

COURSE: HP 236D/N-D Church History  
CREDIT: 3 Semester Hours  
SEMESTER: Spring 2027, Session 1  
TIME: Mondays and Fridays, 9:30 to 10:50 am  
INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Teddy D. Bitner  
Office: 816-425-6164; Cell: 816-914-5119; Email  
teddy.bitner@calvary.edu

## I. DESCRIPTION

A study of Christendom in the course of its development from apostolic times to the end of the church age. The most important persons, problems, decisions and developments are traced. (Prerequisites: EN100 or EN112)

*This course is offered in two formats: in-person and online. Students registered for in-person attend the classes in person, online students attend the classes via the online classroom. For both in-person and online students, assignments and interaction outside of the class period are done in the learning management system.*

## II. OBJECTIVES

A. The purpose of this course is to acquaint you with the critical aspects of the history of the Church and help you appreciate the value of studying history. Basic understanding of the following elements will be achieved:

1. Awareness of contributions of key individuals associated with church history. (PLO 1) (Assessments B, D, E)
2. Understanding of major events and movements contributing to church history and be able to assess those events and movements from a Biblical perspective. (PLO 1)
3. Grasp of critical issues driving events. (PLO 1) (Assessments B, C, D, E)
4. Acquire an understanding of the characteristics of the Christian experience. (PLO 1, 4) (Assessments A, B, D, E)
5. Gain an appreciation of the range of diverse primary sources, literature, and other media (local, national and international) to illustrate and explore citizenship in other times and places. (PLO 1) (Assessments A, B, D, E)

B. Specific competencies to be achieved. The student:

1. Knows history, how past and present interact, and key historical concepts, including time, chronology, cause and effect, change, conflict, and point of view. (PLO 1) (Assessments B, C, E)
2. Identifies major people, places, and events with their causes and consequences. (PLO 1, 4) (Assessments B, C, D, E)

3. Develops the ability to assess historical evidence in order to arrive at sound judgments relative to present and future issues. (PLO 1, 4) (Assessments A, B, D, E)
4. Develops the ability to determine the significance of facts, rather than simply memorize them, in order to prepare oneself for intellectual discussions. (PLO 1, 4) (Assessments B, C, D, E)
5. Understands how and why individuals (including historians) may hold and espouse different views about the past. (PLO 1, 4) (Assessments B, D, E)
6. Understands the linkages between human decisions and consequences, especially from a Biblical perspective. (PLO 1, 4) (Assessments B, C, D, E)
7. Understands current and historical examples of the interaction and interdependence of science, technology and society in a variety of cultural settings, especially from a Biblical perspective. (PLO 1, 4) (Assessments B, C, D, E)

### III. REQUIREMENTS (ASSESSMENTS)

- A. Reading. You will be expected to complete the assigned reading from Cairns and Shelley. As you read the assignments, pay attention to the general threads of history, and how specific individuals and events fit within the patterns of these movements. Also, you will be required to read Noll's *Turning Points: Decisive Moments in the History of Christianity*. You will be asked to verify the percent of the assigned reading from the Cairns and Shelley at the end of the course.
- B. Paper. Topic will be a review of an individual, event, or culture within the period and setting of the course. The paper should be no less than eight (8) pages and no more than twelve (12) pages of text (excluding the title page, etc.) **and is due not later than indicated in the schedule below.** The grade for the paper will be calculated based on the Calvary University evaluation sheet (enclosed). The paper should cite a minimum of three scholarly references using books or peer reviewed articles (including articles sourced from databases such as ProQuest). Internet references may also be used (but may not substitute for the three references required). Students who use the Clark Academic Center (CAC) to review a draft of their paper and provide a copy of the draft signed by a CAC tutor will receive a 5% bonus on the paper. All class papers must follow the Turabian style according to *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 9th edition.
- C. Tests. Two (2) tests will be given. The first exam will be conducted at approximately the fourth week, the second test will be the final examination. The exams will be posted on the course Canvas page, and you will be able to access and take the exams over a period of approximately one week. Tests will include true-false, multiple choice, matching, and fill-in questions. Extra credit questions will generally be essay.
- D. Book Report. You will read Mark Noll's *Turning Points: Decisive Moments in the History of Christianity* and write an eight page book report due as indicated in Canvas. The book report will be organized as follows:
  - a. Introduction

- b. Summary of the book (what did Noll cover in his book)
  - c. Major themes (what point[s] is Noll trying to make?) that you identified during your reading
  - d. Your assessment of Noll's themes (do you agree with him, why or why not)
  - e. Conclusion
- E. Lectures and Discussion Questions. You will watch the lecture (online students) and answer discussions questions normally associated with each course lecture. You will comment on at least one classmate's post. Discussion questions are normally due to be completed within one week of posting.

