "accident" of a particular thing. The "substance" of something is what it held in common with others of the same name, but the substance is joined with particular qualities that make a particular thing unique or different, to form the "accident."

Similarly, the “nature” of a substance was the manner in which it acted, whereas the “essence” of something is that which made a substance capable of definition, or, to put it another way, “that about a thing that makes it what it is.” Only in God is the “essence” totally identical with the “nature.”

In a like way, the “matter” of a thing can be distinguished from its “form” or individual identity, and “potency,” which is the inner potential of a thing, can be contrasted to “act,” how it actually behaves. Thomas distinguished between “essence,” the “whatness” of something, and “existence,” the “thatness” of something. Universals, Thomas argued against the Realists, did not exist in themselves but only in the mind of God and in concrete things.

Thomas argued for the existence of God in five ways:

- First, from the fact of movement. Nothing can pass from potency to act by itself; it needs a mover. God is the prime mover or pure act.
- Second, from causality. No one thing is its own cause. There must have been a “first cause.”
- Third, from the distinction between the contingent and the necessary. All that exists is contingent—that is, created. That things exist implies they have received existence from another.
- Fourth, from the degrees of perfection in beings. There are various approximations, for instance, of goodness. Something must exist, Thomas argued, that possesses perfection in the extreme degree.
- Fifth, from the order of the universe, one sees intelligent creation at work.

The first three arguments were based on cosmology, the fourth on ontology, and the fifth on teleology.

Aquinas described the nature of God as being absolutely simple, that is, made up of one substance. God is also infinite, omnipresent as the Creator and Sustainer of all that is. Finally, God is One, indivisible. Human beings were able to speak of God only by means of analogy, as for instance, wise or good, powerful or merciful. Analogies are justified if they are based upon what God has created. There is a real correspondence between the language of analogy and God himself.

Thomas accepted Augustine’s understanding of God’s creating from nothing, *ex nihilo*. Natural law was the manner in which creation participated in the eternal law of God. In rational creatures, that is humans, the

natural law was imprinted directly, and drew the person toward moral truth. Through this, human beings knew what was good and had a duty to act upon that knowledge. Men and women had a moral obligation to be true to their own conscience.

Each person is a composite of soul and body, Thomas believed. The soul is the “form” of the body; the body is the “matter” of the soul. Humans attain knowledge through sensory data. From this basis they proceed to an understanding of the “essence” of things. Knowledge of God and of one’s own soul begins in the senses.

Each person’s psychology is made up of nutritive, sensation, and rational components. The nutritive components are the most elemental and consist of food, growth, and reproduction. Sensation is made up of the senses, estimation, memory, and imagination.

The rational component is made up of both knowledge, which could be passive or potential as well as active, and will or volition. The human will has a basic urge to fulfill its potential. Human beings possess free will, Thomas taught, in the sense that they are free from coercion. Though human beings are free not to think of God, they are not free in the sense that when they do think of God, they find Him desirable.

God directly ordered some things to take place, Thomas believed, but permitted the acting of others. God had granted the things He created to act freely and to cause other events to happen. Hence God was not accountable for every particular act in the physical universe. All is subject to divine providence, including human salvation, but divine providence and predestination do not contradict free will, Thomas argued, since God produced the results He intended through secondary causes.

He understood original sin as both the absence of original righteousness and the presence of lust. Yet Thomas understood that the human inclination to virtue could not be totally destroyed by sin. Human rationality was not obliterated, else Thomas argued, there would be no capacity for “sin,” since ultimately, sin resided in the will.

Virtue lay not simply in right acting but in the disposition of the will. Divine justice demands that individuals prepare themselves through acts of goodness to receive the “unmerited” gift of grace. At the same time, Thomas recognized, against

Pelagianism, that in order to know and hence obey the truth, individuals needed divine help—grace added to natural abilities. Though the penalty for Adamic sin had been washed away, the affects of original sin remained in those who had been baptized. Original sin continued to affect especially human emotions, and this created a "tinder" for sin. Sin limited but did not destroy the capacity of reason to determine behavior.

This section relies on Bassett and Greathouse, The Historical Development, *128-34.*

If human beings had not sinned, Thomas said, God would not have been incarnated. Even though Thomas felt Mary never sinned, and always remained a virgin, he still argued, against many of his time, that she inherited sin. Thomas opposed the doctrine of the immaculate conception of Mary.

To Thomas, the sacraments were means by which human beings reached through the sensible toward heavenly things. Through the sacraments intelligible realities were revealed.

Thomas taught that God's perfecting work came in two grace-conferring rituals: baptism and confirmation. The Holy Spirit is given at baptism not only to cleanse guilt and grant innocence, but also to add moral strength. God granted an increase of grace and the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit at confirmation. This enabled further growth as Christians and pushed Christians toward maturity and perfection in love.

Bassett and Greathouse, The Historical Development, *145-48.*

The goal of God's grace was to perfect rather than to destroy human nature. "Anything is said to be perfect insofar as it attains its own appropriate end," Thomas wrote. Perfection's main attribute was charity, or love, which resided in the will.

Tugwell, "The Spirituality of the Dominicans," 28; see Flew, The Idea of Perfection, *230-37; and Bassett and Greathouse,* The Historical Development, *136-45.*

Thomas Aquinas evidenced a trend among Dominicans for the primacy of the contemplative as compared to active life, although he understood that the contemplative necessarily led to the active. He also agreed with Aristotle that there was a mean between too much and too little.

Thomas developed a systematic worldview or "university" of thought tied together with logic and presuppositions. Through Thomas a real alternative to Augustinianism, with many of its Neoplatonist slants, developed in Christian theology.

Unlike Thomas, Augustinians argued there was not a clear line of demarcation separating reason and revelation. All knowledge was divine illumination. In particular, Bonaventure (1217-74), a Franciscan,

attacked Thomas on Augustinian grounds. But Thomas's writings gained wide acceptance.

In 1323 Thomas became a saint, and in 1567 the Roman Catholic Church declared him "Universal Doctor of the Church."

Small Groups: Francis of Assisi and Dominic

(15 minutes)

Divide the class into groups of three.

In your small group write character profiles contrasting Francis of Assisi and Dominic.

Refer to Resource 10-3 in the Student Guide.

What were the greatest strengths of each?

Lecture: The Rise of the Universities

(20 minutes)

Refer to Resource 10-4 in the Student Guide.

An intellectual awakening in Western Europe had begun in the ninth century under Charlemagne and his successors. Commerce and trade gave rise to cities, economic growth, and a middle class. The Crusades and even the Mongol invasions jolted Europeans out of centuries of complacency. When the agrarian culture and ways of life that had dominated the Middle Ages began to give way to urban centers in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, the intellectual awakening became established in universities as the centers of European life and learning.

Monasteries were the most prominent repositories of books and learning. Monastic orders and houses expected monks to be literate. Cluny and Citeaux in Burgundy, for instance, were significant theological centers. Books were so precious that they were chained to the walls of libraries. Monks copied and preserved ancient manuscripts. Monastic education, however, centered upon its use within the monastery itself, rather than in the larger world.

In other places, the cathedral schools were important scholarly centers, maintained by local bishops. Anselm of Laon's reputation as a theologian brought students to the cathedral school in Laon in the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries. Cathedral schools were predominant in cities such as Salerno, Montpellier, Bologna, and Paris. The Fourth Lateran Council (1215) required all cathedrals to have grammar teachers and lecturers in theology.

Meanwhile, wandering scholars scoured Western Europe. Due to the intellectual restlessness of the time, they readily found student followers.

The event that marked the flowering of the universities was the grouping of students and masters into guilds. The cathedral schools and the wandering scholars merged, in a sense, to form the basis of universities. The term university came from the term *universitas,* which meant "a body of people." It arose from the grouping together of teachers in a kind of guild, such as were being organized among various craftsmen in Europe during this time. In the same sense that apprentices learned trades from master artisans, students learned from master teachers.

Initially the universities were guilds, not buildings. Classes met in rented halls, where students sat on straw on the floors, or in the professors' own rooms. Gradually, cities expanded to meet the needs of the students and teachers for boarding and classrooms.

Most students came from impoverished economic and low social backgrounds. University education offered a means of social mobility. Unlike cathedral schools and other local schools, universities were open to and attracted students from many countries. All lectures were in Latin. Hence, a student needed a year to study Latin before going into any specialization. They had numbers of teachers. They offered advanced curricula.

Paris became the theological center of the church, especially through the cathedral school of Notre Dame, the origins of which went back to the time of Charlemagne. In the eleventh century teachers began to complain that the cathedral's chancellor was too controlling. The teachers, or masters, along with their students divided into four nations: French, Normans, Picards, and English, and banded together to form a *studium generale.*

Paris became famous because of its outstanding teachers, such as William of Champeaux (1070-1121), who taught until 1108, when he retired under criticism from Abelard. He moved to the monastery at St. Victor and established that as a leading theological center.

Abelard (1079-1143), perhaps more than any other single teacher, was responsible for making Paris the center of theological inquiry in the church. His *sic et non* demonstrated his dialectical method of presenting various sides of an issue such as realism and nominalism. This appealed to students and set a pattern for instruction in universities. Abelard's success in challenging church authority while maintaining his faith not only attracted students, but set precedence in higher education. Paris remained the center of

theology through Abelard's successors, who included Peter Lombard (1100-1160), Albert the Great, and Thomas Aquinas.

Other developing universities included Oxford and Cambridge in England, both of which were patterned closely after Paris. Duns Scotus (1265-1308) brought fame to Oxford for his mediation of Aristotelianism and Augustinianism, as did William of Ockham (1285-1347) for his bold condemnation of certain church practices. The university in Salerno became the center of training in medicine.

Bologna University was primarily known for teaching canon and civil law. Here students, rather than teachers, formed guilds. They required their teachers to begin and end on time and to cover a specified curriculum. Unpopular professors were treated disrespectfully. The students levied fines on incompetent instructors. The university in Bologna began theological courses only in 1360. Significantly, it was one of the few schools that allowed women to teach.

The rise of the universities was ignited by various factors:

- By the thirteenth century, Western Europe was rediscovering both Plato and Aristotle. New translations of these classical philosophers from Greek to Latin were coming from Spain and Sicily. Aristotelian logic, in particular, became of great interest to the schools.
- At the same time, Europe benefited from other Greek philosophical and scientific work that had been maintained and cultivated by the Muslims. Certain ancient works, lost in their original languages, were translated from Arabic into Latin. Along with the works came commentaries and glosses written by Muslim scholars.
- In addition, the church rediscovered the Early Church Fathers. Augustine, in particular, became a dominant influence, and as historian Warren Hollister notes, the "chief vessel of Platonic and Neoplatonic thought is the medieval universities." The revival of learning also built upon earlier medieval scholars and philosophers such as Gregory the Great, Isidore of Seville, and Bede, who had in their own times and ways, kept Christian scholarship alive.
- Finally, the Bible itself, as an object of inquiry, became a catalyst for learning.

C. Warren Hollister, Medieval Europe: A Short History, *second ed (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1968), 267.*

Universities commonly were composed of four faculties: law, theology, medicine, and the arts. During the time that students prepared for one of the advanced levels, they pursued the arts, and eventually earned a bachelor of arts degree, which entitled the student to advance in study.

A bachelor's degree might be earned in 18 months to two years. Again, this was patterned on the medieval guild system, with a bachelor's education being the equivalent of an apprentice in the trades or arts.

The whole educational program was tied to philosophy and logic. The seven liberal arts taken at the bachelor's level included astronomy, geometry, arithmetic, music, grammar, rhetoric, and dialectics. In addition, students were introduced to the higher disciplines of theology, law, and medicine. One who had a master's degree in any of these higher fields was like a master artisan in a guild.

The lecture and the disputation were the two methods of instruction. Books were scarce. Noted scholars read from their own books. At Oxford, a statute required professors to repeat important segments of their lectures. Students regulated how fast or slow the lecturer read, since they were attempting to take adequate notes.

Sometimes advanced students repeated lectures for the sake of those who had been unable to follow the instructors. When lecturers read from a book they had not written, they provided "glosses," giving their own comments or opinions about, or elaborations upon the content.

At Oxford, lecturers were even required to raise questions about dubious points. This method led to disputations or debates. One student or teacher would defend a position against that of another. To earn a bachelor's degree, students had to defend a thesis, just as apprentices might have to produce crafts that would demonstrate their preparation to enter a profession.

As the people of the Middle Ages sought to find the relationship between faith and reason, universities became an important avenue. The new Dominican order took advantage of these growing and expanding universities. Even the Franciscans, in spite of their founder's ambiguities toward learning, became students and prominent teachers in the universities. While the Franciscan scholars tended to follow the

views of Plato and Augustine and were antagonistic to the views of Aristotle, most Dominicans adhered to Aristotle's views.

The universities' focus on theology more than any other subject brought theology to its peak. Theology was the "queen of the sciences." The theology course at Paris required eight years of study to master. Graduates normally were in their thirties. The universities improved the church theologically, but still only a few parish priests attended the universities, and they remained ignorant of the meaning of the Latin in the masses they were conducting.

