



AMBROSE
SEMINARY

CH 501 *Christianity in History* (3)

Winter 2010

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Office Hours:	Wednesdays 3:00-5:30; Tuesdays and Thursdays 8:00-9:30, or by appointment
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Class Time:	Wednesdays, 6:30-9:30
Location:	A2133

Course Description

This course is an overview of the history of Christianity from the time of the early Church to the present. As we consider the development of Christian ideas and institutions within their corresponding social, cultural and political contexts, we will meet influential Christians, discover devotional treasures, and encounter the diverse Christian traditions that have shaped and been shaped by the world around them.

Course Objectives

- ✓ Learn the broad sweep and key issues of church history, including at least fifty of the most important people, events, ideas and institutions from the Christian past.
- ✓ Appreciate the dynamic nature of Christianity as embodied in the Church—in other words, that the Church's theology, practises and institutions are not eternal and unchanging in nature, but deeply intertwined with human civilization and its historical development.
- ✓ Identify your personal Christian/church histories within the history of the Church universal, and understand the influences that have shaped your own faith tradition(s).
- ✓ Grow in your ability to exegete your cultural environment, to understand the forces that influence your church, and to draw on your understanding of church history in order to formulate effective strategies for thriving as a Christian and church leader.
- ✓ Grow in your personal appreciation of and ability to draw from the spiritual journey, testimony and devotional legacy of Christians from the past, knowing that all Christians undergo a common journey from spiritual infancy to maturity.

Texts

1. Paul R. Spickard and Kevin M. Cragg, *A Global History of Christians: How Everyday Believers Experienced Their World* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1994).
2. Richard J. Foster and James Bryan Smith (eds.), *Devotional Classics: Selected Readings for Individuals and Groups*, revised and expanded (New York: HarperOne, 2005).
3. Selected primary source documents will also be discussed in class and distributed on the Moodle course site.

Evaluation

Readings/Participation	40%
<i>Christian History & Biography</i> Readings	10%
Biography Review	15%
Application Assignment	35%

Readings/Participation

Much of your preparation time and our class time will revolve around readings from our two texts and primary source documents, which we will write about online (on the Moodle site) and discuss in class each week, according to the course schedule.

For each chapter in **Spickard/Cragg** (*Global History*), I will post some questions for you to answer in a forum on Moodle. Please respond to these no later than the day before each class, so that I have time to look your responses over and know how to direct the class discussion that week.

For each chapter in **Foster/Smith** (*Devotional Classics*), chose one reading (sign up in the appropriate Moodle forum—no more than two people may choose the same reading), then (replying to your own post), answer the review questions related to your reading. (Extra grace if you try out the suggested exercise and post your reflection on that the following week.) Please complete this exercise no later than the day before each class, so that I have time to look your responses over and know how to direct the class discussion that week.

For each set of **primary source documents**, try to understand the meaning of each document and then identify its historical significance. Make notes to help you in the class discussion.

My assessment will be based on the depth with which you engage with the ideas in our readings (and reflect on your own assumptions about Christianity and the Church, as they're challenged by or confirmed in the readings). Your ability to put your thoughts into clear, concise, and expressive writing will also play a role in determining your mark, as will your willingness to participate thoughtfully in class discussions.

Christian History & Biography Readings

Students of church history should be exposed to the amazing diversity of expression in the Christian faith. To that end, you are required to sign up for (in the appropriate Moodle forum) and

read three issues of *Christian History and Biography* (a topically oriented journal, available in the library or through an online subscription) that are *not* related to the biography you intend to read. Sign up for each issue separately, as per the instructions in Moodle.

Then, in the assignment module provided, compose a four-paragraph reflection on *each* journal issue, answering the following questions:

1. Why did you select this particular journal issue of *Christian History and Biography*? What did you expect to find?
2. What were the themes that dominated your journal issue? In other words, what did the editor want you to think after you had read the issue?
3. Describe the two most important articles in your issue? What did you learn from them?
4. How did what you read challenge or support what you previously thought about the person or topic of the edition? Did you learn anything you can apply to your personal Christian life or ministry?