#### IV. METHODS

- A. Conduct of the class will include a combination of lecture, discussion and question / answer. Student interaction during the conduct of each class session is strongly encouraged.
- B. Grading and Attendance. Attendance accounts for 20% of your overall grade. I expect students to attend class regularly. My attendance policies are:

In class students: there are 16 class sessions in the cycle; each class session is worth 1.25% of your grade. I will deduct 1.25% from your grade for each unexcused absence.

For online students, I will take attendance once a week on Friday. Attendance is based on academic activity, which includes responding to discussion questions, submitting research papers, book reports or similar assignments, or taking an examination. I will deduct 2.50% from your grade for each week in which an online student fails to demonstrate academic activity

The grading scale is provided in the University Catalog (letter grades with numerical equivalents). In computing the final grade, I will weigh the work of the course in the following proportions:

|                      |     |
|----------------------|-----|
| First Examination    | 15% |
| Final Examination    | 15% |
| Discussion Questions | 20% |
| Research Paper       | 15% |
| Book Report          | 15% |
| Attendance           | 20% |

#### V. MATERIALS

Cairns, Earle E., *Christianity through the Centuries: A History of the Christian Church (Third Edition)*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1996. ISBN: 9780310208129 (or any other edition). Price: \$32.99. Kindle edition price is \$17.96. Available used for about \$5.00.

Noll, Mark, *Turning Points: Decisive Moments in the History of Christianity (Third Edition)*, Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012. ISBN: 9780801039966. Price: \$18.99. Available used for about \$6.93.

Shelley, Bruce, *Church History in Plain Language (Fourth Edition)*, Waco: Thomas Nelson, 2012. ISBN: 9781401676315 (or any other edition). Price \$29.99. Kindle edition price is \$9.90. Available used for about \$12.00.

The Bible is a required textbook in every course at Calvary University. To facilitate academic level study, students are required to use for assignments and research an English translation or version of the Bible based on formal equivalence (*meaning that the translation is generally word-for-word from the original languages*), including any of the following: New American Standard (NASB), English Standard Version (ESV), New King James (NKJV), or King James (KJV). Other translations and versions based on dynamic equivalence (*paraphrases, and thought-for-thought translations like NLT and NIV*) may be used as supplemental sources. Please ask the professor if you have questions about a particular translation or version.

#### VI. TENTATIVE CLASS SCHEDULE:

(Assigned reading from Cairns *Christianity through the Centuries* and Shelley's *Church History in Plain Language*)

| Lesson | Date   | Subject                                              | Reading<br>Reading<br>"C"=Cairns<br>"S"=Shelley |
|--------|--------|------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| 1      | Week 1 | The Fullness of Time                                 | C: Chap 1<br>S: Chap 1                          |
| 2      |        | On This Rock / To the Jew First<br>Then to the Greek | C: Chap 2, 3, 4<br>S: Chap 2, 3, 7              |
| 3      |        | Books and Parchments Early<br>Church Government      | C: Chap 5, 6<br>S: Chap 8, 14-15                |
| 4      | Week 2 | Christ or Caesar                                     | C: Chap 7<br>S: Chap 4                          |
| 5      |        | Fables, Doctrines, and<br>Contending for the Faith   | C: Chap 8-9<br>S: Chap 5                        |
| 6      |        | Church Closes Ranks                                  | C: 10<br>S: 6,9                                 |
| 7      | Week 3 | The Church Faces the Empire<br>and Barbarians        | C: Chap 11<br>S: Chap 9                         |
| 8      |        | The Conciliar Controversy and<br>Creedal Development | C: Chap 12<br>S: Chap 10,11                     |
| 9      |        | Golden Age of Church Fathers                         | C: Chap 13<br>S: Chap 13                        |