Beginning about 1200, universities received imperial and papal decrees that endowed them with specific rights. The university system of today is an inheritance from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Though schools and teachers had always existed, the system of faculties, teaching licenses, prescribed books, and degrees dates from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

Graduation with a master's degree became the standard and norm for teaching in a given specialization. Persons who had graduated from a university were exempt from taxation, trial in courts, and military service. The gowns worn at graduation and by teachers were patterned on the clerics' garb.

Higher education in the High Middle Ages exemplified the diversity and richness of the Christian tradition. Teachers and students—and the Scholasticism they represented—sought creative ways of reconciling faith and reason.

Within the parameters of Christianity, which all took as the basis of human learning, the universities demonstrated rich academic freedom. Teachers made students think. Not all teachers or students had to think alike. Scholars did not teach dogmatically, but found that in the open pursuit of truth, Christianity had nothing to fear. Their supposition was that any seeming contradiction between faith and reason was only an appearance, and that ultimately, faith and reason both were means of arriving at the same Truth.

Small Groups: Universities—Yesterday and Today

(15 minutes)

Divide the class into groups of three.

In your small group compare and contrast universities of the High Middle Ages with those of today.

Refer to Resource 10-5 in the Student Guide.

Lecture / Discussion: Biblical Interpretation

(25 minutes)

Period of Transition from Patristic to Exegetical Theology

Refer to Resource 10-6 in the Student Guide.

Medieval theologians and biblical scholars depended on church tradition, with the assumption that the Fathers were true to the Bible. Handbooks depended on "catena," a chain of interpretations originating with the Fathers, especially the Latin Fathers such as Ambrose, Augustine, and Jerome.

By the 800s, exegetes also were using "glosses," or marginal notes on the text. Later, the *Glossa Ordinaria* was an anthology of comments on the Scriptures by the Fathers, with each book having a prologue authored by Jerome—but no fresh, creative thinking. Both Anselm and Peter Lombard wrote *Magna Glosatura,* and these resources were used by preachers through the early seventeenth century. As a result of having these written glosses, professors of Bible could concentrate on textual matters.

In the ninth century Rabanus Maurus developed a sense of the "four-fold" meanings of Scripture. Much of God's will and many of His words were "hidden" in Scripture, not expressed; and there were multiple, valid levels of meaning in the same text, since God spoke through symbols.

The first level was the "letter," the literal meaning of words. The second level was allegory, which had been used by Augustine as well as Origen, and which was a common means of biblical interpretation in the church from 600 to 1200. The allegorical method found hidden, unsuspected riches in texts. Allegorization was common in the Greco-Roman world regarding classical texts.

Those devoted to allegorical interpretations argued that some scriptures cannot and should not be interpreted literally. This included descriptions of God deemed unworthy of Him, texts exegetes considered too primitive, and texts, including genealogies, that seemed too trivial. Allegorical interpretations were limited only by the interpreter's ingenuity. For instance, the "sea" could be a gathering of water,

Scripture, present age, human heart, active life, heathen, or baptism. The allegorical method provided something of a solution to the Old Testament problem. It allowed an alternative to Marcionism. The allegorical method found types of Christ in every part of Scripture. Moses seated in prayer with arms outstretched (Ex 17), was Christ on the Cross. The scarlet cord used to let down the spies (Josh 2) was redemption through the blood of Christ. The "three" spies represented the Trinity. The ark was the church. Any dove was an allegory for the Holy Spirit.

The third level of meaning, according to Rabanus, was the moral meaning. This represented what Christians were to do. The fourth level was the anagogical, which pointed to the "heavenly city." It was what Christians were to hope.

Take a passage of Scripture and have the students give the four levels of meaning for it.

There were multiple levels of meaning in the same text. For instance, Jerusalem literally is the Palestinian city; allegorically it is the church; morally it is the human soul; anagogically it is the heavenly city. Water refers to water, of course, in its literal sense, purity of life in its moral sense, baptism in its allegorical sense, and heaven—the water of life—in its anagogical sense.

Beryl Smalley, The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages, *(Reprint, Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1964), 363.*

While the East preferred the New Testament and Greek, the West also studied Hebrew and examined the Old Testament. The West learned Hebrew from Jews, consulting contemporary Jewish authorities and the rabbinic traditions to gain an understanding of the historical sense of the Bible. "Hebrew appealed to [the Europeans'] emotions, philosophy, and sense of history," writes Beryl Smalley.

With the study of Hebrew went, inseparably, Jewish comments, which were linguistically and grammatically based. The nonmessianic interpretations of Jews awakened scholars to issues of context. Andrew of St. Victor (d. 1175), in particular, used Jewish interpreters. He wrote commentaries on the first eight books of the Bible, the Prophets, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes. These commentaries concentrated on the literal sense of Scripture and were concentrated on the texts themselves.

The thirteenth century saw development of concordances—to the Fathers as well as to text—and "correctoria," variant readings of the text. These movements led interpreters away from fanciful, allegorical, and nonhistorical interpretations.

Thomas Aquinas's View of the Scriptures

Refer to Resource 10-7 in the Student Guide.

Thomas Aquinas evidenced a trend among scholars—who included Albertus Magnus and Bonaventure—for preferring the primacy of the literal and moral meanings of Scripture. The use of Scripture in Thomas's *Summa Theologica* went beyond exegesis and was organized around doctrinal categories. He used reason—not just tradition—to find better understandings of Scripture.

Under the influence of Aristotelianism, Thomas determined that all knowledge—even of the Bible—came via the senses and reason. There was interest in things as they were in themselves. The material creation reflected God. Platonism had buttressed allegorizing, as it tended to see a text as a veil or shell of reality.

Thomas's method was to read Scripture to students and brief them on the basis of glosses, using the sayings of 22 Latin and 57 Greek Fathers. He followed the structure of the text presented by the author, the internal order (grammatical analysis), and closely examined paragraphs and words. The words led to connected consequences, and the consequences to obvious meaning. Using this method, Thomas finished his lectures on the Bible in three years. He published commentaries on several Old and New Testament books.

The writers of the Bible, Thomas argued, were not merely passive instruments of God. Though God predisposed people and events so as to communicate precisely, He worked through free will. Human characteristics did not lessen the message, but the message "proceeds in harmony with such dispositions."

Norman Geisler, Thomas Aquinas: An Evangelical Appraisal *(Grand Rapids: Baker, 1991), 46.*

God activated prophets, for instance, and spoke in terms of their culture, language, and literary forms. For that reason Thomas emphasized the importance of the literal sense and rejected the theory of hidden symbols.

The literal sense was what the "author" intended and, Thomas affirmed, "nothing false can underlie the literal sense of Scripture." Other senses or levels of meaning must be built on the literal. Nothing crucial to Christian life and faith is lost without the other meanings: "Nothing necessary to faith is contained under the spiritual sense that is not elsewhere put forward by the Scripture in its literal sense."

Robert M. Grant and David Tracy, A Short History of the Interpretation of the Bible, *second ed. (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984), 89.*

The interpreter must not add to the literal meaning or detract from it, or change its meaning when interpreting

it. The literal sense was concerned with the meaning of words, which could of course be figurative by design. Though Thomas sought objectivity, he realized exegetes could not claim divine inspiration for their interpretations of Scripture.

The implication was also that the Bible and theology were freed from the Fathers' interpretations. Thomas believed the Scriptures alone—not catena or glosses—were without error. Thomas used reason, not just tradition, to find better understandings of Scripture. The Bible became the foundation of theology.

Later Medieval Scholars

Nicholas of Lyra (1279-1340), a Franciscan teaching at Paris, wrote the first printed Bible commentary. It stressed the importance of the literal sense, closely examined the Hebrew text, examined errors in the Vulgate text, and questioned allegorical interpretations.

Even more radical was the English scholar John Wycliffe (1330-84), who became convinced that every believer was accountable to God and obliged both to know and to obey God's law as found in the Bible. The Bible, Wycliffe believed, was relevant to the whole of life. He began to translate the Bible into English.

By the end of the Middle Ages, the study of the Bible had improved. Interpretation was more tied to the plain, literal meaning of the texts than to either unlikely meanings or the opinions of the Fathers. This greater sense of the meaning and purpose of the Bible led directly to the Reformation.

Allow for response.

In what ways did Thomas Aquinas change the way Scripture was interpreted?

How did his methods fit in with his overall theology?

Lesson Close

(5 minutes)

Review

Call on a different student to answer each of the questions.

What have we gained from the Dominicans?

What have we gained from the Franciscans?

What have we gained from Thomas Aquinas?

Look Ahead

In the next lesson we will discuss how the gospel and culture interacted in both the East and West.

Assign Homework

Direct students to the Homework Assignments in the Student Guide.

Reading Topics:

- Expansion of the church in Europe
- Inquisition: an issue of gospel and culture
- The Catholic Church in China and Mongol Empire
- Shelley, *Church History in Plain Language,* chapter 22

Write a two-page report giving your thoughts, impressions, and feelings about the people, events, and theology.

Read Resource 10-8, “Letters Between the Pope and Khan.”

Term Project #3—Major Christian Expressions.

Write in your journal. Reflect on and respond to the following:

AUGUSTINE’S CONFESSIONS, READING 10

BOOK EIGHT
Conversion to Christ

CHAPTER II
3. I recounted to [Simplicianus] all the mazes of my wanderings, but when I mentioned to him that I had read certain books of the Platonists which Victorinus—formerly professor of rhetoric at Rome . . . this man who, up to an advanced age, had been a worshiper of idols, a communicant in the sacrilegious rites to which

almost all the nobility of Rome were wedded . . . despite all this, he did not blush to become a child of your Christ, a babe at your font, bowing his neck to the yoke of humility and submitting his forehead to the ignominy of the cross.

CHAPTER V

10. I was eager to imitate [Victorinus] [but] the enemy held fast my will, and had made of it a chain, and had bound me tight with it. For out of the perverse will came lust, and the service of lust ended in habit, and habit, not resisted, became necessity. By these links, as it were, forged together—which is why I called it "a chain"—a hard bondage held me in slavery. But that new will which had begun to spring up in me freely to worship you and to enjoy you, O my God, the only certain Joy, was not able as yet to overcome my former willfulness, made strong by long indulgence. Thus my two wills—the old and the new, the carnal and the spiritual—were in conflict within me; and by their discord they tore my soul apart.

11. Thus I came to understand from my own experience what I had read, how "the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh." I truly lusted both ways . . . because here I was rather an unwilling sufferer than a willing actor. And yet it was through me that habit had become an armed enemy against me, because I had willingly come to be what I unwillingly found myself to be. Who, then, can with any justice speak against it, when just punishment follows the sinner?

26. It was, in fact, my old mistresses, trifles of trifles and vanities of vanities, who still enthralled me. They tugged at my fleshly garments and softly whispered: "Are you going to part with us? And from that moment will we never be with you any more? And from that moment will not this and that be forbidden you forever?" What were they suggesting to me in those words "this or that"? What is it they suggested, O my God? Let your mercy guard the soul of your servant from the vileness and the shame they did suggest! And now I scarcely heard them, for they were not openly showing themselves and opposing me face to face; but muttering, as it were, behind my back; and furtively plucking at me as I was leaving, trying to make me look back at them. Still they delayed me, so that I hesitated to break loose and shake myself free of them and leap over to the place to which I was being called—for unruly habit kept saying to me, "Do you think you can live without them?"

Lesson 11

The Gospel and Culture Interact—East and West

Lesson Overview

Schedule

Start Time	Task or Topic	Learning Activity	Materials Needed
0:00	Introduction	Orient	Student Guide
0:20	The Expansion of the Church in Europe	Lecture/Discussion	Resources 11-1—11-3
0:45	The Inquisition	Lecture/Discussion	Resources 11-4—11-6
1:10	The Catholic Church in China and Mongol Empire	Lecture/Discussion	Resource 11-7 Resource 11-8
1:35	Letters	Small Groups	Resource 11-9
1:55	Lesson Close	Review, Assign	Student Guide

Suggested Reading for Instructor

Chambers, James. *The Devil's Horsemen: The Mongol Invasion of Europe*. Reprint, New York: Atheneum, 1985.

Dawson, Christopher, ed. *Mission to Asia*. Reprint, New York: Harper Torch Books, 1966.

Fletcher, Richard. *The Barbarian Conversion: From Paganism to Christianity*. New York: Henry Holt, 1997.

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Lesson Introduction

(20 minutes)

Accountability

In pairs have the students read each other's papers from their visits to other churches.

Allow for some class discussion about the experiences.

Return and collect homework.

Orientation

Today we will review the expansion of the church during the 300 years of 1000 to 1300 and the evangelization of Northern Europe and Iberia.

The Inquisition in the Middle Ages was the church's response to heresy, which it sought to eliminate by force.

The Roman Catholics advanced into Asia, particularly China, in the High Middle Ages. If the church had responded differently to the Mongols, the history of the world would have been quite different.

Learner Objectives

Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.

