

SYLLABUS

04HT502: History of Christianity I

Dr. Sean Michael Lucas
Chancellor's Professor of Church History

Office: Independent Presbyterian Church, 4738 Walnut Grove Rd, Memphis, TN 38117

Phone: (901) 685-8206

E-mail: slucas@rts.edu

Course description:

The general introduction to Christianity in the early and medieval periods focuses on Christian doctrines and great leaders from Justin Martyr to Martin Luther who made contributions of lasting significance to the Christian church.

Goals:

1. The student will be *introduced* to the history of the Christian church in its first fifteen centuries, particularly emphasizing the way certain beliefs and practices have shaped Christian identity.
2. Through the lectures, the student will be *exposed* to the cultural and political contexts of Christian thought and *develop* a greater critical appreciation for the Christian tradition.
3. Through the reading and discussions, the student will be *oriented* to key figures, beliefs, practices, and stories in the life of the Christian church and will *explore* how they relate to contemporary Christian life and ministry.
4. Through the final exam, the student will *reflect* on how Christian identity, as represented in the first fifteen centuries of the church, continues to have relevance for contemporary Christian life and ministry.

Required texts:

Justo Gonzalez, *The Story of Christianity, vol. 1: The Early Church to the Reformation, 2nd edition* (New York: HarperOne, 2010); ISBN: 978-0061855887

Hugh T. Kerr, *Readings in Christian Thought, 2nd edition* (Nashville: Abington, 1990); ISBN: 978-0687355471

Michael Reeves, *Theologians You Should Know: An Introduction from the Apostle Fathers to the 21st Century* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2016); ISBN: 978-1433550867

Thomas C. Oden, *How Africa Shaped the Christian Mind: Rediscovering the African Seedbed of Western Christianity* (Downers Grove: Intervarsity, 2008); ISBN: 978-0830837052

Requirements and Grading:

1. *Regular attendance and class participation* (10%). Because this is a week-long class, I strongly urge you not to miss a session. Participation is noted as the class progresses.
2. *Reading* (40%). The reading grade is broken into three parts:
 - a. 2 one-page reaction papers (each worth 5%).
 - b. 1 five-page response paper for *How Africa Shaped the Christian Mind* (10%)
 - c. Final reading summary (20%)

3. *Gonzalez tests* (30%). During the week, you will have two (2) examinations on the assigned Gonzalez readings
4. *Final exam* (20%). You will have a final exam that will be completed **by the final class due date, Friday, September 14, 2018**. I will give you more information on this on the first day of class.
5. *Grading scale (standard RTS scale)*:

97-100	A
94-96	A-
91-93	B+
88-90	B
86-87	B-
83-85	C+
80-82	C
78-79	C-
75-77	D+
72-74	D
70-71	D-
Below 70	F

As part of our purpose to train servants of the triune God to walk with God in all of life, we expect godly integrity in the academic work done at RTS. God's covenant with His people calls for honesty and a commitment to truth (as in the 9th commandment). As we live in that covenant and in community with one another, upholding truth is an essential duty. Specifically applied to academic labors, this means that we accurately represent our work to others. In other words, neither cheating nor plagiarism is tolerated.

Instructions on particular assignments:

1. *Reading*

- a. **Students must read Gonzalez in its entirety before class begins.** You will have two tests during the week on the content in Gonzalez (see syllabus for date and general time).
- b. You may want to follow the attached reading schedule in preparation for class, which correlates Gonzalez with Kerr and Reeves. The reading schedule provides the required readings for those three books.
- c. You will (obviously) need to read Oden in its entirety in order to write the paper (see below for instructions).
- d. With your final exam, you will turn in a reading report, which will estimate how much of the reading you completed. I will distribute a reading report to you sometime during the week and I will also provide an electronic version when I send you the final exam.
- e. If you do not turn in a completed reading report, you will receive no points for reading. **It is due on September 14, 2018; no late reports are accepted.**

2. *One-page reading reaction papers*

- a. There will be two separate reaction papers, in which you will answer a specific question on the reading. You will find the appropriate question listed in the syllabus.

- b. The reaction paper will be written with one-inch margins, double-spaced, 12 point Times Roman font.
- c. **The reaction papers will be due on Monday, July 30, 2018.** You will turn both papers in after the lunch period on that day; **no late papers will be accepted.**
- d. Please do not email your paper; it is your responsibility to get a hard-copy of the paper to the instructor.
- e. The grade is pass/fail; if you follow instructions completely (including form requirements stated in line b), you will receive the full amount of points (signified by a check mark). If you fail to follow instructions, then the instructor will determine how many points are appropriate.
- f. The two reaction paper topics are:
 - Read Kerr, 17-43: How does Justin Martyr present his apologetic? In particular, what role does “Reason” play for presenting the faith to others? Do you his is a good approach in gaining credibility for the Christian faith?
 - Read Kerr, 102-20: Assess Aquinas’ theology of sin and grace. Is it accurate to call him “Pelagian” (why or why not)? If this was the dominant theology on the eve of the Reformation, in what areas do you think the Reformers objected to Thomism?