| Lesson | Date   | Subject                                                                                                           | Reading<br>Reading<br>"C"=Cairns<br>"S"=Shelley                |
|--------|--------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| 10     | Week 4 | The Cloisters, Hierarchy and Liturgy<br>The First Pope                                                            | C: Chap 14-16<br>S: Chap 11,12                                 |
| 11     |        | Christian Losses and Expansion<br>/ <b>First Exam Due</b>                                                         | C: Chap 17<br>S: Chap 16                                       |
| 12     | Week 5 | The Revival of Imperialism<br>Emergency of the Holy Roman Empire                                                  | C: Chap 18, 19<br>S: Chap 18                                   |
| 13     |        | Revival and Schism, Zenith of Papal Power Crusaders and Reformers                                                 | C: Chap 20, 22<br>S: Chap 19                                   |
| 14     |        | Medieval Learning and Worship                                                                                     | C: Chap 23<br>S: Chap 20, 21                                   |
| 15     | Week 6 | Attempts at Internal Reform<br>The Papacy Faces External Opposition                                               | C: Chap 24, 25<br>S: Chap 20.21                                |
| 16     |        | Background to the Reformation<br>Luther and the German Reformation                                                | C: Chap 26, 27<br>S: Chap 23, 24                               |
| 17     |        | Reformation in Switzerland and Reformed Faith outside Switzerland<br>Reformation and Puritanism in England        | C: Chap 28-30<br>S: Chap 26-28                                 |
|        |        | <b>Book Report Due</b>                                                                                            |                                                                |
| 18     | Week 7 | Counter-Reformation<br>Establishment of Christianity in North America                                             | C: Chap 31-32<br>S: Chap 27, 29                                |
| 19     |        | Rationalism, Revivalism and Roman Catholicism<br>Roman Catholic Victories and Losses                              | C: Chap 33, 34<br>S: Chap 32-34, 36                            |
| 20     |        | Religion and Reform in Great Britain and Europe<br>Foes of the Faith                                              | C: Chap 35, 36<br>S: Chap 34, 35, 38                           |
|        |        | <b>Research Paper Due</b>                                                                                         |                                                                |
| 21/22  | Week 8 | The American Church in the National Era<br>The Changing World and Liberal Decline /<br>Ecumenism and Evangelicals | C: Chap 37-39<br>S: Chap 39, 41 /<br>C: Chap 40-42<br>S: 44-48 |

| <b>Lesson</b> | <b>Date</b> | <b>Subject</b>                                                                        | <b>Reading</b><br><u>Reading</u><br>"C"= <i>Cairns</i><br>"S"= <i>Shelley</i> |
|---------------|-------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|               |             | The Contemporary Church-Trends and Issues / <b>Final Exam Due; Reading Report Due</b> |                                                                               |

VII. POTENTIAL PAPER TOPICS (list not all inclusive, only suggestions)

**People:**

|                        |                   |                       |                   |
|------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|
| Paul                   | Charlemagne       | Henry VIII of England | Dwight Moody      |
| Peter                  | Constantine       | Martin Luther         | Georg Hegel       |
| John                   | Pope Gregory VII  | John Calvin           | Charles Darwin    |
| Irenaeus               | Pope Innocent III | John Knox             | C. S. Lewis       |
| Chrysostom             | Francis of Assisi | Hulderich Zwingli     | Francis Schaeffer |
| Jerome                 | Acquinas          | Jonathan Edwards      | Billy Graham      |
| Ambrose                | Anselm            | William Penn          | Karl Barth        |
| Augustine              | John Wycliffe     | John Wesley           | Charles Colson    |
| Pope Gregory the Great | John Huss         | George Whitefield     | Pope John Paul II |
| Pepin                  |                   | Charles Spurgeon      |                   |

**Movements**

|               |                     |                        |                     |
|---------------|---------------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| Gnosticism    | Franciscans         | Puritans               | Fundamentalism      |
| Donatism      | Dominicans          | Separatists            | Deep Ecology        |
| Islam         | Universities        | Deism                  | Liberation Theology |
| Monasticism   | Mysticism           | Rationalism            | Feminist Theology   |
| Scholasticism | Renaissance         | Biblical Criticism     | Atheism             |
| The Crusades  | Reformation         | Materialism            | Darwinism           |
| Cistercians   | Counter-Reformation | Theological Liberalism | Communism           |
| Waldenses     | Biblical Humanists  | Urbanization           | National Socialism  |

**Special Notes:**

Grades on late assignments will be reduced by 4% for each day the assignment is late.