Restating the objectives for the learners serves as an advanced organizer for the lesson and alerts learners to key information and concepts.

At the end of this lesson, participants should

- describe the movements of the church into Northern Europe
- discuss the relationship between Christians and Muslims in Iberia during this period
- appreciate the efforts of Ramon Lull to evangelize the Muslims
- discuss the reasons for the Inquisition
- develop a consciousness of the ways the Church can misuse the authority of God in the Christian life
- describe the attempts of monks to evangelize Asia in the High Middle Ages
- Consider the failures of Christian attempts to evangelize Asia, and what might have happened if Christians had been able to convert the Mongols

Lesson Body

Lecture / Discussion: The Expansion of the Church in Europe

(25 minutes)

Missionary Activity in Europe

One thousand years after Christ, there were still large areas of Europe to be evangelized.

Refer to Resource 11-1 in the Student Guide.

Point out all these areas on a map.

Resource 11-2 is a map the students can use for this lesson.

Scandinavia possessed a warlike culture that occasionally, as in the eighth century, launched out to attack and plunder areas of Europe. Vikings, the Norse, devastated Ireland in raid after raid between 800 and 850, and had pillaged and destroyed many ancient monasteries. Vikings established a pagan kingdom in Dublin that endured from 850 to 1150. The Danes attacked England and established a kingdom there as well as in Sweden. But both the Vikings and the Danes were ready to "make room for a Christian deity alongside the traditional gods," as historian Richard Fletcher puts it.

Fletcher, The Barbarian Conversion*, 374.*

In the early eleventh century Norway was still made up of various kingdoms or chiefdoms. One king, Haakon, had been raised and educated in England, and introduced Christianity during his reign, 946-961. A bishop was consecrated about 960.

Tradition has it nonetheless that Christianity came to Norway in 995 through Olaf Tryggvason, who had been baptized in England in 994. Accompanied by an English bishop, Olaf returned to Norway in 995 in pursuit of a throne. During the next four years, he attempted to convert the people by force.

Olaf Haraldsson, a kinsman, who ruled from 1015 to 1028, carried on the work. Not content with nominal acceptance of Christianity, he admonished priests and bishops to instruct the people well in the faith. Yet paganism persisted, and Christianity itself was modified by Norwegian ways and traditions. In 1152 the Norwegian church declared itself independent of all church officials except the pope himself.

Fletcher, The Barbarian Conversion, *410-12.*

Iceland accepted Christianity by a democratic process. Iceland had been settled in the late ninth and early tenth centuries predominantly by Norwegians, but

including Irish and Scottish people who had already embraced Christianity.

It is likely that Icelanders themselves sought Christian missionaries from Norway to evangelize their country. Since the Germans were actively engaged in missions in Norway, Thangbrand, a German bishop, arrived in Iceland sometime in the eleventh century. It is said that Christianity became the state religion of Iceland by an act of the country's parliament about 1016. Christianity brought literacy, Latin, a written law, theology, and history.

This created a dramatic break with previous customs, which had included offering human sacrifices to the gods. The church remained attached to the bishop of Norway. The first Icelander bishop, Islef, was educated in Germany in the eleventh century. Islef established a theological school.

Fletcher, The Barbarian Conversion, *397-400.*

The Danes had many contacts with their Christian neighbors to the south. The Danish King Harald Bluetooth, who ruled from 958 to 987, was a Christian. Under his rule, churches were built throughout the country.

His son Sweyn initiated raids on England. Sweyn's son Canute, who reigned from 1016 to 1035, continued the conquest of England and extended Danish rule over Norway. Canute came under the influence of an English archbishop, Wulfstan of York, who explained the ways of Christian faith more clearly.

Canute made a pilgrimage to Rome in 1027. He established a close unity between the state and ecclesiastical structure and required his subjects to learn the Lord's Prayer and attend communion at least three times each year. Canute invited missionaries from England to evangelize Denmark, but kept them tightly under his control. Bishop Adalbert of Hamburg, seeing himself as a kind of patriarch for the church in the North, became jealous of the English intervention in Denmark.

Fletcher, The Barbarian Conversion, *403-10.*

In Sweden, King Olof Skotkunung, who ruled from 995 to 1022, founded a bishopric at Skara and accepted missionaries from Germany. Later in the eleventh century missionaries also arrived from England, and possibly Poland and Russia.

In 1104 the pope appointed a bishop to Lund, Sweden, to serve over all of Scandinavia. Missionaries commonly smashed pagan idols and burned pagan

temples. In the 1080s the king himself attacked a pagan cult at Uppsala. But Sweden remained pagan. In the 1130s King Sverker called upon austere Cistercian monks to evangelize the country. A bishop for Uppsala, a Cistercian, was appointed in 1164. But old superstitions long remained.

Fletcher, The Barbarian Conversion, *412-15.*

Finland was at war with Sweden during these years. Swedish settlements in Finland established Christianity. An indigenous bishop was appointed in 1291. Not until that date can the country be said to be Christianized.

Christianity entered Poland through Bohemia and Germany. A Polish prince was baptized in the late tenth century. But the growth of Christianity in Poland awaited his son, Boleslaw Chrobry, who reigned from 992 to 1025. Boleslaw encouraged missionary activity and established an archbishopric and hierarchy that assured the church's independence from Germany. He unified the kingdom, but at great cost. After his death the kingdom broke apart, churches and monasteries were destroyed, and priests and bishops driven out or killed. Yet Christianity in Poland persisted amid the political chaos.

Neill, A History of Christian Missions, *79. See also Fletcher*, The Barbarian Conversion, *425-29.*

Paganism proved resistant in the Baltic region of northeastern Europe. Many evangelists sent from Denmark, Poland, Russia, and Germany were martyred. During the Crusades, the Order of Teutonic Knights was given authority by the pope to evangelize and conquer by force, with the enticement that the order could retain two-thirds of any pagan lands it took, reserving the other third for the church.

The Dominicans arrived alongside the Teutonic Knights. The Knights conquered Prussia about 1250. Christianity was forced upon the people through the treaty imposed. Any who lapsed into paganism, the treaty stipulated, were to be reduced to slavery. The provisions also enforced monogamy and the order of Christian worship, which included the requirements to confess to a priest once a year and take communion at Easter time.

The kingdom of Lithuania held out longer against the Knights. Finally, they allied themselves with Poland in order to defeat the Knights, on the condition that the Lithuanian king, Jogaila, who was to wed a Polish princess, unite the kingdoms of Poland and Luthuania, and be baptized. Jogaila was baptized in 1385. This marked the official end of paganism in Europe. Missionaries from Poland evangelized Lithuania.

Neill, A History of Christian Missions, *93-96; Fletcher,* The Barbarian Conversion, *503-7.*

Success in Iberia

Refer to Resource 11-3 in the Student Guide.

The Crusades against the Muslims in the Holy Lands naturally turned the church's attention toward Spain, which had been under Muslim rule since the eighth century. The Christian reconquest of Spain began in 1002. During the next five centuries the churches in Spain conformed to Roman Catholic practices through the zeal and influence of French clergy. During the twelfth century both the Knights and the Cistercians arrived. The thirteenth century brought the Dominicans and Franciscans.

Ramon Lull (1235-1315) was a philosopher and lay missionary to the Muslims in Spain. Born to aristocracy, Lull's native area of Spain, Majorca, had only recently been freed from Muslim control. At the age of 30 Lull had a profound conversion experience and professed a call from God to devote himself full-time to His service, and particularly to evangelize the Muslims.

In order to prepare himself for this task, Lull spent nine years studying both Arabic and Christian thought. He began to publish apologetic works aimed at the Muslims and persuaded the king to set up a study center for the study of Islam and Arabic. Thirteen Franciscans enrolled for study.

Lull himself became a Franciscan. Their approach to the conversion of the Muslims, peaceful preaching and humble persuading, appealed to him. Lull wrote:

> I see many knights go to the Holy Land beyond the sea, wanting to conquer it by force of arms, and in the end they are all brought to naught without obtaining their aim. Therefore it seems to me, O Lord, that the conquest of that Holy Land should not be done but in the manner in which you and your apostles have conquered it: by love and prayers and shedding of tears and blood.

Quoted in Benjamin Z. Kedar, Crusade and Mission: European Approaches Toward the Muslims *(Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984), 190.*

Lull's approach to the Muslims was based on three principles.

- First, missionaries should have a comprehensive, accurate knowledge of the language. There needed to be colleges to teach these languages along with theological education.
- Second, he believed the Muslims would be won with rational arguments, and without recourse to Scripture, since Muslims rejected its authority. He spoke of God in monotheistic ways that Muslims

and Jews as well as Christians could accept. He made extensive use of diagrams and charts as well as Neoplatonist philosophy.

- Third, missionaries must be ready to sacrifice themselves. That Lull himself was martyred in North Africa is open to question.

Lull's ideas possessed mystic tendencies. He centered his contemplations upon divine perfections, which, he said, was achieved by the purification of memory, understanding, and will. He defended the immaculate conception of Mary. Lull elaborated his idea in a number of books and tracts.

For about 10 years, 1287 to 1297, Lull traveled throughout Europe to elicit the support of the monarchs for the evangelization of the Muslims. He secured centers of Arabic language study in five universities. He also undertook missions to North Africa.

In 1299 he persuaded the king of Aragon to force the Muslims and Jews to attend instruction in Christianity. Protected by the crown, Lull himself began preaching in synagogues and mosques in Aragon. Even later in life, in 1305, Lull admonished the pope in the Crusade to the Holy Land, to first send as an advance party, friars well trained in both Arabic and apologetics to preach to the Muslims. If the Muslims refused the Good News, force was tolerable, Lull now believed. At least some Muslims, he was confident, would be responsive to public disputations and preaching.

Kedar, Crusade and Mission, *189-99.*

Jews as well as Muslims in Iberia were pressed by force to convert to Christianity. At the same time, Christians did not trust the conversions. They feared that Jews maintained their own customs secretly, and that there was an alliance between Jews and Muslims. The Christians imposed the Inquisition, which forced neighbor to report on neighbor, in an attempt to discover and root out false conversions. The Christianization process in Iberia was completed only in 1492, after the union of the kingdoms of Castille and Aragon, and the defeat at Granada of the remaining Muslims.

Allow for response.

In what ways were each of Raymon Lull's three principles important to his ministry?

How much do we Christians know about the Muslims?

Would the three principles apply to present-day situations?

Lecture / Discussion: The Inquisition

(25 minutes)

The Dissenting Groups

Refer to Resource 11-4 in the Student Guide.

In 1022 a group of heretics were condemned at the Council of Orleans. The heretical movement spread from southern France to northern Italy and Germany. In France the heretics were called Albigenses. In Germany they were called Catharists—from the Greek, *katharos,* pure. They were also known as the Patarenes.

These heretics were dualists. They rejected flesh and matter as evil and saw matter and spirit in eternal conflict. With both a soul and a body, human beings lived in a "mixed" state. Redemption was the liberation of the soul from the flesh. There were two classes of believers, these heretics taught. The "perfect" were those who received the baptism of the Holy Spirit by the imposition of hands, and who lived by the strictest rules, and were celibate. Below them were ordinary believers.

These heretics were not only dualists but also Docetists. Christ was not fully incarnate, but like an angel. He did not suffer, die, or rise from the dead. The Old and New Testaments were filled with allegories, which the heretics believed the Catholic Church wrongly interpreted literally.

The heretics rejected the sacraments, indulgences, and various doctrines, including purgatory and the resurrection of the body. All matter was bad; therefore, they lived self-denying, very strict lives. In ascetic practices, they exceeded monks. As pacifists, they refused to take up arms. The most vigorous condemned marriage. They were vegetarians, refusing milk, butter, cheese, eggs, and meat.

These heretics actively attempted to boycott and disrupt the Catholic Church. They issued propaganda against the Catholic Church. They thought of themselves as the only true church. They excited extreme reaction but welcomed suffering—to the point of committing suicide—and martyrdom.

Refer to Resource 11-5 in the Student Guide.

An unrelated group, also considered heretics by the church, were the Waldensians. These were followers of Peter Valdo who died about 1215, a rich merchant of Lyons. Beginning in southern France, the movement spread to northern Italy and Austria. They believed

they represented an unbroken tradition stretching back to Paul's trip from Rome to Spain.

About 1173, Valdo heard Christ's words to the rich young man in Matthew 19:12 to sell all he had and give his money to the poor, and he obeyed literally. Valdo separated from his wife, placed his daughters in a convent, and set off as an itinerant preacher. He preached against the worldliness of the church and its priests, and against the dualism of the Catharists.

Unlike the Albigenses or Catharists, Waldensian beliefs regarding Christ were strictly orthodox. Valdo sought papal recognition for his movement at the Third Lateran Council of 1179. Not only did the pope refuse, but the Council of Verona in 1184 placed the Waldensians under the ban of excommunication along with the Catharists.

So the Waldensians separated from the Roman Catholic Church. They doubted the efficacy of sacraments given by unworthy priests, and so appointed their own preachers. Without the church's consent, Waldensians used lay preachers, including women.

