Things to Think About As We Get Started:

1. Major themes in church history repeatedly come up. Watch for them. They are somewhat cyclical but not deterministic.

2. Almost all the early Christian leaders sought to adapt the Christian faith to their culture, their region, and their times.
   a. This attempt was later the seedbed for major differences in the Christian tradition.
   b. Some early Christians rebelled against the cultural adaptation of Christianity and then promptly declared themselves to be the only ones who were right (Sound familiar?)
   c. An interesting thesis of church history set forth by Phyllis Tickle is that about every five hundred years, the church, or the empowered structures of institutionalized Christianity—whatever they may be at the time—becomes intolerable and must be shattered in order that new growth and renewal can occur (see Phyllis Tickle, The Great Emergence: How Christianity Is Changing and Why.)

   We are living in and through such a time. [Think about it—we are 499+ years away from the October 31, 1517 nailing of Martin Luther’s debate propositions to the church door in Wittenberg, Germany.] In order to understand the present times, we must look at the past and how political, social, and religious forces came together in these massive transitions.

3. The process of self-definition is an ongoing one for the church, but to what extent? How do we do it in matters as diverse as doctrine, worship, church government and ethics? Challenges to the “orthodox” faith—the way most Christians believed—became known in the early church as “heresies.” They were defined as doctrines which seemed to threaten the very core of the Christian faith.
   a. The rapid growth of the church brought people from varied backgrounds, which in turn gave rise to diverse religious beliefs and practices.
   b. The most important (and dangerous) heresy was known as Gnosticism (late 1st century beginning). This complex heresy, which blended certain elements of pagan philosophy with ancient pagan religions as well as distorted Christian beliefs, had the following major components: (1) negative view of the world, including denial that God created it; (2) view that one escapes from the material world and ascends to the spiritual world by means of a special knowledge (in Greek, gnosis); (3) denial of the Christian doctrine of the Incarnation (which states that God took on human flesh in the person of Jesus) and the final resurrection.
   c. Another early heresy was the doctrine of Marcion (85-160 A.D.), who believed that the God who wrote the Old Testament could not be the same as the Father of Jesus,
but rather was an inferior being (vengeful, cruel, etc.). He rejected all of the OT books and began making his list of NT-era books which he believed were inspired by the true God.

d. It was in response to heresies such as the Marcionites, that the early church began to produce the *canon* (list of books they believed were inspired in the NT) and the *Apostles’ Creed*, which defined orthodoxy for them and began to emphasize apostolic succession.

4. What about *worship* and what about *leadership* in the early church?

a. It is possible to know a great deal about early Christian worship because of the writings of men in the late 2nd and early 3rd centuries, such as Irenaeus, Tertullian, Clement, and Origen.

b. The central tenets of worship were *communion* (a celebration observed on Sundays) and *baptism* (immersion during this period but by the 3rd century involved extensive instruction and was sometimes performed on special days, such as Easter).

[citation: *Incidentally, the church in the East and in the West of the Roman Empire was already showing signs of division.*]

c. Leadership by the end of the 1st century usually consisted of lay elders over a city. Then early into the 2nd century, certain men were elevated over others in the geographical area (bishop). By the 3rd century, the bishop of Rome began to assume a primary role of leadership and claimed apostolic succession in the West [--a point of contention with the churches in the Eastern part of the Roman Empire].

d. Sins such as sexual immorality resulted in excommunication from the Eucharist (communion). Great debate ensued as to whether they could be restored. The same debate also came when certain Christians caved under persecution but then later wanted to return to the church.

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**Terms You Might Need to Know:**

- **Apostolic Fathers** -- Writings of the early Christian leaders primarily in the 2nd and 3rd centuries. Through their writings, we learn much about the life and controversies of the early church.

- **Martyrs** – Believers who died for their faith. In Greek, the word for “martyr” is the same word used for “witness.” There was an early Christian saying, “The blood of the martyrs was the seed of the church.” Perhaps the most famous was Justin Martyr, who in the 2nd century argued that anything that was true had its origin in the “Logos”, the Word that is talked about in John 1:1 (“In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God.”) *Have you ever heard the saying, “All truth is God’s truth?” That saying may have had its origin in Justin.*

- **Apologists**—Christian writers who defended the Christian faith in the face of various accusations made against it by the pagan world. Some apologists were openly hostile to
the Greco-Roman culture, while others tried to seek common ground between Christianity and the culture of the time.