Again, do not choose issues that overlap with the biography you plan to read, or you will not get credit for them. Be sure to write your responses in your own words. Please use examples, references, or short quotations to support your answers (to note your source, which is simply the journal issue you're reflecting on, put the relevant page numbers in parentheses). Compile all three reflection papers into one document. Include a title page with your information, the course information, the assignment name, the three issue numbers and titles, and the date.

Due on Monday, 1 February 2010, uploaded in the appropriate Moodle assignment module. Late postings will be penalized one letter grade (i.e. A to B, B+ to C+, etc.).

My assessment will be based on the quality of your understanding of the material in your *Christian History & Biography* issues, the level of engagement with the people or topics you are reading about, and the quality of your writing.

Biography Review

One of the ways to relate church history to contemporary life and ministry is to examine an individual character from church history, to see how he or she attempted to live the Christian faith in his or her time. To that end, you are required to sign up for (on the Moodle site) and read a biography chosen from the list provided at the end of this syllabus, and submit an 800-1000 word review paper, answering the following questions:

1. According to the book, *who* was this person, and what did they think or do?
2. Briefly, *why* did you choose this person to read about?
3. *In what ways* were they a product of their times?
4. *In what ways* did their lives pose a challenge to those around them?
5. What positive and negative lessons do you take away from the biography?

Do not choose a biography that overlaps with any of the issues of *Christian History & Biography* you plan to read. Be sure to write the response in your own words. Please use examples, references,

or short quotations (with footnotes) to support your answers. Include a title page with your personal information, the course information, the assignment name, and the date.

Due on Monday, 1 March 2010, uploaded in the appropriate Moodle assignment module. Late papers will be penalized one letter grade (i.e. A to B, B+ to C+, etc.).

My assessment will be based on the quality of your understanding of the book and its subject, the level of engagement with the person you are reading about, and the quality of your writing.

Application Assignment

All of the reading, responding, and discussion in the course is meant to serve as the basis for the application assignment, the most important of all. Choose one of the two options to complete. Be sure to discuss your project with me during the conception and research phases, before the writing phase:

Option 1: My Personal Christian Roots

If church history cannot connect contemporary Christians with the great traditions (theological, devotional, and historical) of the Church, it has not done its job. To that end, you are assigned the task of identifying your own personal Christian tradition(s)—these may be denominational, parachurch, or mission organizations, or theological traditions, important writers, liturgies or devotional traditions—and then of discovering, investigating, and explaining some ways that your Christian tradition(s) have shaped your own spirituality, beliefs, or philosophy of ministry.

Step 1: Post a short note in the appropriate Moodle forum identifying your tradition(s).

Step 2: Research the history and thought of your tradition(s), identifying important elements of your tradition(s) that have shaped you or that you admire and would emulate (e.g. the egalitarianism, pacifism, and separation of the Anabaptist tradition; the missional focus and pragmatism of the Christian and Missionary Alliance; the congregational independence and high view of Scripture of the Baptists; the inclusivity and liturgical practises of Anglicanism; the force of convictions about Calvinistic predestination; the cultural engagement of Lesslie Newbigin; the training, structures, and strategies of Youth For Christ; the holistic nature of Roman Catholicism).

Step 3: Reflect on the ways these important elements of your tradition(s) have influenced you. Think of specific examples to support your reflections. In other words, you need to try to explain (for example) how the egalitarianism of the Anabaptists, or the inclusivity of the Anglicans, or the theological concept of predestination has influenced you.

Step 4: Write a ten-to-fifteen-page paper combining your research (step 2) and your reflections (step 3), with about two-thirds of the paper devoted to the research aspect. Be sure to write your paper in your own words. Please use examples, references, or short quotations to support your answers. Follow the Ambrose History Department Style Guide format. Include a title page with your information, the course information, the assignment name, and the date. **This paper is due on Monday, 5 April 2010, uploaded in the appropriate Moodle assignment module.** Late papers will be penalized one letter grade (i.e. A to B, B+ to C+, etc.).

Step 5: Post a short note in the Moodle forum where you first identified your personal Christian traditions, describing the feedback you got from showing your paper to a pastor, professor (other than me), or family member. **This posting is due one week after your paper has been submitted.**

My assessment will be based on your ability to understand and articulate your own Christian roots, the quality of your historical research into your personal Christian tradition(s), the level of reflection on your own formation in your tradition(s), and the quality of your writing.