These preachers used local languages to proclaim the Scripture. On biblical bases they denied purgatory, refused to pray for the dead or venerate the saints and relics. They emphasized the Sermon on the Mount, refused to kill for any reason, and lived simply.

The Church's Response

Refer to Resource 11-6 in the Student Guide.

In the early centuries, the means by which the church controlled heresy was the threat of excommunication. However, after the church became the official religion of the empire, it allowed the state to resort to physical punishment, even death, to control heretics.

Even so, many medieval church leaders, including Bernard of Clairveaux, counseled the church to use appropriately Christian means against heresy, and decried the use of force. Nonetheless, the 1179 Third Lateran Council sanctioned the state's use of force to suppress heresy.

In 1184 Pope Lucius inaugurated the Inquisition by making it mandatory for bishops to examine their people once a year and to require of them an oath attesting to their orthodoxy. The term "inquisition" and "inquisitor" came from the Roman law and were taken over from the Roman Empire.

The church became threatened by the Catharists, Albigenses, and Waldensians. Various councils, including the Fourth Lateran Council (1215), condemned their teachings. Pope Innocent III sent out missions to combat the heresy, and finally an armed and cruel crusade that ended in 1218.

The Dominicans became involved in refuting them. Yet the common person was impressed by the austerity of the heretics' lives, which they contrasted to the moral laxity of many clergy and monks, and the movements severely threatened the church.

In 1232 Emperor Frederick II (1194-1250), who was also king of Sicily, issued an edict calling upon state officials to find and punish heretics. Pope Gregory IX (1148-1241) had several struggles with Frederick for control over Italian lands. Fearing that the state would take over what was truly a task for the church, realizing the failures of earlier attempts to uproot the heretics, and taking away control from the local bishops, Gregory centralized the church's response and appointed inquisitors responsible to himself.

The Council of Toulouse in 1229 sanctioned the Inquisition in order to free the church totally from unorthodox beliefs. In 1231 Gregory issued an edict excommunicating all heretics in general, and mentioning in particular the Catharists, Albigenses, and Waldensians. Those suspected of heresy should be thoroughly examined, and if recommended for punishment, handed over to the state. Indeed, secular rulers lent support to the church in the uprooting of supposed heretics.

Laypersons were expected to report on their neighbors if they believed them deviant from the faith. "Infamy" was ascribed to those who aided heretics. Anyone who protected a heretic was equally liable to be excommunicated.

Gregory selected inquisitors from the new orders, the Franciscans, founded in 1209, and the Dominicans, founded in 1220. Unlike resident priests, the orders could devote themselves fully to the task. He particularly felt the Dominicans were well trained in theology for the mission and task of routing out heretics, and officially entrusted the Inquisition to them in 1233.

Gregory was a personal friend of Francis of Assisi and felt the Franciscans lacked the worldly ambition that might tempt the other, older orders in their pursuit of

heretics. The Franciscans were officially appointed to the Inquisition only in 1246. The austere lives of the Franciscans could be compared favorably to the Catharists or Waldensians.

The friar inquisitors traveled around the countryside, admonishing those who held heretical views to confess them. Their first tactic was preaching. They believed that knowledge of the truth itself would guard local laypersons from error.

Gregory's explicit instructions to the inquisitors were:

> When you arrive in a city, summon the bishops, clergy and people, and preach a solemn sermon on faith; then select certain men of good repute to help you in trying the heretics and suspects denounced before your tribunal. All who on examination are found guilty or suspected of heresy must promise to obey absolutely the commands of the church; if they refuse, you must prosecute them, according to the statutes which we have recently promulgated.

Elphege Vacandard, The Inquisition, *trans. Bertrand Conway, quoted in Albert Shannon,* The Medieval Inquisition, *second ed. (Collegeville, MN: Liturgy Press, 1991), 73.*

The suspected persons were brought before a kind of local jury that included the local priest and laypersons. Those accused by witnesses were closely interrogated. One question they were asked was, "Have you heard the heretics say, and have you believed that all the good spirits as well as the souls of the angels and of men had been made originally by the good god in heaven, and that there they had sinned and had fallen from heaven, and that some of these spirits had become embodied in human bodies by the bad god?"

Shannon, The Medieval Inquisition, *78.*

Another question was simply, "Did you, at this time, believe that these heretics were good men and spoke the truth, that they had a good faith and a good sect, in which men were able to be saved, and that the doctrine which you heard from them was true, wholly or partially?" To that question one French widow responded:

> I, at the time, thought and believed that these heretics were good people, in that they engaged in great abstinences, never took anything of others, did not render evil for evil, also because they observed chastity. But now I do not hold them to be good people, but on the contrary to be evil, for they are very grasping and selfish, and also because they force people to die "the endura." But all the doctrines exposed above, all their errors, I believed to be the truth, pressured as I was to

> believe it. And I remained in this belief for about a year, until they told me not to suckle my daughter, after her heretication, and also because at that time I heard them tell their "believers" to kill those who persecuted them, betrayed them, or denounced them, "for it is necessary to cut down the bad tree" [Matthew 7:19]. That is why, since that time, I no longer believed their doctrine to be true, but rather that they were evil people. I provided for them since that time in my house, because I was afraid of them and I loved my husband very much, and I did not wish to offend him. I had observed him to be very attached to these heretics.

Shannon, The Medieval Inquisition, *85.*

There were various ways the inquisitors hoped to establish the truth. They hoped for confessions. The ones who voluntarily confessed to heresy were offered lighter penalties—fasting, the wearing of a yellow cross, fines, or a pilgrimage, for instance. At the same time, they were asked for the names of other heretics.

Eyewitnesses were called. Those who were obstinate in the face of several witnesses were imprisoned. Heavy penalties included flagellation, the confiscation of goods, imprisonment, and ultimately surrender to the state—which usually meant death by burning. In Germany especially, trials sometimes resorted to "ordeals," for divine intervention to determine the guilt or innocence of a person. One such method was trial by hot water. A person would draw a stone from the bottom of a boiling pot. His arm then was bandaged. If, after three days, the hand was whole, the person was acquitted.

Shannon, The Medieval Inquisition, *112.*

But it soon became apparent that abuses of the Inquisition system were common. One zealous Dominican inquisitor in France brought 180 persons to death by burning in 1239. The pope, when he heard of it, thought this excessive and had the inquisitor imprisoned for life in a monastery. In Toulouse, between 1245 and 1246, 945 people out of a population of about 5,000 were interrogated. One hundred and five were sentenced to prison, and the remainder to lesser punishments.

Shannon, The Medieval Inquisition, *70-71, 135.*

In certain localities, inquisitors were themselves placed in danger by townspeople. As the Inquisition progressed, local inquisitors sent questions and problematic issues back to Rome for decision. Appeals of sentences to the pope became common.

In 1244 the inquisitor's role was more fully circumscribed, and the Council of Narbonne stipulated

Shannon, The Medieval Inquisition, *90.*

that the orders should receive no monetary benefit from the Inquisitions, listed various categories of heretics, and declared, "It is better for the guilty to remain unpunished than for the innocent to be punished."

Manuals for inquisitors began to circulate. However, in 1252 Pope Innocent IV sanctioned the use of torture to induce confessions, and increasingly the pope restored power and authority to the inquisitors.

This strengthened and centralized the control of the pope over the church and set precedents in church law. The Inquisition indicated the extent to which the church would go to enforce conformity, not only to its doctrines, but to its authority.

As a result of the church's aggressive actions against them, by 1400 few traces of the Catharist heretics remained. However, in spite of the Inquisition and persecution, the Waldensians thrived, especially among the lower classes. They influenced the Hussite movement in Bohemia. Even without any central leadership, they survived to embrace the Reformation, but found the reformed churches equally as intolerant of them as the medieval church had been.

Allow for response.

During this time where were the teachings and example of Christ to be found?

Describe a person who might be called a heretic in the church today.

What is the reaction of the church today to that person?

What are the teachings today that the church needs to label as heresy?

Lecture / Discussion: The Catholic Church in China and Mongol Empire

(25 minutes)

Refer to Resource 11-7 in the Student Guide.

Adapted from Floyd T. Cunningham, "Christianity in the Mongol Empire," Word and Ministry *5 (July-December 1997), 16-19.*

Christian influence reached into the heart of the Mongol Empire in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Emissaries and letters went back and forth between Christian leaders in Europe and Mongol Khans; Nestorians already were prominent in the inner circles; and wives and mothers of Mongol leaders were Christians. There was an opportunity for Christians to unite with Mongols against Muslims in the Middle East. It seemed, in fact, that there were opportunities for

the Christian conversion of Mongol leaders themselves, who had extended their empire far beyond the borders of any empire before or since in world history.

The Mongols were a nomadic people emanating from Central Asia. Genghis Khan (1162-1227) unified Mongol tribes and allied himself with others, including the Keraits, who had been converted to Christianity in the 10th century by Nestorians. The Mongols captured Beijing in 1215. Genghis warred against the Muslim Khorezin empire in southwestern Asia in the same decade and conquered Tibet in the 1220s. The Mongol armies terrorized people everywhere, evidencing military might and strategy characterized by a rapid movement of cavalry.

Religiously, the Mongols were Shamanist, but they realized these beliefs were insufficient for a state religion. Although many leaders adopted Tibetan Lamaism, a form of Mahayana Buddhism, by policy they were tolerant of all religions. Nestorian priests attended to the royal court along with Buddhist monks and Muslims. In Genghis's capital, Karakorum, mosques, temples, and churches could be found alongside each other.

Europeans were confused as to where the Mongol invaders originated from when they rode out of the east in the 1220s to wreak havoc upon Eastern Europe. They captured Kiev, by then a center of Eastern Orthodoxy, in 1240; and the next year attacked Hungary, Poland, and Prussia.

They defeated the Teutonic Knights and Templars, the finest European military forces. This brought greater urgency to the European rulers. But Europe was divided politically. The Holy Roman Emperor Frederick would not take a united front with the pope, who called for a Crusade against the Mongols, and so no force was mobilized. Throughout Europe, Christians prayed they would be saved from the Mongol onslaught. It began to seem all Christendom would fall unless God intervened.

Suddenly the Mongols turned back. Perhaps God had intervened. Actually, Second Supreme Khan, Ogedai, had died, and Mongol princes and generals hastened back to the capital. But Europeans wondered when the Mongols would return, and shuddered.

In 1245, Pope Innocent IV sent two Franciscans with letters for the "Emperor of the Tartars." Friar John of Plano Carpini arrived in Karakorum in 1246, in time for

the coronation of Genghis's grandson, the Third Supreme Khan, Kuyuk.

The first letter was largely theological, describing the redemptive and mediatory work of Christ. The pope said he was sending the friars to fulfill the apostolic mission of the church, "so that following their salutary instructions you may acknowledge Jesus Christ the very Son of God and worship His glorious name by practicing the Christian religion."

The letters are in Resource 10-8 in the Student Guide. They were to be read as homework.

From your reading of the first letter, what was your impression of its message?

The second letter of the pope, written a week later, was more confrontational. It spoke against the Mongol invasion and destruction and "earnestly beseeched" the Khan to offer penance to God, who "without doubt you have seriously aroused by such provocation." God may be refraining from chastising the proud for a season, the pope warned, but He may "take greater vengeance in the world to come."

Have the students look at the second letter.

How would you expect someone to receive and respond to this second letter?

The Khan's response began by calling upon the pope to come with the other princes to serve him. He called the pope's words impudent. So far as the Khan was concerned, the Mongols were carrying out God's commands. "How could anybody seize or kill by his own power contrary to the command of God?" the Khan asked. He had his own theology: "From the rising of the sun to its setting, all the lands have been made subject to me. Who could do this contrary to the command of God?" The Khan sent his warning: unless the pope himself came to pay homage, he would be considered an enemy.

Have the students look at the Khan's letter.

What is your impression of the Khan's response?

How would you expect the pope to receive it?

Despite these recriminations, Kuyuk did favor Christianity of all the religions in his empire. His mother was a Christian, at least in name (both she and her son lived profligately). Kuyuk ruled only two years. But before dying of alcohol poisoning, he was baptized.

Refer to Resource 11-8 in the Student Guide.

Meanwhile both the Europeans and the Mongols were directing their attention to the Holy Lands. France's King Louis IX in 1248 received ambassadors from the Mongol commander, Eljigedei, who himself had been

baptized a Christian, suggesting an alliance between the Europeans and the Mongols against the Muslims. Louis informed the pope, who promptly sent another mission to Karakorum led by Friar Andrew. But by the time Andrew reached the Khan, in 1250, the empire was under the regency of Kuyuk's widow, Oghui-Ghaimish, who saw no reason to form an alliance with the Europeans.

Louis sent another emissary, Friar William of Rubruck. William traveled from Acre, the remaining Christian outpost in the Holy Lands, to the Mongol ruler in Russia, Sartak, who was a Christian. Sartak sent William and his companions on to the Great Khan Mangku in Karakorum.