- **Persecutions**—Widespread in 2nd and 3rd centuries, but usually only occurred if Christians were brought before authorities and refused to acknowledge Caesar as god. Sporadic and local persecutions were the rule. After relative calm in the 3rd century, persecutions became increasingly severe. The worst was under Diocletian (285-305). Persecutions were ended in 313 by the so-called “edict of Milan” by the emperor Constantine (306-337).

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6th century baptistery, hewn out of a single piece of marble. It was housed in the Hagia Sophia in Istanbul, Turkey. It was discovered during the latest renovation and was first opened to the public for viewing in 2010. The church was first opened in 360 A.D. and has survived several fires, earthquakes, and renovations. It is presently a museum. The following quote is taken from the web site:

“If you look at the baptismal tank, you immediately take the impression of the anatomical shape of a uterus. Even the color of the marble seems to remember the human flesh. This is not accidental. Baptism, in fact, is seen as a rebirth from the womb of the Church. The water must completely immerse the body of the baptized three times in remembrance of the death and resurrection of Christ. The same steps leading down into the water are three, a symbolic number (along with seven), which are often used in Christian architecture.”
The Christian Empire (from the “conversion” of Constantine [early 4th century] to the Fall of the last Roman Emperor of the West [476])

1. By the end of the 4th century, Christianity became the official religion of the empire. The church enjoyed increased power and visibility, and many of the aristocracy now became Christians.
2. One of the great mysteries of church history revolves around the “conversion” of the Emperor Constantine. Christians were gaining significantly in numbers in the Empire. Constantine was a politician as well as a military leader. He claimed a vision of the cross just before a critical battle and the message “By this sign conquer.” Constantine was victorious. Shortly thereafter Christianity was legalized. To add to the mystery, Constantine waited to be baptized until he was on his deathbed. Was the “conversion” to Christianity politically motivated or spiritually—or maybe both?? [Whoever heard of THAT in a politician!!—RM]
3. Many changes took place: Christian worship became more formal; church buildings (called “basilicas”) sprang up. Most liked the change; others rejected it and headed for the desert to take up monastic life. A third group was neutral. [The word “monk” means solitary one; “monastery” means “a group of aloners.”]
4. Monasticism spread, especially in North Africa, both males and females. They began to show leadership in such diverse fields as theology, missions, agriculture, Bible copying, and even war (think Crusades).
5. Still others simply broke away from the majority church, insisting that they were the true church—just as in the 2nd and 3rd centuries, and now.
6. A big issue—what to do with the “lapsed”—those Christians who had denounced their faith under persecution and now wanted back in the church. The issue also had racial and social overtones, as well as theological. The controversy was heavy in North Africa, with conservatives and progressives arguing their views.
7. Controversies and Councils—The biggest controversy was over the nature of Jesus and the nature of the Trinity, especially whether Christ was fully God. (The Arians said he was first among the created beings.) Two Ecumenical Councils, (Nicea in 325 and Constantinople in 381) discussed the controversy and condemned Arianism. The doctrine of the Trinity which we believe today was forged out of these Councils—the Godhead is three in one.
8. The 4th and early 5th centuries were times of great Christian writers and thinkers. Among them are Augustine (whose influence lasts even to the present), Eusebius (1st church historian), and Jerome (translated the OT from Hebrew to Latin, the Vulgate).
9. This period came to an end with the fall of the Roman Empire (410 and later—it happened over time). The “barbarians” (Germanic people) came in from the north and sacked Rome. Even though the Roman Empire was officially over, for the next 1,000 years there were repeated attempts to restore the Constantine relationship between church and state. (Some even wish for it today!)
Session Two: The Medieval Period

The Early Middle Ages (late 5th century through the Crusades (11th century +)

1. Chaos reigned in most of Europe because of various invasions from the North. The Angles and Saxons settled in portions of England. Most famous missionary from England to Ireland was St. Patrick.

2. Because of the pain and death and disorder, Christian worship began to turn from celebration to topics of sin and death and repentance. Communion evolved from a celebration to a somber service, where one was to think more of one’s sins than of the victory of the Lord.

3. Even in the chaos, the Church became even stronger and more influential. Monasticism and the papacy played key roles. Most famous monk was St. Benedict, whose Benedictine Rule (529) set the tone for monasticism for centuries.