Option 2: Teaching Christian History

If church history cannot connect contemporary Christians with the great traditions (theological, devotional, and historical) of the Church, it has not done its job. To that end, you are assigned the task of writing a manual for teaching selected aspects of Christian history in a church or Christian educational setting relevant to your life and ministry. Your manual must include several elements:

1. **Introduction:** This will outline the intended audience, goals, and outcomes of the manual.
2. **Principles:** Here you must explain the principles, or guiding ideas, that you have used to develop the manual.
3. **Lesson Plans:** Develop at least four lesson plans for teaching sessions. Each must include an **overview**, a list of **goals/outcomes**, a list of **supporting materials** to be used (primary documents, illustrations, pictures, etc.), descriptions of any **activities or assignments**, and an **outline** of any lecture component, if employed.
4. **Lesson:** Develop at least one of these lesson plans into a full-fledged lesson that could be delivered in a church or Christian educational setting relevant to your life and ministry.
5. **Feedback:** Briefly describe the feedback you received from showing the project to a pastor or professor (other than me).

Include a title page with your information, the course information, the assignment name, and the date.

Due on Monday, 5 April 2010, uploaded in the appropriate Moodle assignment module. Late papers will be penalized one letter grade (i.e. A to B, B+ to C+, etc.).

My assessment will be based on your ability to understand and articulate your own understanding of Christian history, the quality of your historical understanding of the historical subjects covered by the manual, the level of engagement with the project, and the quality of your organization and writing.

Course Outline

1. **Beginnings:** Introductions – What Good is Christian History? – Of Churches and Trees – Liturgy, Canon, and Creed (January 6)
 - Readings: none
2. **Early Church:** Early Christian Theological Questions – Early Christian Worship – Early Church Leadership – Christian-Jewish Relations – Devotional Classics (Preparing for the Spiritual Life) (January 13)
 - Readings: *Global History* 1 & 2 (Early Christians, Roman World); *Devotional Classics* 1 (Preparing for the Spiritual Life); Early Christian Documents
3. **Medieval Christianity:** Constantine – Papacy – Orders – Crusades – Cathedrals (January 20)

- Readings: *Global History* 3 & 4 (Turning Point, Age of Faith); Medieval Documents
4. **A Bigger Picture:** Non-western Churches – Stories of Christianity – Unity and Diversity in the Church – History of Church-State Relations – Devotional Classics (Contemplative Tradition) (January 27)
 - Readings: *Global History* 5 & 6 (Eastern Orthodoxy, Other Non-Western Churches); *Devotional Classics* 2 (The Prayer-Filled Life)
 5. **Humanism and Reform:** Late Medieval Troubles – Renaissance Humanism – Luther (February 3)
 - Readings: *Global History* 7 (Renaissance); Renaissance Documents; Luther Documents
 6. **Reformation(s):** European Reformations – Reformation Legacies (February 10)
 - Readings: *Global History* 8 (Reformation); Reformation Documents
 7. **Crossing Cultures:** Early European Missions – Devotional Classics (Holiness Tradition) (February 24)
 - Readings: *Global History* 9 (Global Expansion); *Devotional Classics* 3 (The Virtuous Life); Early Missions Documents
 8. **Early Modernity:** Pietism – Enlightenment – Wesley and Methodism – Baptists – History of Hymns (March 3)
 - Readings: *Global History* 10 (European Christianity); Early Modern Documents; Hymn Activity
 9. **Early North America:** Christianity in 18th and 19th century America and Canada – Revolution, Reaction, and Reform – Devotional Classics (Charismatic Tradition) (March 10)
 - Readings: *Global History* 11 & 12 (Early America, 19th Century); *Devotional Classics* 4 (The Spirit-Empowered Life)
 10. **Modern North America:** Modernity (worldviews) – Liberalism and Fundamentalism – Holiness and Social Gospel Movements – Canadian Christianity – Devotional Classics (Social Justice Tradition) (March 17)
 - Readings: *Global History* 14 & 16 (Modern Context, 20th Century America); *Devotional Classics* 5 (The Compassionate Life)
 11. **A Global Faith:** Rise of World Christianity – Pentecostalism – Devotional Classics (Evangelical Tradition) (March 21)
 - Readings: *Global History* 13 (Worldwide Christianity); *Devotional Classics* 6 (The Word-Centered Life); Global Christianity Documents
 12. **Europe in Crisis:** War, Dictatorship, and the Churches – German Church Struggle – Impact of the Holocaust – Ecumenism (March 28)
 - Discuss *Global History* 15 (20th Century Europe); Church Struggle Documents
 13. **The Past 50 Years:** Recent Trends in World Christianity – Devotional Classics (Incarnational Tradition) – What Have We Learned? (April 7)