I will accept late assignments until midnight on the last day of the cycle. I will not accept assignments beyond that point. Students may contact the registrar to apply for additional time to complete the class.

Students with disabilities have the responsibility of informing the Accommodations Support Coordinator ([aso@calvary.edu](mailto:aso@calvary.edu)) of any disabling condition that may require support.

Plagiarism is defined as copying any content without identifying the source. This also includes taking another person's or AI entity's ideas or constructs and presenting them as your own. Plagiarism of any kind will not be tolerated. Most assignments at Calvary require the student to produce original work. Therefore, unless specifically permitted by the instructor, the use of AI-generated content is prohibited (even if cited) as it does not represent original work created by the student and is an unreliable aggregate of ideas from other sources. AI, however, may be utilized in cases where the instructor has explicitly permitted its use to accomplish specific tasks. It is only in these cases that AI-generated (or modified) content may be submitted by the student. If there are any questions as to the permissibility of AI use for an assignment, please ask your instructor for clarification.

The Clark Academic Center ([learning@calvary.edu](mailto:learning@calvary.edu)) is dedicated to providing free academic assistance for Calvary University students. Student tutors aid with all facets of the writing process, tutor in various subject areas, prepare students for exams and facilitate tests. Please take advantage of this service.

| <b>Rubric for History Assignments</b> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                       | <b>Above Standards = 3</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                               | <b>Meets Standards = 2</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | <b>Approaches Standards = 1</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                         | <b>Fails to Meet Standards = 0</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Knowledge</b>                      | Recalls details of previously learned material, including relevant facts and theories. Student is able to articulate and reflect on the details in written form effectively.                                                             | Recalls details of previously learned material, including relevant facts and theories. Student is able to describe the details in written form.                                                                                                  | Recalls the general outline of previously learned material, including relevant facts and theories. Student is able to describe the general outline in written form.                                                                     | Fails to recall the general outline of previously learned material, including relevant facts and theories. Student is unable to describe the general outline in written form.                                                                      |
| <b>Comprehension</b>                  | Answers are relevant to questions. Grasps the meaning of previously learned material. Correctly explains, interprets, and summarizes as appropriate.                                                                                     | Answers are mostly relevant to questions. Exhibits the ability to grasp the meaning of previously learned material. Displays the ability to explain, interpret, and summarize as appropriate.                                                    | Answers generally relate to questions. Exhibits marginal grasp of the meaning of previously learned material. Struggles with the ability to explain, interpret, and summarize as appropriate.                                           | Answers do not correlate with questions. Exhibits no grasp of the meaning of previously learned material. Fails to display the ability to explain, interpret, and summarize as appropriate.                                                        |
| <b>Application</b>                    | Applies rules, methods, concepts, principles, and laws as required by questions.                                                                                                                                                         | Generally, applies rules, methods, concepts, principles, and laws as required by questions.                                                                                                                                                      | Demonstrates comprehension of rules, methods, concepts, principles, and laws present in the material, struggles with finding and articulating appropriate applications.                                                                 | Demonstrates a failure to comprehend rules, methods, concepts, principles, and laws present in the material. Fails to articulate applications with finding and articulating appropriate applications. Fails to understand the idea of application. |
| <b>Analysis</b>                       | Dissects and differentiates constituent parts of a concept, theory, or idea and relate those parts to the whole. Evidences strong critical thinking skills with logical and thoughtful development of analytical conclusions.            | Identifies and describes parts of a concept, theory, or idea and relate those parts to the whole. Evidences good critical thinking skills with reasonably developed analytical conclusions.                                                      | Identifies most parts of a concept, theory, or idea and relate those parts to the whole. Evidences basic critical thinking skills with marginally developed analytical conclusions.                                                     | Fails to identify parts of a concept, theory, or idea and relate those parts to the whole. Demonstrates the lack of basic critical thinking skills with poorly developed analytical conclusions.                                                   |
| <b>Synthesis</b>                      | Masters the whole of a concept, theory, or idea by means of its constituent parts. Artifacts are sophisticatedly and cohesively synthesized to undergird the central argument. Able to articulate the results of synthesis effectively.  | Sees the whole of a concept, theory, or idea by means of its constituent parts. Artifacts are cohesively synthesized to undergird the central argument. Able to articulate the results of synthesis effectively.                                 | Approaches the whole of a concept, theory, or idea by means of its constituent parts. Artifacts are marginally synthesized to undergird the central argument. Able to articulate the results of synthesis.                              | Fails to comprehend the whole of a concept, theory, or idea by means of its constituent parts. Fails to synthesize artifacts to undergird the central argument. Unable to articulate the results of synthesis.                                     |
| <b>Evaluation</b>                     | Assesses and critiques theories, thoughts, ideas, concepts, proposals, literary works, or other forms of creative expression. Masters the data, synthesizes theory and outcomes, and draws insightful conclusions based on the evidence. | Describes and articulates theories, thoughts, ideas, concepts, proposals, literary works, or other forms of creative expression. Comprehends the data, synthesizes theory and outcomes, and draws appropriate conclusions based on the evidence. | Approaches and recites theories, thoughts, ideas, concepts, proposals, literary works, or other forms of creative expression. Recognizes the data, considers the theory and outcomes, and draws some conclusions based on the evidence. | Fails to comprehend theories, thoughts, ideas, concepts, proposals, literary works, or other forms of creative expression. Fails to consider the data, unable to apply or synthesize the theory and outcomes,                                      |