4. The title of “pope” is hard to trace in its origins. It means “papa,” a term of endearment and respect, and was at first applied to any bishop who was beloved. It eventually became the exclusive title of the bishop of Rome, along with increased power and prestige. For example, Leo the Great (pope from 440-461) intervened in the Christological controversies of the day and also is reported to have stopped Attila the Hun practically at the gates of Rome. Pope Gregory the Great (590-604) was very influential throughout Europe in that he stabilized and preserved Christianity in the Middle Ages through a new emphasis on monasticism.

5. In 800, Pope Leo III crowned Charlemagne, king of the Franks, as Emperor. (Notice how the pope was now superior to the emperor.)

6. Papacy entered a period of rapid decline until 11th century.

7. Meanwhile in the East, the Roman Empire (now called the Byzantine Empire) continued for another 1,000 years. There the state was much more powerful than the church. The East is where most of the theological controversies (mostly over the nature of Christ) took place.

8. The final controversy (7th Ecumenical Council in 787) was over images, whether they should represent God in some way. For the most part, the East said no (at the Council) and the West said yes. Still holds today.

9. Islam arose as a new threat to the church. Mohammed’s life spans most of the 7th century. He conquered almost all of Arabia. His followers continued his policy of military expansion. They conquered all of ancient Persia (the Middle East) and significant portions of the Roman Empire. Finally, the Franks stopped the advance of Islam into Western Europe in the battle of Tours or Poitiers (732). Charles Martel was king of the Franks.

10. After the reign of Charlemagne (about 800), chaos once again reigned and feudal lords began to spring up all over Europe. Each feudal lord had his own law, and there were endless battles among them.

11. The relationship between the Eastern Church and the Western Church became increasingly tense, until the definitive rupture in 1054. They broke communion with each other, an act which endures to this day!
12. In the West, the much-needed reform came from monasticism. In their effort to rid the church of abuses, the program of reformation insisted on clerical celibacy, poverty and obedience (still in effect today).

13. The 11th century in turn produced conflicts between the Emperor and the Pope, especially over who had the right to appoint bishops (investiture).

14. This was also the time of the Crusades (began in 1095 and continued for centuries). They had many religious, as well as economic and political motivations. The most well-known reason was to regain the Holy Lands from the “infidel” Muslims. Bi-products were: the economies flourished through trade, money was once again the “coin of the realm,” intellectual ideas experienced a revival, great Gothic cathedrals were constructed, and the bourgeoisie arose—the “people from the city”, later known as the middle class of tradesmen and business people.

15. The Renaissance (15th century) was a movement originating mostly in Italy, emphasizing arts, letters, philosophy, antiquity, and the joys and pleasures of life. Again, most embraced it; but some saw it as worldly heresy.

I. The Early Reformers

1. The Catholic church was in chaos in the 1300s, with the king of France moving the papacy to Avignon for a time (“Babylonian Captivity”); the result was rival popes in Avignon and in Rome (“The Great Western Schism”) from 1378-1423. In grabs for power, more corruption followed.

2. They were finally settled through various councils in early 15th century, and there was an attempt at reformation of the church. Also a time of great construction.

3. In response to all this “schism,” the reformer/priest, John Wycliffe of England (late 1300s) gained attention by his protests against the RCC.

4. Wycliffe also was convinced that the Bible should be translated into the language of the people—done shortly after his death by his followers.

5. John Huss (1366-1415) was less radical than Wycliffe, but like him, believed that the church consisted of the elect and those who lived the Christian life. From Bohemia, Huss was burned at the stake after being reassured by the Catholic authorities that he had safe passage to a Council.
6. Another pietistic reformer was **Thomas a Kempis**, who wrote *The Imitation of Christ*. Many other examples of reformation occurred throughout Europe (e.g., William of Occam (early 14th)). **Erasmus** of Rotterdam, a contemporary of Luther, was a Catholic theologian who advocated restoration by returning to simple New Testament Christianity. [sound familiar . . .?]

7. Still others in Europe sought reform by practicing mysticism, which allowed them to cultivate the spiritual life without having to deal with a corrupt church that was apparently incapable of reform.

II. **Meanwhile in the East . . .** [think eastern part of the old Roman Empire]

1. All through the Medieval period, the **Eastern Orthodox Church** (the official religion of the Byzantine Empire\(^1\)) continued to exist, although they grew progressively weak against various political foes.