- Discuss *Global History 17* (Around the World Since WWII); *Devotional Classics 7* (The Sacramental Life)

Important Notes

- It is the responsibility of all students to become familiar with and adhere to academic policies of as are stated in the Student Handbook and Academic Calendar.
- Personal information, that is information about an individual that may be used to identify that individual, may be collected as a requirement as part of taking this class. Any information collected will only be used and disclosed for the purpose for which the collection was intended. For further information contact the Privacy Compliance Officer at privacy@ambrose.edu.
- The last day to enter a course without permission and /or voluntary withdrawal from a course without financial penalty: 15 January 2010
- The last day to voluntarily withdraw from a course or change to audit without academic penalty: 12 March 2010
- Although extensions to coursework in the semester are at the discretion of the instructor, students may not turn in coursework for evaluation after the last day of the scheduled final examination period unless they have received permission for a “Course Extension.” Alternative times for final examinations cannot be scheduled without prior approval. Requests for course extensions or alternative examination time must be submitted to the Registrar’s Office by the appropriate deadline. Course extensions are only granted for serious issues that arise “due to circumstances beyond the student’s control.”
- We are committed to fostering personal integrity and will not overlook breaches of integrity such as plagiarism and cheating. Plagiarism and cheating can result in a failing grade for an assignment, for the course, or immediate dismissal from the university college. Students are expected to be familiar with the policies in the current Academic Calendar and the Student Handbook that deal with plagiarism, cheating, and the penalties and procedures for dealing with these matters. All cases of academic dishonesty are reported to the Academic Dean.
- The following grading system will be used for this course. A student's final grade in a course is recorded as a letter grade on the student's permanent record of marks. Each letter grade has a corresponding grade point value which is used to determine the number of quality points earned by the student for a given course. Quality points are used to compute the student's grade point average.

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Grade Point</i>	<i>Description</i>
A+	4.0	Excellent: superior performance showing comprehensive understanding of subject matter.
A	4.0	
A-	3.7	
B+	3.3	Good: clearly above-average performance with knowledge of subject matter complete.
B	3.0	
B-	2.7	
C+	2.3	Satisfactory: basic understanding of subject matter.
C	2.0	
C-	1.7	
D+	1.3	Poor: marginal performance.
D	1.0	Minimal pass.
F	0	Failure: unsatisfactory performance or failure to meet course requirements.

- All sources used in written assignments must be listed in a bibliography. All quotations and paraphrases from published material must be annotated by means of footnotes or endnotes. The history department employs the “Turabian” format. Please see the Ambrose History Department Style Guide for details. As stated above, there will be no toleration of plagiarism: the unattributed copying and presentation of another person’s thoughts, writings and discoveries from another source—including purchased essay—as your own. This includes close

paraphrasing—changing a few words from the sources. Plagiarism or cheating leads to disciplinary action such as failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University College.