3. *Five-page response paper to How African Shaped the Christian Mind.*

- In the first half-page, introduce your paper: mention who wrote the book, his background, his thesis, etc.
- In section one, answer the following question (2-3 pages): reread the seven ways Africa shaped the Christian mind (chap. 2); *which one or two “ways” seemed truly significant to you?* Think about significance in terms of the historical story you’ve considered to this point of the class as well as your own experience of the Christian tradition.
- In section two, answer the following question (2-3 pages): *how did Oden’s book inform, instruct, correct, or challenge your understanding of the development of the Christian tradition?*
 - a. The response will be written with one inch margins, double-spaced, 12 point Times Roman font. Please write in complete sentences, paragraphs, etc.
 - b. **The response will be due by the final due date for all materials for this class, Friday, September 14, 2018.**

**SCHEDULE OF ASSIGNMENTS
AND PROBABLE LECTURE SCHEDULE**

Monday

Morning

- Syllabus overview
- Why bother with Church History?

Afternoon

- **Response papers due**
- The worship of the early church
- The expansion of the early church

Tuesday

Morning

- The beliefs of the church in the first five centuries, parts one and two

Afternoon

- **Gonzalez test #1 (pp. 1-260)**
- The beliefs of the church in the first five centuries, part three
- The twin realities of the Middle Ages

Wednesday*Morning*

- Evangelizing the Barbarians: St. Patrick
- The church's beliefs in the Middle Ages, part one

Afternoon

- The church's beliefs in the Middle Ages, part two

Thursday*Morning*

- **Gonzalez test #2 (pp. 269-490)**
- The Shape of Religious Life: Mission in the Medieval Church

Afternoon

- The Crusading Spirit: Mission in the Medieval Church

Friday*Morning*

- On the Eve of the Reformation, part one

Afternoon

- On the Eve of the Reformation, part two

Assigned readings and suggested schedule

Gonzalez	Kerr	Reeves
1-96	17-43	13-58
97-156	43-51, 74-77	
157-217	68-73	59-82
219-252	51-68	83-102
253-344		
345-386	82-100	103-124
	102-124	125-148
387-446		
447-490	100-102, 125-133	

Extension Policy

All assignments and exams are to be completed by the deadlines announced in this syllabus or in class.

Extensions for assignments and exams due within the normal duration of the course must be approved beforehand by the Professor. Extensions of two weeks or less beyond the date of the last deadline for the course must be approved beforehand by the Professor. A grade penalty may be assessed.

Extensions of greater than two weeks but not more than six weeks beyond the last deadline for the course may be granted in extenuating circumstances (i.e. illness, family emergency). For an extension of more than two weeks the student must request an Extension Request Form from the Registrar's Office. The request must be approved by the Professor and the Academic Dean. A grade penalty may be assessed. (RTS Catalog p. 42 and RTS Atlanta Student Handbook p. 14)

Any incompletes not cleared six weeks after the last published due date for course work will be converted to a failing grade. Professors may have the failing grade changed to a passing grade by request. (RTS Catalog p. 42)

REFORMED  THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
SYSTEM

**Course Objectives Related to MDiv Student Learning Outcomes
With Mini-Justification**

Course: History of Christianity I
 Professor: Dr. Sean Michael Lucas
 Campus: Atlanta
 Date: Summer 2018

<u>MDiv Student Learning Outcomes</u>		<u>Rubric</u> ➤ Strong ➤ Moderate ➤ Minimal ➤ None	<u>Mini-Justification</u>
Articulation (oral & written)	Broadly understands and articulates knowledge, both oral and written, of essential biblical, theological, historical, and cultural/global information, including details, concepts, and frameworks.	Strong	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Two short reflection papers based on primary sources One moderate length essay that requires interaction with multiple sources A case study-based exam that require integration of these themes
Scripture	Significant knowledge of the original meaning of Scripture. Also, the concepts for and skill to research further into the original meaning of Scripture and to apply Scripture to a variety of modern circumstances. (Includes appropriate use of original languages and hermeneutics; and integrates theological, historical, and cultural/global perspectives.)	Minimal	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Discusses use/misuse of Scripture by various theologians
Reformed Theology	Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.	Minimal	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Various theologies contrasted with confessional Reformed views of theological loci
Sanctification	Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student's sanctification.	None	
Desire for Worldview	Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God.	Moderate	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates biblical presuppositions for thinking historically, culturally about issue Emphasizes consequences of low view of doctrine for subsequent theology

Winsomely Reformed/ Evangelistic	Embraces a winsomely Reformed ethos. (Includes an appropriate ecumenical spirit with other Christians, especially Evangelicals; a concern to present the Gospel in a God-honoring manner to non-Christians; and a truth-in-love attitude in disagreements.)	Strong	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In lectures, model sympathetically critical engagement with other perspectives, especially liberal, Pentecostal, etc. 2. In writing assignments, emphasize the importance of winsome engagement of other positions with which one disagrees.
Preach	Ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm.	None	
Worship	Knowledgeable of historic and modern Christian-worship forms; and ability to construct and skill to lead a worship service.	Moderate	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide overview of worship practices in the ancient and medieval periods with reflection on contemporary development
Shepherd	Ability to shepherd the local congregation: aiding in spiritual maturity; promoting use of gifts and callings; and encouraging a concern for non-Christians, both in America and worldwide.	Strong	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In case study exams, repeatedly focus on integration and how material applies pastorally 2. With Oden reading, focus on effects of globalization, how impacts local church
Church/World	Ability to interact within a denominational context, within the broader worldwide church, and with significant public issues.	Moderate	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consider the development of Reformation/Presbyterian tradition from its roots in catholic Christianity; provide basis for meaningful ecumenical dialogue.