| <b>Rubric for History Assignments</b> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                       | <b>Above Standards = 3</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | <b>Meets Standards = 2</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | <b>Approaches Standards = 1</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | <b>Fails to Meet Standards = 0</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | and fails to draw conclusions based on the evidence.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Citations and Plagiarism              | Refers to right sort and numbers of Scriptures and/or outside references with proper form, careful and full presentation and adequate, informative content. All direct quotes are cited, all paraphrased material is cited, evidence of frequent and accurate citations throughout the paper. All source material appears in the Bibliography / References. | Refers to right sort and numbers of Scriptures and/or outside references with proper form, careful and full presentation and adequate, informative content. All direct quotes are cited, paraphrased material generally is cited, with adequate frequency. All source material appears in the Bibliography / References | Refers to right sort and numbers of Scriptures and/or outside references with proper form, careful and full presentation and adequate, informative content. All direct quotes are cited, paraphrased material generally is marginally cited, student shows evidence of struggling with paraphrasing. Most source material appears in the Bibliography / References | The student fails to cite direct sources (cut and paste from Wikipedia or other sources). Student fails to properly paraphrase and cite material. Student does not list source material in the Bibliography / References, or the paper completely lacks a Bibliography / References. |
| Spelling / Grammar / Syntax           | Writes clearly, follows the accepted norms of spelling, grammar, and syntax with no errors                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Generally writes clearly and follows the accepted norms of spelling, grammar, and syntax with minor errors.                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Does not write clearly, exhibits several spelling, syntax, and grammar errors                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Does not write clearly, fails to follow spelling, grammar, and syntax guidelines and acceptable use.                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Format Style (Turabian, APA, MLA)     | The assignment has been submitted neatly and according to relevant submission guidelines per Turabian, APA, or MLA.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | The assignment follows nearly all of the relevant submission guidelines per Turabian, APA, or MLA.                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | The assignment displays evidence of formatting challenges, but generally follows the relevant submission guidelines per Turabian, APA, or MLA.                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | The assignment displays evidence of formatting challenges and fails to follow the relevant submission guidelines per Turabian, APA, or MLA.                                                                                                                                          |
| Academic Level Satisfied              | Content / answers are insightful, original, scholarly, developed with exceptional detail, and appropriate to degree level.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Content / answers are appropriate, original, scholarly, developed with adequate detail, and appropriate to degree level.                                                                                                                                                                                                | Content / answers approach original scholarship, developed with some detail, and appropriate to degree level.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Content / answers do not display original scholarship, adequate detail, or appropriate to degree level.                                                                                                                                                                              |