CH 501 Biography Book List

1. Wills, Gary. *Saint Augustine*. New York, 1999. (on the famous Bishop of Hippo and author of *Confessions*)
2. Hanson, R.P.C. *Saint Patrick, His Origins and Career*. New York, 1968. (on the missionary to and patron saint of Ireland)
3. Maddocks, Fiona. *Hildegard of Bingen: The Woman of Her Age*. New York, 2001. (on the 11th century musician and theologian)
4. Leclercq, Jean. *Bernard of Clairvaux and the Cistercian Spirit*. Kalamazoo, 1976. (on the founder of the Cluny reform, and great medieval churchman)
5. Jantzen, Grace. *Julian of Norwich: Mystic and Theologian*. New York, 1988. (on the 14th-15th century mystic.)
6. Kittelson, James M. *Luther the Reformer*. Minneapolis, 1986. (on the founder of the Protestant Reformation and Lutheran Church, Martin Luther)
7. Potter, G.R. *Zwingli*. Cambridge, 1976. (on Huldrych Zwingli, the Swiss Reformer, who lived from 1484-1531)
8. Goertz, Hans-Jürgen. *Thomas Müntzer: apocalyptic mystic and revolutionary*. Edinburgh, 1993. (on a controversial leader in the “radical reformation”, Thomas Müntzer (c. 1489-1525))
9. Cottret, Bernard. *Calvin: a biography*. Grand Rapids, 2000 (on French Reformer Jean Calvin)
10. Medwick, Cathleen. *Teresa of Avila: The Progress of a Soul*. New York, 1999 (on the late-medieval mystic nun)
11. Marshall, Rosalind. *John Knox*. Edinburgh, 2000. (on the founder of Scottish Presbyterianism)
12. Rack, Henry D. *Reasonable Enthusiast: John Wesley and the rise of Methodism*. Philadelphia, 1989. (on the founder of Methodism, John Wesley)
13. Stout, Harry S. *The Divine Dramatist: George Whitefield and the Rise of Modern Evangelicalism*. Grand Rapids, 1991. (on the evangelist who rivalled Wesley, George Whitefield, 1714-1770)
14. Phipps, William E. *Amazing Grace in John Newton: slave-ship captain, hymnwriter, and abolitionist*. Macon, GA, 2001. (on the colourful author of the most famous English hymn)
15. Pollock, John. *Wilberforce*. New York, 1977. (on the British abolitionist and reform politician)
16. Busch, Eberhard. *Karl Barth: His Life from Letters and Autobiographical Texts*. Philadelphia, 1976. (500+ pages on the twentieth-century Swiss theologian)
17. Wind, Renate. *Dietrich Bonhoeffer: a spoke in the wheel*. London, 1991. **OR** Bethge, Eberhard. *A Costly Grace: An Illustrated Introduction to Dietrich Bonhoeffer*. New York, 1979. (on the German theologian and martyr to Hitler)
18. Sayer, George. *Jack: A Life of C.S. Lewis*. Wheaton, 1994. (450+ pages on the English author and apologist)
19. Greene, Dana. *Evelyn Underhill: Artist of the infinite life*. New York, 1990. (on the important English spiritual writer, who lived from 1875-1941)
20. Hebblethwaite, Peter. *Pope John XXIII: Shepherd of the Modern World*. Garden City, NY, 1985. (500+ pages on the surprising reformer who called the Second Vatican Council)
21. George, Timothy. *Faithful Witness: The Life and Mission of William Carey*. Birmingham, 1991. (on the great missionary pioneer to India)
22. Hambrick-Stowe, Charles E. *Charles G. Finney and the Spirit of American Evangelicalism*. Grand Rapids, 1996. (on the foremost evangelist of pre-Civil War United States, who lived from 1792-1875)
23. Taylor, Frederick Howard. *Hudson Taylor's Spiritual Secret*. London, 1953. (on the missionary and founder of the China Inland Mission)
24. Jeal, Tim. *Livingstone*. London, 1993. (on the nineteenth-century Scottish missionary and explorer)
25. Pollock, John. *Moody: The Biography*. Chicago, 1983. (on the nineteenth-century American evangelist)
26. Minus, Paul M. *Walter Rauschenbusch, American Reformer*. New York, 1988. (on the founder of the American social gospel movement, who lived 1861-1918)
27. Ruffin, Bernard. *Fanny Crosby*. Philadelphia, 1976. (on the great American hymn-writer)
28. Martin, William. *A Prophet With Honor: The Billy Graham Story*. New York, 1991. (700+ pages on the world-renowned evangelist)
29. Epstein, Daniel Mark. *Sister Aimee: the life of Aimee Semple McPherson*. New York, 1993. (on the charismatic preacher and founder of the Foursquare Gospel Church)
30. Spink, Katheryn. *Mother Theresa: a complete authorized biography*. San Francisco, 1997. (on the Albanian Catholic humanitarian nun)