The friar arrived in 1253. Mangku's mother had been a Christian, but he believed he needed to remain impartial toward any religion. William had the opportunity to explain and defend the faith, but his theology was, as historian James Chambers describes it, "intolerant and dogmatic and his arguments were academic and philosophical." His only "conversions" were a Nestorian priest and six German children.

James Chambers, The Devil's Horsemen: The Mongol Invasion of Europe *(Reprint, New York: Atheneum, 1985), 140.*

The Mongols continued to amass armies to face the Muslims and attacked Baghdad in 1258. Not only were Christians included among the Mongol soldiers, but the Mongol commander placed Christians in prominent positions in Syria, which now came under Mongol control. Just when the Mongols were preparing their advance against Muslims in Jerusalem, Mangku died and the Mongol commander withdrew. This spared the destruction and possible annihilation of Islam.

Mongols saw Europeans as their natural allies against the Muslims and sent various representatives, mostly Nestorian Christians, to European courts in the 1270s and 1280s. In 1288 and 1290 Argur, Ilkhan of Persia, sent letters to the pope and the king of France, proposing a joint effort in 1291 to drive the Muslims out of Palestine. The Khan had his son baptized as a Christian and promised he himself would be baptized in the River Jordan, and would restore Jerusalem to the Christians, if the alliance achieved its goal.

But remarkably, neither the pope nor the European princes seemed interested in this project. Their last Crusade efforts had failed miserably, and they were unwilling to cooperate on another. Soon Argur died and his son, who had been baptized a Christian, converted to Islam. By this time the Mongols of the "Golden Horde" who ruled Russia also had become Muslim. Any

chance for a Christian/Mongol alliance in the Middle East against the Muslims was lost forever.

In context the Christian response seemed rational. The Europeans were terror-stricken by the Mongols. In spite of their desire to retake the Holy Land, they realized the attainments of medieval Islamic civilization surpassed their own. Muslim philosophy and architecture were arguably the most advanced in the world in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Why embrace a barbarian horde and turn against these civilized neighbors?

There were still opportunities waiting for Christianity in eastern Asia, nonetheless. The Fifth Supreme Khan, Kublai, directed his attention to China and particularly aimed at pacifying the south. He had no preferences toward Chinese religions or learning, and used foreigners, such as the Italian explorer Marco Polo, as well as Mongolians to govern the subjected Chinese.

Kublai Khan even invited the pope to send a hundred missionaries to evangelize China! They did not come—they were not sent—and so Buddhist lamas filled the religious void. Apparently Kublai himself embraced Buddhism.

The pope did send John of Monte Corvino, who arrived just after Kublai's death in 1294. John was able to establish an active Christian center in the Khanbalik, the heart of the eastern Mongol empire. The Pope appointed John as archbishop in 1307 and sent additional missionaries. John wrote to the pope from Beijing in January 1305 regarding his mission and the conditions of the church in China:

> In the year of our Lord 1291, I, Brother John of Monte Corvino, of the Order of Friars Minor, left the city of Tauris, in Persia, and penetrated into India. For thirteen months I sojourned in that country and in the church of the Apostle St. Thomas, here and there, and baptized about a hundred people . . . Resuming my journey, I arrived at Cathay, the kingdom of the emperor of the Tartars, who is called the great Khan. In delivering to the said emperor the letters of the Lord Pope, I preached to him the law of our Lord Jesus Christ. The emperor is too rooted in his idolatry, but he is full of good will to Christians. And I have been twelve years with him.
>
> Isolated in this distant pilgrimage, I was eleven years without making my confession until the

arrival of Brother Arnold, a German from the province of Cologne, who has been here for two years.

In the city of Khanbalik I built a church which has been finished six years. I added a campanile with three bells. I have baptized, I think, almost six thousand people in the church, and had there not been the campaign of calumny of which I spoke earlier, I would have baptized more than thirty thousand. I am often busy administering baptism. I have also bought, one by one, forty children of pagans below seven and twelve years of age. As yet they know no faith: I have baptized them and educated them in Latin letters and in our worship.

Through me, a king in this region, of the sect of Nestorian Christians, who was of the race of that great king called Prester John of India, adopted the true faith; he received minor orders and robed in consecrated vestments, served me at mass. The Nestorians even accused him of apostasy; nevertheless, he brought the majority of his people to the Catholic faih. He built a fine church, worthy of his royal munificence.

I beg you, brothers whom this letter may reach, to have a care that its content comes to the knowledge of the Lord Pope, the cardinals, and the Procurator of our Order at the Roman court. Of our Minister-General I ask alms of an antiphonary and readings from the lives of the saints, a gradual and a psalter to serve as a model for us, since here I have only a portable breviary and a small missal. If I have a model, the children will copy it.

At present I am in process of building a new church so that the children can be distributed in several areas. I am getting old and my hair is quite white, less from age—I am only fifty-eight years old–than from weariness and care. I have learned the Tartar language and script reasonably well; that is, the language customarily used by the Mongols. I have translated the whole of the New Testament and the Psalter into this language. I had it transcribed in superb calligraphy and I show it. I read it, I preach it, and I make it known publicly as a testimony to the law of Christ.

And I had made an agreement with King George, mentioned below, had he lived, to translate the whole of the Latin office, so that it could be sung through all the territories of his state; during his

From Jean Comby, How to Read Church History*, vol. 1,* From the Beginnings to the Fifteenth Century*, trans. John Bowden and*

Margaret Lydamore (New York: Crossroad, 1985), 159, quoted from de Ghellinck, Revue d'Histoire des Mission *(December 1928).*

> lifetime the Latin rite was celebrated in his church in the language and scripture of his country, both the words of the canon and the prefaces.

In response to this letter, Pope Clement V sent several bishops to China to consecrate John of Monte Corvino as archbishop. The pope also installed a bishop at Ts'iuan-Tcheou in south China. For sixty years Catholic missionaries established churches throughout southern China.

However it seems likely that the churches were made up mostly of the ruling peoples, the Mongols, and foreigners. So when, inevitably, the Chinese rebelled against the Mongols, they also rejected the religions associated with them.

Chu Yuan-Chang defeated the Mongols in 1368, established the Ming dynasty, and returned Confucianism to its central place in Chinese society. As the Nestorian churches had been virtually all destroyed with the spread of antiforeignism in the tenth century, now in the fourteenth Christianity again suffered near if not total collapse.

The story of Christian contacts with the Mongols brings a whole series of intriguing "what if" questions, revolving around the seemingly unlimited opportunities opened to Christians to spread the faith throughout the empire, which spread from the Black Sea to the Sea of Japan.

What if the pope's admonitions in 1245 had been more winsome and intelligible to Kuyuk, who after all, became a Christian?

What if the European princes had met the Ilkahn in 1291 at the River Jordan to rout the Muslims out of the Holy Lands?

What if the pope had sent a large contingent of missionaries in 1294 to evangelize China, and what if their efforts had been directed to the masses rather than to the ruling elite?

The only answer to these questions is that the history of the world, and the shape and form of Christianity today would be different.

The opportunities were lost because of the Christians' fear of the unknown, their incapacity to believe God could be in a murderous horde of devastation-bearing

nomads. Opportunities were lost because of the Christians' bickering and divisions.

The popes failed to inspire the confidence of the princes toward some great mission to the Mongols. The Mongols, it seemed, were looking for what Christianity offered, a great religion that could unify their empire from East to West. If Christians had been able to step into the void . . . only if.

Small Groups: Letters

(20 minutes)

Refer to Resource 11-9 in the Student Guide.

Divide the class into groups of three.

In your small group analyze the theological content and implications of the pope's letters. Compare it to the Mongol Khan's theology.

Prepare a letter you would have written to the Great Khan if you had been the pope.

Allow some time for the groups to share their letters.

Lesson Close

(5 minutes)

Review

Call on several students to respond.

What is one insight you have gained from this lesson?

Look Ahead

In the final lesson of this module we will study the Late Middle Ages: 1300-1500.

Assign Homework

Direct students to the Homework Assignments in the Student Guide.

Reading topics:

- Ministry and worship in the Late Middle Ages
- Church and state in the Late Middle Ages
- Theology, devotion and reform in the Late Middle Ages—Thomas à Kempis
- Shelley, *Church History in Plain Language,* chapter 23

Write a two-page response giving your thoughts, impressions, and feelings about the people, events, and theology.

Term Project #4—Paper on "Church Order"
Term Project #5—Glossary of people, places, and events.

During the next lesson your journal will be checked to verify the faithfulness and consistency of completing the journaling assignment. The specific entries will not be checked, only the faithfulness of the entries.

Write in your journal. Reflect on and respond to the following:

AUGUSTINE'S CONFESSIONS, READING 11

CHAPTER XII
28. Now when deep reflection had drawn up out of the secret depths of my soul all my misery and had heaped it up before the sight of my heart, there arose a mighty storm, accompanied by a mighty rain of tears. That I might give way fully to my tears and lamentations, I stole away from Alypius, for it seemed to me that solitude was more appropriate for the business of weeping. I went far enough away that I

could feel that even his presence was no restraint upon me. This was the way I felt at the time, and he realized it. I suppose I had said something before I started up and he noticed that the sound of my voice was choked with weeping. And so he stayed alone, where we had been sitting together, greatly astonished. I flung myself down under a fig tree—how I know not—and gave free course to my tears. The streams of my eyes gushed out an acceptable sacrifice to you. And, not indeed in these words, but to this effect, I cried to you: "And you, O Lord, how long? How long, O Lord? Wilt you be angry forever? Oh, remember not against us our former iniquities." For I felt that I was still enthralled by them. I sent up these sorrowful cries: "How long, how long? Tomorrow and tomorrow? Why not now? Why not this very hour make an end to my uncleanness?"

29. I was saying these things and weeping in the most bitter contrition of my heart, when suddenly I heard the voice of a boy or a girl—I know not which—coming from the neighboring house, chanting over and over again, "Pick it up, read it; pick it up, read it." Immediately I ceased weeping and began most earnestly to think whether it was usual for children in some kind of game to sing such a song, but I could not remember ever having heard the like. So, damming the torrent of my tears, I got to my feet, for I could not but think that this was a divine command to open the Bible and read the first passage I should light upon. For I had heard how Anthony, accidentally coming into church while the gospel was being read, received the admonition as if what was read had been addressed to him, "Go and sell what you have and give it to the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven; and come and follow me." By such an oracle he was soon forthwith converted to you. So I quickly returned to the bench where Alypius was sitting, for there I had put down the apostle's book when I had left there. I snatched it up, opened it, and in silence read the paragraph on which my eyes first fell: "Not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying, but put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof." I wanted to read no further, nor did I need to. For instantly, as the sentence ended, there was infused in my heart something like the light of full certainty and all the gloom of doubt vanished away.

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Lesson 12

Late Middle Ages

Lesson Overview

Schedule

Start Time	Task or Topic	Learning Activity	Materials Needed
0:00	Introduction	Orient	Student Guide
0:20	Ministry and Worship in the Late Middle Ages	Lecture/Discussion	Resources 12-1—12-7
0:50	The Struggle Within the Church	Lecture/Discussion	Resource 12-8
1:05	Theology, Devotion, and Reform	Lecture	Resources 12-9—12-14
1:30	Devotionalism in the Late Middle Ages	Small Groups	Resource 12-15
1:55	Lesson Close	Review, Assign	Student Guide

Suggested Reading for Instructor

Appleby, David. *History of Church Music*. Chicago: Moody, 1965.

Bokenkotter, Thomas. *A Concise History of the Catholic Church*. Revised edition, New York: Image, 1979.

Dickinson, Edward. *Music in the History of the Western Church*. New York: Haskell House, 1969.

Douglas, Winfred. *Church Music in History and Practice: Studies in the Praise of God*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1937.

Duchesne, L. *Christian Worship: Its Origin and Evolution*. Translated by M. L. McClure. Fifth edition London: Macmillan, 1927.

Grimm, Harold. *The Reformation Era, 1500-1650*. Revised edition, London: Collier-Macmillan, 1965.

Holmes, Urban T. *A History of Christian Spirituality: An Analytical Introduction*. San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1980.

Kelly, J. N. D. *The Oxford Dictionary of Popes*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986.

Lane, George A. *Christian Spirituality: An Historical Sketch*. Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1984.

McNeill, John T. *A History of the Cure of Souls*. New York: Harper and Row, 1951.

Micklem, Nathaniel. *Christian Worship*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1936.

Ozment, Steven. *The Age of Reform, 1250-1550: An Intellectual and Religious History of Late Medieval and Reformation Europe.* New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1980.

Price, Milburn. *A Joyful Sound: Christian Hymnody*. Second edition, New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1978.

Raitt, Jill, ed. *Christian Spirituality*. Vol. 2, *High Middle Ages and Reformation*. New York: Crossroad, 1987.

Wilson-Dickson, Andrew. *A Brief History of Christian Music*. Oxford: Lion, 1997.

_____. *The Story of Christian Music: From Gregorian Chant to Black Gospel*. Hong Kong: Lion, 1992.

Lesson Introduction

(20 minutes)

Accountability

In pairs have the students exchange their term projects to read and critique for each other.