2. The **Turks** overcame Constantinople in 1453. From that time on, the center of power in the EOC shifted from Greece/Turkey to **Russia**.

3. After the fall of Constantinople, many scholars fled to the West, taking with them important biblical and historical manuscripts, adding to the Renaissance.

III. Two important events took place in the late 15\(^{th}\) & 16\(^{th}\) century: 1) the “discovery” and conquest of the Americas and 2) the Protestant Reformation.

1. Rarely mentioned as a part of church history, it is important to note that within a hundred year period, the influence of Europe was spread throughout the world, and the Church was right in the middle of it.

2. **Christianity** grew dramatically, often by conquest more than conversion.

3. Conquest began in the West Indies and spread to Africa and Mexico and later South America. Most of the natives were destroyed or put into some form of slavery; often called “Indians.”

4. In the newly colonized lands, the Crown had the right to nominate bishops, who would run the churches. Naturally, the Crown selected supporters. Thus church and state worked closely together for mutual benefit. European expansion also included the continents of Africa and Asia.

5. At the same time, however, there were those in the church who dissented and protested, saying that the entire enterprise was evil and unchristian. Thus we turn to the Reformation period.

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\(^1\) The Byzantine Empire is also known as the Eastern Roman Empire. The name comes from Byzantium, which was the ancient name for Constantinople, the capital city in the medieval period. The modern name for the city is Istanbul, capital city of Turkey.
Session Three: The Reformation Period:
16th-18th Centuries

16th Century

1. The date usually given to the beginning of the Reformation is 1517, when an Augustinian monk named Martin Luther posted his famous 95 theses [these are debate propositions concerning his “protest” of the Catholic teaching and practice]. Result: irresistible momentum.

2. Luther’s main “discovery” after studying Romans was that salvation is by grace, through faith. This led him to protest the sale of “indulgences.” He also believed that the Scriptures were the ultimate authority, not the Roman Catholic Church. He also wanted to dissolve monasteries and convents and insisted on the holiness of common life—i.e., non-monastic life. He was wildly popular.

3. Increasing tension followed between Protestants and Catholics—both with the rulers and with leaders such as Luther and Erasmus (still a Catholic).

4. Luther’s successor was Phillip Melanchthon, more moderate than Luther. This difference later led to a division among the strict and moderate Lutherans.

5. Not all dissenters from the Roman Catholic Church followed Luther. Ulrich Zwingli and his successor, John Calvin (Switzerland) gave birth to the churches we now call “Reformed” and “Presbyterian.” Calvin was more moderate than Zwingli.

6. Calvin’s work, “Institutes of the Christian Religion, systematized Reformed theology, which accepted most of Luther but insisted more on the process of sanctification that is the necessary result of justification. They also emphasized social and political aspects of faith, and eventually led to revolutions in places such as Scotland, England, and Netherlands. Above all, Calvin emphasized the sovereignty of God.

7. Other “protesters” took more radical positions, and were known by their enemies as “Anabaptists”—or “re-baptizers.” Out of this wing came the Mennonites and other groups. They advocated that the church follow strict practices of the NT; thus they rejected the view of the church and society since the time of Constantine (4th century). They were pacifists.

8. In England, there was a different sort of reformation—a peculiar blend of Calvinism and ancient Catholic traditions of worship and church governance. Known today at “Anglican” or “Episcopal.”

9. In England, Henry VIII wanted an heir. The Pope would not annul his marriage to Catherine of Aragon, so Henry declared himself head of the church, had his marriage annulled, and was wed again.

10. His son was Edward VI (reigned briefly), succeeded by his half-sister, Mary Tudor—a Catholic. Known as “Bloody Mary.” She was succeeded by her half-sister, Elizabeth, who was a Protestant. A great time for Protestantism (the King James Bible was translated in 1611).

11. The Roman Catholic Church also underwent a reformation (1500s), partly as the result of the Protestant Reformation and partly due to its own inner dynamics (sometimes called Counter-Reformation by Protestants). Most arguments against Protestants were developed during this time. High point of the Roman Catholic reformation was the Council of Trent (1545-1563).
12. New **monastic orders** that emerged: Society of Jesus or Jesuits, founded by Ignatius of Loyola. Became the right arm of the papacy. Very missions minded; first to go to China. Corruption in papacy was eliminated. Also **Discalced Carmelites** (composed of nuns and friars; led by two prominent Spanish saints, Teresa of Avila and John of the Cross).