Return and collect homework.

Orientation

We begin this lesson by covering ministry, worship, and music in the Late Middle Ages.

The issue of the Papacy and its control by the state for much of the fourteenth century raised the question, not only of the role of the pope in the church, but the role of the state as well.

We will finish by reviewing late medieval attempts to renew devotional life among laypeople.

Learner Objectives

Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.

Restating the objectives for the learners serves as an advanced organizer for the lesson and alerts learners to key information and concepts.

At the end of this lesson, participants should

- understand some of the practices of pastors in the Late Middle Ages and be able to contrast these to present pastoral practices
- gain an understanding of the development of worship
- discuss continuities and discontinuities in contemporary worship practices
- tell why the Papacy moved from Rome to Avignon and back to Rome
- discuss some of the abuses within the church during the fourteenth century
- appreciate the power of Thomas à Kempis's *Imitation of Christ* and use it in their own devotions
- know the theological trends and reform movements of the Late Middle Ages as background for the Reformation

Lesson Body

Lecture / Discussion: Ministry and Worship in the Late Middle Ages

(30 minutes)

During the Middle Ages, there was an increasing sense of the "secular" as compared to the "sacred" spheres of life and vocation. Towns were developing. Trade and commerce grew, and with them the spirit of liberty. Secular rulers often were hostile toward the church, but the church found ways of renewing itself.

Pastoral Care in the Late Middle Ages

The vibrancy of monasticism in the thirteenth century, with the rise of the Dominicans and Franciscans, represented the spiritual hunger of the church, as well as its need for reform. The monks emphasized spiritual rather than worldly values and sought to cultivate the soul. Out of this movement came a renewed concern for pastoral care as well as literature, music, philosophy, and theology.

Refer to Resource 12-1 in the Student Guide.

The ideal priest cared deeply for his people. Priests instructed the laity on creeds, the Ten Commandments, capital sins, and virtues. These emphases also formed bases for preaching. Stories circulated about the saints and these, along with the Gospels, formed illustrations in sermons.

An influential book for pastors was Hugh of St. Victor's *The Five Sevens,* published in the twelfth century. Hugh described the seven vices, the seven petitions of the Lord's Prayer, the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, the seven virtues, and the seven beatitudes. Another influential book, similarly organized, was the fourteenth-century English *Book of Vices and Virtues*. In it, "mirth and jollity" were associated with evil company and intemperance.

The Dominicans also published books of guidance to help confessors. These were theological treatises showing that penance, as a sacrament, offered absolution for sins. The most influential of these was *Summa Casuum,* written about 1225 by Raymond of Penafort, who had succeeded Dominic as leader of the order.

The priests were to exercise secrecy regarding what was confessed. The seal of silence could be broken only on matters involving heresy and issues that would bar the one confessing from either priesthood or marriage. At the same time, sexual advances were not infrequent during confessions. Sometimes observers served as safeguards. Where a priest erred, he could confess to and be given absolution by another priest, who might conceivably be equally guilty. Among both clergy and laity, the practice of penance for sins deteriorated. This accompanied the granting of indulgences for sins.

Indulgences were based upon the understanding that the church was one with departed as well as living members. Saints were those who had more than the required number of good works. Their surplus of good deeds could be applied to sinners, both departed and living. Their surplus provided a "treasury of merits" that others, through the church's granting of "indulgences," could draw upon. The doctrine of the "treasury of merits" was taught by Alexander of Hales (1186-1245), a Franciscan theologian teaching at the University of Paris. The treasury of merits was defended and expounded by Thomas Aquinas, who taught that the indulgences did not annul the penalty, but provided the means of paying the penalty.

As a result, the selling of penance became a lucrative trade in late medieval times. People no longer dreaded sin. There was little spirit of true repentance, and corruption even among the orders was irresistible. It seemed, as William Langland described in *Piers Plowman* in the late 1300s, "God's love has turned trader." There was rising indignation regarding such abuses in church.

Quoted in McNeill, A History of the Cure of Souls*, 150.*

Some restrictions were placed on monks in the fourteenth century regarding their hearing confessions. The presupposition was that the priests alone exercised the keys by which souls were bound or loosed spiritually. The priest, this reasoning went, held a truly authoritative role over souls.

During the fourteenth century, priests were forced to deal with overwhelming death. Peaking from 1348 to 1358, an epidemic Black Death descended over Europe, killing one-half of the population. The churches as well as towns were decimated. Chaos ensued, with roving bands attacking monasteries and convents. Some monks left the monasteries to wander throughout Europe as flagellants.

Thomas Bokenkotter, A Concise History of the Catholic Church, *rev. ed. (New York: Image, 1979), 190.*

One of the most helpful books for pastors as they dealt with grief was *The Art of Dying* by Jean Gerson (d. 1429). The book advised friends not to encourage the dying falsely. It included prayers to be offered to God, Mary, guardian angels, and saints. The dying one was to be given Eucharist and read stories of faith. An image of the Cross was to be held over the deathbed, which was considered the final "battlefield" for the soul of the dying. It was the place where evil spirits battled with good for the person's soul.

Another book, written by John Merk about 1440, *Instructions for Parish Priests,* offered admonitions on the duties of parenthood, behavior in church, witchcraft, and sloth. The book, for instance, instructed midwives to baptize stillborn babies.

John T. McNeill, A History of the Cure of Souls, *chapter 7.*

Allow for response.

How is pastoral care different now than in the Middle Ages?

How is it the same?

Medieval Worship and Church Music

Refer to Resource 12-2 in the Student Guide.

By the Late Middle Ages Christian worship and music had taken a distinct form throughout much of Europe. Christians began regular worship on Sunday from the days of the primitive church, but until the time of Constantine, had to do so in the early morning or late evening. After the fourth century, Sunday typically was observed as a public holiday or "holy day."

The Lord's Supper, or Eucharist, was the center of Christian worship. The service was also known as the *dominicum,* meaning "the Lord's." It became known as the "mass" based on the last words of the Latin service, *ite, missa est,* meaning, "go, it is the dismissal." In the sense that the mass reenacted the death and resurrection of Jesus, it provided a kind of religious drama for the laity. It had two parts: the liturgy of the Word and the Eucharist "feast." The ministry of the Word was the preparation for receiving the elements.

Prayer normally consisted of praise, thanksgiving, and confession. There were three types of prayers. In "litany" prayers the priest invited the congregation to pray for various, specified needs. In the Eastern Church a deacon enumerated the prayer's petitions. The Eastern Church retained litany prayers, while the West eventually discarded them. The second type of prayer was the "collect" or collective prayer, which was prayed as the officiating minister or presider over the

worship invited the faithful to pray with him. The congregation often stood with their arms raised and hands extended. The third type of prayer was the reciting or chanting of the Psalms. The Psalms were chanted by the clergy, with the congregation repeating the last words of the chant. Contemplation and meditation were also parts of prayer.

The churches conducted prayer times at least twice a day: the morning prayers, which became known as "lauds," and the evening prayers, or "mattins." The "lauds"—taken from the concept of praise—included prayers from Psalms 148-150. The "mattins" consisted of prayers from Psalm 95, a hymn, other psalms and readings from the Bible, the church Fathers and lives of saints, and the *te deum,* an ancient Latin hymn to the Father and the Son. It began, "We praise thee, O God."

See Sing to the Lord, *40, 719.*

Monasteries conducted prayers throughout the day:

- before daybreak
- at dawn
- *prime* at the first hour—6 a.m.
- *terce* at the third hour—9 a.m.
- *sext* at the sixth hour—12 noon
- *none* at the ninth hour—3 p.m.
- *vespers* at evening time—about 6 p.m.
- *compline* at the completion of the day

The prayer services were so linked to the Psalms that all 150 psalms were read or chanted in a week.

Refer to Resource 12-3 in the Student Guide.

The rite of baptism gained a more precise definition and usage in the Western Church in the Late Middle Ages. Before baptism, converts and catechumens learned basic Christian beliefs and ethics. Those preparing for baptism were considered part of the Christian community.

Baptisms usually were held at Easter. Sometime in the fourth century, Holy Week, climaxing in Easter, became widely observed by all Christians. The marking of Christ's death became separated from celebration of His resurrection. The date for the celebration of Easter was based on Jewish observance of the Passover, in relation to the lunar calendar—rather than on a fixed day, as Christmas. This was set by the Nicene Council in 325, but various sectors of the church, particularly in Northern Africa and Ireland, continued to use different dates.

Candidates for baptism were to prepare themselves in advance of Easter. They were to prove their moral

fitness for baptism during this time. It required fasting, prayer, and the memorization of the creeds. One meatless meal a day was required. Originally, the period was for 36 days. Even those who already had been baptized began observing the disciplines of preparation for Easter. The number of days was extended to 40 days in the time of Charlemagne.

The *quadragesima* or "Lenten" preparation—the term "lent" coming from the old English word for springtime—was initiated by "Ash Wednesday." Each day between Ash Wednesday and Easter had its own special mass. In England and Ireland, the Nicene date for Easter was accepted at the Synod of Whitby in 664. The Eastern Church has a different system of determining the date of Easter observance than the West.

During Holy Week, the candidates for baptism received specific instruction. "Scrutinies" right before baptism called upon the candidates for baptism to prostrate themselves in prayer. The minister then laid hands upon the candidates in the form of an exorcism. Then the baptismal candidates were anointed with oil. This ritual prepared them to bind themselves to Christ. Finally, commonly on Easter day, the candidate was baptized.

Normally, a priest took water from a font or basin and poured the water over the heads of the persons being baptized. After the newly baptized ones put on new garments, they were taken to a *consignatorium*, a room in the church where a priest then anointed them with oil, making the sign of the cross with his thumb on the forehead of each. This "second work of grace" was the "confirmation" of the baptized, and this was thought to be the time of their receiving the Holy Spirit. Only after baptism and confirmation were they able to partake of communion.

The high point of Easter observance in the Middle Ages was the midnight mass or Paschal Vigil Service preceding Easter Sunday. At first, this service both commemorated the death and celebrated the resurrection of Jesus, but after the fourth century, the church commemorated the death on Good Friday, and the Resurrection at the midnight mass preceding Easter day.

Refer to Resource 12-4 in the Student Guide.

Pentecost Sunday was celebrated 40 days after Easter and became one of the most commemorated feasts in the church's year. After Easter, it became a secondary date for baptisms. In fact it was called "Whitsunday"

for the white robes the candidates for baptism wore on that Sunday.

In 1334, the Sunday following Pentecost Sunday was established as "Trinity Sunday." It celebrated God in three persons.

Celebrations of the birth of Jesus probably began in the fourth century. The Eastern and Western traditions had different dates. The Western churches by 336 had decided upon December 25 as the date of Christmas, which probably corresponded to a pagan feast day to the "sun of righteousness."

Just like Easter, Christmas acquired a preparatory period, known in this case as Advent—taken from the Latin *adventus,* meaning coming. In the Western church, Advent began on the Sunday nearest November 30, which was Saint Andrew's Day. Advent began the liturgical year of the church.

Like Lent, the season of Advent became one of penitence and sacrifice, in this case in preparation for the coming of Christ. By the fifth century the Eastern churches celebrated the Nativity on January 6. The West celebrated this date as the Epiphany or "manifestation." January 6 became associated with the baptism of Christ, the visit of the magi, and through them, the annunciation of the gospel to the Gentiles, and the miracle of Cana.

With the development of the church calendar around the Lenten and Advent seasons, different colors for the priests' robes represented different time in the church year. The priests wore purple robes during periods of fasting—during the Lenten and Advent seasons. They wore white robes for the major celebrations of Easter, Christmas, Ascension Day, and some saints' days. Green robes were worn at other times in the church's calendar. Priests used red robes to mark both the martyrs'/saints' days and Pentecost Sunday.

An Eleventh-Century Mass Was Typically Composed of:

Refer to Resource 12-5 in the Student Guide.

The Liturgy of the Word

- *Introit:* antiphonally sung—that is, with a response from either half of the choir or the congregation—psalm-verse and repeat of the antiphon sung by the choir as the priest and the ministers proceed to the altar.

- *Kyrie:* a threefold repetition of "Lord, have mercy" and "Christ, have mercy" that everyone sings.
- *Prayers:* prayers of confession and forgiveness offered by the priest.
- *Gloria:* a free-composition song of thanks and praise, based on Luke 2:14.
- *Versicle and response:* "The Lord be with you," the priest says, and the congregation responds, "And also with you."
- *Collects:* chanted or "cantillated" prayers for the day.
- *Epistle:* chanted New Testament reading.
- *Gradual:* antiphon, psalm-verse, antiphon, a highly elaborated music for the choir.
- *Alleluia:* "alleluia," psalm-verse, "alleluia" for the choir.
- *Sequence:* free composition for the choir.
- *Gospel:* chanted, the worship service book is carried to the place of the cross.
- *Credo:* a statement of faith for all to say or sing.