13. The influence of **John Calvin** (1509-1564) and **Jacob Arminius** (1560-1609) is interesting as we trace their influence from their time to the present.

14. Main tenets of **Calvinism** (or Reform theology): Total human depravity; Unconditional election; Limited atonement; Irresistible grace; Perseverance of the Saints. –(it spells T-U-L-I-P)

15. Main tenets of **Arminianism**: Free-will; Conditional election; Universal redemption; the Holy Spirit can be resisted; Falling from grace (contested by some Arminians).

16. Even though these beliefs have many things in common, they differ sharply over the doctrine of salvation (soteriology) and predestination, even today in much of Evangelical theology. [NOTE: For additional discussion, see pp. 3-6 of this handout.]

17th and 18th Centuries

17. During the 17th and 18th centuries, the strong religious convictions of various groups among the Catholics and Protestants led to bloody wars which decimated the population (the most famous was the **Thirty Years’ War** (1618-1648). The result: guarantee of religious freedom, but only for Catholics, Lutherans, and Reformed.

18. In **France**, the earlier policy of religious freedom was abandoned. Many French Protestants (known as **Huguenots**) left France; others stayed.

19. In **England**, the **Puritan Revolution** led to long civil wars. Puritans insisted that the church must be purified from all that was not biblical (i.e., Catholicism). Tensions between the kings and Parliament increased. Eventually, Parliament won and, **Oliver Cromwell** came into power. Meanwhile, the Puritans began to divide into factions. This, in turn, brought an anti-Puritan reaction. The eventual result was reasonable tolerance in England, as long as one held to **Thirty-Nine Articles** of Anglicanism.

20. In **Scotland**, the **Westminster Confession** was adopted, which became the foundation of Presbyterianism, the religion of the realm.

21. “**All of these wars were fueled by the inflexible spirit of various orthodoxies—Roman Catholic, Lutheran, and Reformed. For each of these orthodoxies, every detail of doctrine was of the greatest importance, and therefore not even the least deviation from the most strict orthodoxy should be allowed. The result was not only the wars that have been mentioned, but also an endless series of debates among Catholics, Lutherans, and the Reformed, all of whom found it difficult to reach an agreement even within their own traditions.**” Justo Gonzales, *Church History: An Essential Guide*, p.79

22. The two high points of Reform theology in this period are: **Synod of Dort** (1618-19), which condemned Arminianism (too much active participation of the believer in salvation); and the **Assembly of Westminster** (resulting in **Confession of**
Westminster), setting Presbyterian standards in Scotland. This Confession was a point of sharp controversy in the Parliament between England and Scotland.

23. One of the reactions to such strict orthodoxy was the growth of rationalism. As a result of the works of men like Descartes, Spinoza, Hume, and John Locke, the idea developed that only a Christianity that could prove itself to be eminently rational was worthy of belief. (Reason was not as objective as they thought, after all.) The American Restoration Movement was profoundly influenced by the rationalists.

24. Another consequence to the rigid orthodoxy was the belief that experience and obedience were more important than orthodox doctrine. The result was the beginning of the Pietist Movement (e.g. Moravians) and Methodism, founded by John and Charles Wesley. They intended to stay within the Church of England, emphasizing personal faith, but they eventually separated as an independent church.

25. Methodism grew mostly among the masses in England who suffered the consequences of the Industrial Revolution. It later spread to the US, where it grew quite strong, especially on the frontier (remember the Methodist circuit riders).

26. Still others, unhappy with orthodoxy and pietism, sought God through the Spiritualist view—no longer in the church or the community of believers, but in the inner private life. A leader was George Fox, who taught about the “inner light” or Holy Spirit, set against the authority of the church and scriptures. Result: Quakers.

27. Still others decided to leave Europe and seek where they could practice their own beliefs essential to the Gospel. They were intolerant of any who disagreed with them. Such was the origin of the British colonies in New England. Among them were Puritans, Roman Catholic, Anglican, Baptist, Methodist, Anabaptists, etc.

*Extra Added Features [Source: http://so4j.com/calvinism-vs-arminianism-compare]*

[A little advice—there are as many different variations and hues of Calvinism and Arminianism as there are weeds in your garden. Soooo, this chart is simply furnished to give you a general idea of the differences in the two approaches to the Scriptures and to salvation. If you are interested in these ideas I strongly encourage you to read some additional material.-RM]
The Five Points of Calvinism, also known as the acronym **T.U.L.I.P.** and the Five Points of Arminianism

**CALVINISM**

**T - Total Inability or Total Depravity**

Because of the fall, man is unable of himself to savingly believe the gospel. The sinner is dead, blind, and deaf to the things of God; his heart is deceitful and desperately corrupt. His will is not free, it is in bondage to his evil nature, therefore, he will not - indeed he cannot - choose good over evil in the spiritual realm. Consequently, it takes much more than the Spirit's assistance to bring a sinner to Christ - it takes regeneration by which the Spirit makes the sinner alive and gives him a new nature. Faith is not something man contributes to salvation but is itself a part of God's gift of salvation - it is God's gift to the sinner, not the sinner's gift to God.

**U - Unconditional Election**

God's choice of certain individuals unto salvation before the foundation of the world rested solely in His own sovereign will. His choice of particular sinners was not based on any foreseen response of obedience on their part, such as faith, repentance, etc. On the contrary, God gives faith and repentance to each individual whom He selected. These acts are the result, not the cause of God's

**ARMINIANISM**

**Free-Will or Human Ability**

Although human nature was seriously affected by the fall, man has not been left in a state of total spiritual helplessness. God graciously enables every sinner to repent and believe, but He does not interfere with man's freedom. Each sinner possesses a free will, and his eternal destiny depends on how he uses it. Man's freedom consists of his ability to choose good over evil in spiritual matters; his will is not enslaved to his sinful nature. The sinner has the power to either cooperate with God's Spirit and be regenerated or resist God's grace and perish. The lost sinner needs the Spirit's assistance, but he does not have to be regenerated by the Spirit before he can believe, for faith is man's act and precedes the new birth. Faith is the sinner's gift to God; it is man's contribution to salvation.

**Conditional Election**

God's choice of certain individuals unto salvation before the foundation of the world was based upon His foreseeing that they would respond to His call. He selected only those whom He knew would of themselves freely believe the gospel. Election therefore was determined by or conditioned upon what man would do. The faith which God foresaw and upon which He based His choice was not given to the sinner by God (it was
choice. Election therefore was not determined by or conditioned upon any virtuous quality or act foreseen in man. Those whom God sovereignly elected He brings through the power of the Spirit to a willing acceptance of Christ. Thus God's choice of the sinner, not the sinner's choice of Christ, is the ultimate cause of salvation.

**CALVINISM**

**Limited Atonement/ Particular Redemption**

Christ's redeeming work was intended to save the elect only and actually secured salvation for them. His death was substitutionary endurance of the penalty of sin in the place of certain specified sinners. In addition to putting away the sins of His people, Christ's redemption secured everything necessary for their salvation, including faith which unites them to Him. The gift of faith is infallibly applied by the Spirit to all for whom Christ died, therefore guaranteeing their salvation.

**ARMINIANISM**

**Universal Redemption or General Atonement**

Christ's redeeming work made it possible for everyone to be saved but did not actually secure the salvation of anyone. Although Christ died for all men and for every man, only those who believe on Him are saved. His death enabled God to pardon sinners on the condition that they believe, but it did not actually put away anyone's sins. Christ's redemption becomes effective only if man chooses to accept it.

**CALVINISM**

**Irresistible Grace or the Efficacious Call of the Spirit**

In addition to the outward general call to salvation which is made to everyone who hears the gospel, the Holy Spirit extends to the elect a special inward call that inevitably brings them to salvation. The internal call (which is made only to the elect) cannot be rejected; it always results in conversion. By means of this special call the Spirit irresistibly draws sinners to Christ. He is not limited in His work of applying salvation by man's will, nor is He dependent upon man's cooperation for success. The Spirit graciously causes the elect sinner to cooperate, to believe, to repent, to come freely and willingly to Christ. God's grace, therefore, is invincible; it never fails to result in the salvation of those to whom it is extended.