Eucharistic Feast

- *Offertorium:* antiphon, for the choir.
- *Prayers:* including "Lift up your hearts," and the proper Preface for the day, in preparation for communion.
- *Sanctus and benedictus:* the *sanctus* begins, "Holy, holy, holy," and the *benedictus* is a prayer of thanksgiving (Luke 1:68-79) sung by everyone, with the *sanctus* repeated after the *benedictus*.
- *The canon of the mass:* the consecration of the bread and the wine.
- *Paternoster—"Our Father":* the Lord's Prayer, recited by the priest.
- *Agnus Dei*—"Lamb of God": free composition sung in three parts, each part beginning, "lamb of God," sung by everyone.
- *The communion antiphon:* for the choir.
- *Communion*
- *Versicle and response:* a short sentence taken usually from the Psalms, said or sung antiphonally.
- *Postcommunion:* chanted.
- *Ite, missa est:* a short sentence of dismissal, to which everyone responds *deo gratias*—thanks be to God.

From Andrew Wilson-Dickson, The Story of Christian Music: From Gregorian Chant to Black Gospel *(Hong Kong: Lion, 1992)*, *41.*

Refer to Resource 12-6 in the Student Guide.

Christian music was largely monophonic, meaning it was written for a single voice, even if sung by a choir. Verses were taken directly from the Psalms. Notated music began only in the tenth century. Gregorian chants, already being sung for centuries, were finally written down. Chanting or "cantillation" was little more

than a heightened speech, and accompanied some monastic prayer times. “Antiphon” was the choral “answer” or response of either the congregation or a part of the congregation to a stanza. Psalm 136, “his love endures forever,” set the pattern for this.

“Plainchant” was composed of Latin verses sung in free rhythms, rather than rhymed or metered. Eventually, spiritual leaders began rewriting scriptures in the form of verses set to music. One of the first to do so was Caedmon, a laborer at the monastery at Whitby in the seventh century. Both Abelard and Bernard contributed hymns to Christian liturgy.

One chant had the cantor (lead singer) begin: *Into thy hands, O Lord.*
The choir responded: *I commend my spirit.*
The cantor continued: *For thou hast redeemed us, O Lord, thou God of truth.*
The choir responded again: *I commend my spirit.*
The cantor: *Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.*
And the choir finished: *Into thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit.*

In the twelfth century, the church began to sing “polyphonously,” with two-, three-, and even four-part harmonies. Melodies improved. Secular music influenced the church. Chords were added. As preaching developed under the new monastic orders in the thirteenth century, so did the free composition of songs. As the Franciscans emphasized the continuity of God and nature, they reflected their theology in songs.

Refer to Resource 12-7 in the Student Guide.

Sing the songs in praise and worship.

Many hymnals contain some of the very early hymns. Let us add our voices to those of yesterday.

Lecture / Discussion: The Struggle within the Church

(15 minutes)

Refer to Resource 12-8 in the Student Guide.

The successful assertion of churchly authority over the state came at a price. Spiritual concerns no longer seemed central to the ministry and purpose of the Papacy.

Pope Boniface VIII, who served from 1294 to 1303, struggled with the French monarch, Philip the Fair, over the taxation of clergy without papal consent. Boniface defended his authority over all persons, while Philip attempted to bring the pope himself to trial. As

Boniface attempted to excommunicate Philip, he was taken prisoner by Philip. Though quickly released, Boniface died soon thereafter.

The election of Bertrand de Got by the College of Cardinals in 1305 began a 72-year period in church history called the “Babylonian Captivity” of the Papacy. Bertrand, who took the name Clement V, was from a wealthy French family, and upon becoming pope, declared his preference to stay close to his home in Avignon rather than to preside in Rome.

Though the king of Naples ruled Avignon, on political matters Clement sided with the French. With the papal seat in Avignon, the French saw themselves as in control of the Papacy, and in general, the states exerted a powerful influence over the pope. Clement was persuaded by King Edward I of England to condemn an objectionable archbishop of Canterbury. Though Clement asserted the right of the Papacy over the monarchs to appoint ecclesiastical offices, he stooped to the sale of these same ecclesiastical offices. Five of his family members were promoted to cardinals.

The removal of the Papacy from Rome caused resentment in Germany and in Rome. Italian sees declined to send revenues to Avignon. Many resented Clement’s extravagant use of power and money—though partly for the founding of universities at Orleans and Perugia and chairs of oriental languages in other schools to aid missionary work—which depleted the hoarded resources of both. The papal states, meanwhile, were engulfed in war.

Following Clement, who died in 1314, five successive popes, all of French origin, chose to reside in Avignon rather than Rome. Following Clement’s lead, they enjoyed the splendor, luxury, and pomp of the papal office. They built a massive palace and gathered an impressive court around themselves that included great artists and scholars. They strengthened their control over church appointments and raised taxes and fees on bishops, abbots, and pastors.

Bokenkotter, A Concise History of the Catholic Church, *190-91.*

The Avignon papacy was not well accepted. Papal tax collectors were hated and persecuted. It brought to attention the issue of how church money was being used. The Papacy stood on the edge of bankruptcy, and because of this the Avignon popes sought other ways to generate revenue.

Fees and taxes were asked for any privileges from the church. There was also a practice that whenever a bishop was appointed, a so-called annate, his first year's income, should go to the pope. In order to increase this source of revenue, the pope often transferred bishops. Sometimes he delayed the appointment of a bishop in order to receive all of the income from the see himself.

Another scheme was the granting of indulgences, which were dispensed to raise money for various large and small projects, from building bridges to waging war. Extravagant claims for the spiritual benefits of indulgences mounted with each generation. When the pope did not have his way, he could threaten excommunication. Hostility and antagonism were felt against the pope.

The great malaise in the church was compounded by the papal seat being in Avignon. But the same problems continued when the Papacy was finally transferred back to Rome. Pope Gregory XI reentered Rome in 1377, but died within a year. When Pope Urban VI was elected he took his seat in Rome, but partly because of his dictatorial leadership and partly because of jealousies with the French, the Papacy divided. The French cardinals chose their own pope, Clement VII. He was followed by Benedict XIII. Until 1408 there were two claimants to the papal seat, one in Rome and one in Avignon. The prestige of the Papacy was at its lowest ebb.

List and discuss the reasons why the location for the Papacy would have been a disadvantage or an advantage.

Lecture / Discussion: Theology, Devotion, and Reform

(25 minutes0

Refer to Resource 12-9 in the Student Guide.

Late Medieval Theology

Scholasticism in this period was divided between the *via antiqua* and the *via moderna*. The *via antiqua* was characterized by the Thomist optimism that reason and knowledge were necessary and important for the construction of theology. The *via antiqua* stressed the study of the Bible and other theological resources. For those embracing the *via moderna,* faith alone was necessary for the comprehension of theological truths. William of Ockham championed this latter position and ultimately it influenced Martin Luther.

The most significant late medieval theologian was John Duns Scotus (1265-1308), a Franciscan scholar. After studying at Paris, he taught at Cambridge, Oxford, Paris, and Cologne. His principal theological work was his commentary on the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard. He combined elements of Aristotelianism with traditional Augustinianism.

Whatever is, is intelligible, Duns Scotus argued. Only nonbeing is unintelligible. He offered metaphysical and basically ontological proofs for the existence of God. There were characteristics of being, such as “one,” “true,” “good,” and “beautiful” that are universally applied to human beings’ understanding of God. Some qualities, such as “infinite” and “uncreated,” are comprehended only by considering their converse, “finite” and “created.”

Since human beings have an innate notion of these, there must be an existence given to the former. Like Thomas Aquinas, Duns Scotus started his logic with the concrete and contingent, and worked from there to postulate the existence of God. Unlike Thomas, who gave reason primacy in his theology, Duns Scotus postulated the primacy of will over reason in God, though in God alone the two could not be separated.

Christ, Duns Scotus said, was incarnated in order to become the primary object of divine love. Duns Scotus endangered the unity of Christ by arguing for two essences in Christ, the divine and the human. Redemption was both an act of love and an act of satisfaction. He believed salvation was due not so much to some rational necessity in God’s order, but simply because God willed it. Duns Scotus advocated the immaculate conception of Mary.

Regarding human nature, Duns Scotus believed human perfection was not to be seen in reason but in the will. He also argued that the immortality of the soul was beyond rational proof; it was a statement of faith.

Duns Scotus contributed to the divorce of reason and faith—a marriage built up by Thomas Aquinas. God was not subject to human rationality. Doctrines, said Duns Scotus, were to be accepted on the basis of faith alone, not reason. Thus, no reasons were needed to substantiate church practices. No questions need be asked; that would be a sign of unbelief.

William of Ockham (1285-1347), a Franciscan who taught at Oxford, was the chief architect of nominalism. Medieval nominalism or “conceptualism”

understood that universal concepts were adequate representations of reality—but that universals were found only in human minds. Every substance or instance is independent. Human beings intuit or sense similarities among observed things. Knowledge of God, however, is intuited and cannot be determined by reason or sense, but only on the basis of revelation and authority. Like Duns Scotus, William facilitated the decline of the synthesis between reason and faith.

William believed papal authority should be strictly limited to the church or sacred realm, and that the state should take precedence over the church in public affairs. For these views, William was charged with heresy and summoned before the pope at Avignon in 1323. He continued to compose his philosophy while detained at Avignon for several years. Though William was cleared of the charges, he accused the pope himself of heresy.

In 1328 William fled Avignon, and was excommunicated. He found protection under Louis of Bavaria. In 1331 William was expelled from the Franciscan order and sentenced to imprisonment, but he continued to champion the rights of secular rulers and to criticize the Papacy.

Mysticism

Refer to Resource 12-10 in the Student Guide.

John Eckhart (1260-1327) was a German Dominican scholar educated at Paris. After serving his order in the provinces, he returned to Paris for two years as a teacher. In 1313 he entered a life of preaching, first at Strassburg and then in Cologne, where he also became the spiritual director of his order's house of studies.

The theme of unity or oneness runs throughout Eckhart's thought. God's oneness is His most basic attribute. God is eternally creating, but creation must itself be considered eternal. His mysticism ran counter to scholasticism, since it downplayed the importance of reason. But it tended toward Neoplatonism.

This oneness included the relationship between God and human beings. By becoming free of all things, including oneself, one becomes like God. Human beings are nothing apart from the existence of God, who works through all things. A person may know the Truth by becoming one with it. Eckhart identified the "likeness" of human beings to God with their intellect.

Eckhart also spoke of the "birth" of the Son of God in the soul as being a kind of "breakthrough" of the

individual by which the immediacy of God is realized. Through this birth, human beings are able to live a "detached" life.

A "detached" person lives ethically within the world, not really being a part of it. Eckhart wrote:

> People should not worry so much about what they do but rather about what they are. If they and their ways are good, then their deeds are radiant. If you are righteous, then what you do will also be righteous. We should not think that holiness is based on what we do but rather on what we are, for it is not our works which sanctify us but we who sanctify our works. However holy our works may be, they do not in any way make us holy in so far as they are works, but it is we, in so far as we are holy and possess fullness of being, who sanctify all our works, whether these be eating, sleeping, waking or anything at all.

Meister Eckhart: Selected Writings, *ed. Oliver Davies (London: Penguin, 1994), 7.*

By 1326 Eckhart, like William of Ockham at the same time, was accused of heresy. Eckhart died prior to a trial scheduled before the pope. It seemed to his accusers that Eckhart had taken up the same heresies the Dominicans had been founded to counteract—a mystical religion void of ethical content. However, Eckhart's words were often taken out of context. His accusers did not appreciate the balance between law and the mystical presence of God that Eckhart attempted to maintain.

Alois Maria Haas, "Schools of Late Medieval Mysticism," in Christian Spirituality: High Middle Ages and Reformation, *ed. Jill Raitt. New York: Crossroad, 1988, 145-50; Davies,* Meister Eckhart, *xi-xxxviii.*

Thomas à Kempis and *The Imitation of Christ*

Refer to Resource 12-11 in the Student Guide.

In the late fourteenth century, laypersons in the Rhineland organized the Brethren of the Common Life. The founder was Gerhard de Groote (1340-84), educated in Paris, and a sometime teacher at Cologne. In 1374 he committed himself to devout and simple living. He entered a monastery, and after three years, became a missionary preacher—though never ordained—in Utrecht. He loudly condemned the worldliness of the church, and for that was censured.

De Groote gathered a few followers as equally committed as he to a radically Christian way of life. They dedicated themselves to joyfulness, manual labor, and a cultivation of the inner life. Their spiritual formation included study and meditation, mutual confession of sins, and the conscious attempt to imitate Christ both inwardly and outwardly.

Soon after the death of de Groote, some of the brethren reordered the community on the pattern of the Augustinian *Rule*. The brethren founded schools in the Netherlands and Germany. They copied and later printed many books for these schools. The brethren were condemned by the church for undercutting sacramentalism for suggesting there could be direct communion with God apart from the church order.

Thomas à Kempis (1380-1471) was a member of the Brethren of the Common Life. He represented a kind of devotional life that was Christocentric, holding up Jesus as the example. Thomas used Scripture to enable meditation upon Christ. As Leo Sherley-Price summarizes, the characteristics of Jesus that Thomas lifted up were: "his perfect humility, poverty of spirit, purity of heart, meekness, sorrow for sin, forgiveness of injustice, and peace and joy in the midst of persecution."

"Introduction," The Imitation of Christ *(Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1952), 12.*

That is, the imitation of Christ possessed both outward obedience and an inward attitude. "This life consists in the practice of the Christian virtues; the practice of the Christian virtues leads up to union with Christ; and union with Christ is consummated in the Holy Eucharist." This provides the outline of his widely influential book, *The Imitation of Christ*.

Bro. Azarias, quoted by Sherley-Price, "Introduction," 14.

Thomas was more concerned with doing whatever would take him to inward union with Christ than with theologizing. Partaking of Christ's virtues, Thomas taught, comes via outward discipline, as it does in asceticism through purgation and self-denial. One does not need deep insight into the mysteries of God in order to experience Him. But the person does require faith and an untainted life. Human beings are nothing morally, but by meditation God may come into our presence; we may enjoy fellowship with God. The person lives with temptations as long as he or she lives, since sin comes from within. But we are enabled not to act on our every impulse. Where there is love within, God sanctifies the entirety of life.

Not only was Thomas's mysticism Christocentric, but it was both personal and communal. It was centered around the passion and death of Christ, the Lord's Supper. The *Imitation of Christ* was written for laypersons who desired to enter a monastic-like order of communal life together. Thomas gave directions to novices, and advice to those already committed. Just as with monasticism, the way into the holiness of God was through movement away from the world. The *Imitation of Christ* can be used devotionally in various ways.

Prayers and responsive readings, for instance, can be gleaned from the work:

Refer to Resource 12-12 in the Student Guide.

Have the class read this responsively.

The Imitation of Christ, *book 2, chapter 11.*

All: Jesus has many lovers of his kingdom, but he has few bearers of his cross.
People: But those who love Jesus purely for himself, and not for their own profit convenience . . .
Leader: Bless him as heartily in temptation and tribulation and in all other adversities as they do in time of consolation.
People: If a man gives all his possessions for God . . .
Leader: He yet is nothing.
People: And if he does great penance for his sins, and if he has great wisdom and knowledge . . .
Leader: He yet is far from virtue.
People: The words of our Savior are very hard and grievous when he says:
Leader: Forsake yourselves, take the cross and follow me.
People: Why, then, do we dread to take His cross, since it is the very way to the Kingdom of Heaven, and there is no other way?
Leader: Take, therefore, your cross and follow Jesus, and you shall have life eternal. Behold then, how in the cross all things stand;
People: And how, in dying to the world lies all our health.
Leader: And that there is no other way to life and true inward peace but the way of the cross.
People: And the way of daily submission of the body to the spirit. If we arrange everything after our own will . . .
Leader: Yet you will find that you must suffer.
People: Either according to our will or against it.
Leader: And so you will always find the cross.
People: This cross is always ready.
Leader: And everywhere it awaits you.
People: And we cannot flee it nor fully escape it.
Leader: Wherever you go.
People: If we gladly bear this cross . . .
Leader: It will bear you.
People: If there had been any nearer or better way than to suffer . . .
Leader: But because there was not, he openly exhorted his disciples who follow him,
People: And all we desire to follow him.
Leader: To forsake their own will.
People: And to take the cross.
Leader: And so, when all things are searched and read this is the final conclusion:
All: By many tribulations we enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, and may our Lord Jesus bring us there. Amen.

The tendency in Thomas, and in mysticism in general, was to emphasize less the needs of society and the world, and even the church. Mysticism accepted the perpetuity of sin and grace in human beings, but taught that human beings could transcend sin by constant prayer and disciplined, ascetic living. There was a transcendent meaning and purpose, something beyond calling men and women out of themselves, a place of blessed fellowship with their Lord.

Gabriel Biel (1420-95), a member of the Brethren of the Common Life, followed William of Ockham in emphasizing that faith alone was necessary for the comprehension of theological truths.

Attempts at Reform

The Avignon "Babylonian Captivity" severely weakened the Papacy, which was accumulating wealth and beauty at others' expense. The pope's affairs were the same as any earthly prince. He was a devoted patron of the arts.

Refer to Resource 12-13 in the Student Guide.

Many sought far-reaching reform. Among them, John Wycliffe (1328-84) was an Augustinian scholar in the Neoplatonist tradition. He taught at Oxford from 1361. On the matter of universals, Wycliffe was a realist rather than a nominalist. He believed God's will was in perfect accord with reason, since reason and revelation cannot contradict.

Wycliffe abhorred the disorder and corruption of the church and attacked the luxury and venality of the popes. Life and behavior, not vocation, marked the elect, he taught. Hence, even the pope might be reprobate. Ecclesiastical dominion lost authority whenever it ceased to be just. In essence, Wycliffe denied the authority of the pope.

Wycliffe affirmed that the Bible must be taken as the sole law of the church and that it must be translated in a language easily understood by the people. Wycliffe himself, without the encouragement of his church superiors, undertook the translation of the Vulgate or Latin Bible into English.

Through a direct reading of the Bible, Wycliffe was able to demonstrate vast differences between the apostolic church and the church of his own day. He believed the church had no right to withhold grace from anyone, for instance. He attacked various abuses in the church, including monasticism, and the cults to the saints, with pilgrimages to their shrines and their supposed sacred

relics. Wycliffe attacked the sale of indulgences. He preached a religion of personal faith and piety, and the universal priesthood of all believers standing in a direct relationship with God.

Not surprisingly, in 1377 the pope condemned Wycliffe. The archbishop prohibited Wycliffe from preaching, but Wycliffe was protected by the state from worse censure. Though he lost some supporters when he publicly disagreed with the doctrine of transubstantiation, Wycliffe only increased his attacks on the abuses and even the necessity of the priesthood. He sent out his own preachers, who preached wherever they found a hearing—on roads, village greens, and churchyards. His itinerant preachers won many converts.

As a nationalist, Wycliffe's view that the government should assume control over church property appealed to the people. They were stirred by Wycliffe's indictments of the church. Partly in response, the English peasants revolted in 1381.

Wycliffe spent the last years of his life as a parish priest. After Wycliffe's death his followers, known as Lollards, hiding from the church's hierarchy, continued many of his teachings.

Refer to Resource 12-14 in the Student Guide.

Influenced directly by Wycliffe's writings, John Hus (1373–1415) became a symbol of anti-German, nationalist sentiment in Bohemia. As a priest in Prague, Hus began preaching directly from the Bible. He believed it was wrong for the church to establish any doctrine contrary to the Bible. Its authority, Hus became convinced, was greater than either popes or councils.

Though he agreed with Wycliffe's indictments of the church, Hus retained the transubstantiation doctrine of the Lord's Supper. But he called for the church to distribute both the wine and the bread—rather than only the bread—to communicants. For this reason, his followers became known as "utraquists," wanting "each," communion of both kinds. Like Wycliffe, Hus condemned the low morals of priests and corruption within the church. He saw the sale of indulgences as one example of such corruption.

Hus's teachings were drawn together at Prague in 1421 in a series of Articles. The Articles advocated the free preaching of the Word of God, communion of both wine and bread to the laity, the confiscation of church property, and secular punishment for clergy living in

mortal sin. Hus's followers included influential townspeople. His more radical disciples, called Taborites, created the *Unitas Fratrum* or New Unity of the Brotherhood, which directly challenged the authority of the church.

Hus became especially incensed when the pope promised remission of sins for any who would join forces against the king of Naples, who had invaded papal states in a political dispute. Because of his opposition, the pope disallowed Hus from preaching at his church. Hus refused to obey. He said God, not the pope, had called him to preach. Though Hus was excommunicated, many of his parishioners supported him, and in the midst of the dispute with the pope, he was elected to a prestigious university position.

Meanwhile, reform sentiment sought the strengthening of the councils. The nominalists' understanding that the church was not to be found in some eternal idea, or in a hierarchy, but in the believers themselves joined as a body, strengthened this movement. Some believed such councils had an authority that superseded that of the pope. The pope, said those who promoted councils, was the church's only chief administrator. He and the church's leaders were instruments of and servants to the will of the church.

Leading scholars called for a great council that would restore unity to the fragmenting church. This concept was reinforced during the Avignon captivity of the Papacy, when cardinals could not decide on the true leader of the church.

Emperor Sigismund called for a council, which met at Constance 1414-18. The council issued two important decrees. The first was that general councils had authority directly from Christ, so the whole church was bound to their decisions. The second decree was that councils must meet regularly.

The Council of Constance also summoned Hus to defend his teachings. Though he had been promised safe passage, Hus found himself immediately imprisoned. The council condemned Hus's teachings and ordered him put to death unless he recanted his views. Hus refused to recant, recalling that he had never preached or written anything contrary to the Bible or the faith of the church. Hus was burned at the stake.

Another council met in Basel over a period of years, 1431-49. In the midst of this council, the French clergy

met at Bourges in 1438 to issue the "Pragmatic Sanction of Bourges," which affirmed the power of the councils, stated the right of the French church to elect its own clergy without papal interference, prohibited the payment of taxes to the pope, and limited the number of appeals French courts could make to the Roman Curia. Similarly, the Concordat of Vienna in 1448 reaffirmed the right of the emperor to nominate all clergy to important church posts.

Nonetheless, conciliarism, for all its potential as a movement of true reform in the church, failed. One of the reasons was that the pope moved behind the scenes to undermine their decisions. The pope continued to administer papal lands. Secular rulers were willing to compromise with the pope on religious issues if he aided them politically. Pope Pius II directly condemned conciliarism in an edict in 1460.

Girolamo Savonarola (1452–98), a Dominican, was a Thomist, Joachimist, and Italian reformer. He became a preacher to the rich and powerful de Medici family in Florence, which lay at the heart of the Italian Renaissance. The pope had become the leading patron of the arts. While preaching, Savonarola claimed to receive prophecies, which included the collapse of Medici rule over the city.

Popular with the people, Savonarola was responsible for political reforms initiated in 1495. At a carnival in 1497 he went so far as to burn articles that represented ostentatious wealth, such as wigs, playing cards, immodest books, pagan art, and trinkets. The upper classes were incensed. Papal commissioners declared him a heretic, the lord of the city accused him of treason, and the pope excommunicated him in 1497. He was condemned and hanged, and his body burned in Florence.

But the church could not forever stifle voices that protested its authority and corruption, and who called for reform.

Small Groups: Devotionalism in the Late Middle Ages

(25 minutes)

Divide the class into groups of three.

Refer to Resource 12-15 in the Student Guide.

Compare and contrast the devotionalism of the Late Middle Ages to:

- Earlier religious life
- Contemporary evangelism

While the students are working in small groups, check each student's journal. Assure them that you are not checking the specific entries but are checking for faithfulness of completing the assignment.

Allow time for the groups to report.

Lesson Close

(5 minutes)

Review

What areas of contemporary church life are deeply affected by decisions made during the Middle Ages?

Look Ahead

This completes the module on *Examining Our Christian Heritage 1*. There is more to investigate in *Examining Our Christian Heritage 2.* There will be a continuation of the history of Christianity, moving into the Reformation and studying church leaders who framed our present denominations and doctrines.

Assign Homework

Direct students to the Homework Assignments in the Student Guide.

Prepare to continue the study of the History of Christianity by reading about the Reformation, Luther, John Calvin, the Wesleys, and the Holiness Movement.

Write in your journal. Reflect on and respond to the following:

AUGUSTINE'S CONFESSIONS, READING 12

BOOK NINE
The end of the autobiography. He is baptized.

BOOK TEN
From autobiography to self-analysis. In conclusion, he undertakes a detailed analysis of appetite and the temptations to which the flesh and the soul are heirs, and comes finally to see how necessary and right it was for the Mediator between God and humanity to have been the God-Human.

CHAPTER XXXVII
60. By these temptations we are daily tried, O Lord; we are tried unceasingly. Our daily "furnace" is the human tongue. And also in this respect you command us to be continent. Give what you command and command what you wilt. In this matter, you know the groans of my heart and the rivers of my eyes, for I am

not able to know for certain how far I am clean of this plague; and I stand in great fear of my “secret faults,” which your eyes perceive, though mine do not. For in respect of the pleasures of my flesh and of idle curiosity, I see how far I have been able to hold my mind in check when I abstain from them either by voluntary act of the will or because they simply are not at hand; for then I can inquire of myself how much more or less frustrating it is to me not to have them. This is also true about riches, which are sought for in order that they may minister to one of these three “lusts,” or two, or the whole complex of them. The mind is able to see clearly if, when it has them, it despises them so that they may be cast aside and it may prove itself. But if we desire to test our power of doing without praise, must we then live wickedly or lead a life so atrocious and abandoned that everyone who knows us will detest us? What greater madness than this can be either said or conceived? And yet if praise, both by custom and right, is the companion of a good life and of good works, we should as little forgo its companionship as the good life itself. But unless a thing is absent I do not know whether I should be contented or troubled at having to do without it.

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