**ARMINIANISM**

**The Holy Spirit Can Be Effectually Resisted**

The Spirit calls inwardly all those who are called outwardly by the gospel invitation; He does all that He can to bring every sinner to salvation. But inasmuch as man is free, he can successfully resist the Spirit's call. The Spirit cannot regenerate the sinner until he believes; faith (which is man's contribution) proceeds and makes possible the new birth. Thus, man's free will limits the Spirit in the application of Christ's saving work. The Holy Spirit can only draw to Christ those who allow Him to have His way with them. Until the sinner responds, the Spirit cannot give life. God's grace, therefore, is not invincible; it can be, and often is, resisted and thwarted by man.

**CALVINISM**

**Perseverance of the Saints**

**ARMINIANISM**

**Falling from Grace**
All who are chosen by God, redeemed by Christ, and given faith by the Spirit are eternally saved. They are kept in faith by the power of Almighty God and thus persevere to the end.

Those who believe and are truly saved can lose their salvation by failing to keep up their faith, etc. [All Arminians have not been agreed on this point; some have held that believers are eternally secure in Christ - that once a sinner is regenerated, he can never be lost.]

According to Calvinism

Salvation is accomplished by the almighty power of the Triune God. The Father chose a people, the Son died for them, the Holy Spirit makes Christ's death effective by bringing the elect to faith and repentance, thereby causing them to willingly obey the gospel. The entire process (election, redemption, regeneration) is the work of God and is by grace alone. Thus God, not man, determines who will be the recipients of the gift of salvation.

According to Arminianism

Salvation is accomplished through the combined efforts of God (who takes the initiative) and man (who must respond) - man's response being the determining factor. God has provided salvation for everyone, but His provision becomes effective only for those who, of their own free will, "choose" to cooperate with Him and accept His offer of grace. At the crucial point, man's will plays a decisive role; thus man, not God, determines who will be recipients of the gift of salvation.

SOURCE & CREDIT: Above material was taken from: THE FIVE POINTS OF CALVINISM - Defined, Defended, Documented. David N. Steele and Curtis Thomas, are Baptist Ministers in Little Rock, Arkansas. It is the clearest and most concise summary I have found for the average Bible student. If you are interested, there is an abundance of written material (book and internet) that go into in-depth comparisons. Remember also that over a period of almost 400 years, an infinite variety of interpretations and shades of meaning appear. Therefore, what you see above is a pure form of the two beliefs compared side by side for purposes of illustration. Also remember that Jacob Arminius lived and died as a Calvinist, although he was compelled to critically examine and reject elements of his Calvinist background.

One of my favorite scholars and authors on this topic is Dr. Roger E. Olson, a professor of religion at Baylor University and a nationally recognized scholar in the field. He has several books out and is a frequent contributor to the Patheos blog. [http://www.patheos.com]--RM
# THE TUMULTUOUS 16th CENTURY

- All happening about the same time

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<th>John Knox (1514-1572)</th>
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<td>Luther's political views lead to the formation of a state church.</td>
<td>Zwingli's political views lead to the formation of a state church.</td>
<td>Calvin set up a pseudo-theocracy in Geneva, using his political and religious power to have Michael Servetus executed as a heretic.</td>
<td>Anabaptists (dated by some to Jan. 21, 1525, when Conrad Grebel baptized George Blaurock) Mennonites (late 16th century; begun by Menno Simons [1496-1561]). Anabaptists met with considerable resistance from both Catholics and Protestants. Anabaptists advocated a radical separation of church and state.</td>
<td>Knox brought reformation to the church in Scotland; Scotland replaced Roman Catholicism with Presbyterianism (a form of Calvinism) rather than Anglicanism.</td>
<td>Henry VIII denied the authority of the pope and established the Church of England (Anglican Church) This church is known as the Episcopal Church in the United States.</td>
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Session Four:
History of American Christianity, Including Special Mention of the Stone-Campbell Restoration Movement

1. The “Great Awakening” took place in the 18th century—a religious revival that made a great contribution to a sense of unity, eventually creating a single nation. [primarily in New England]

2. The 19th century began with a “Second Great Awakening” on the frontier, and involved mainly Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, and later Disciples of Christ, or “Campbellites,” as they came to be called. [More info at the end of this lesson.]

3. The Christians out of the group led by Barton W. Stone and those led by Alexander Campbell merged in 1832 in Lexington, KY. The next decades saw significant growth.

4. The 19th century was the great century of Modernity, beginning with a series of political upheavals which opened the way for the ideals of democracy and free enterprise—North American independence, the French Revolution, and the independence of the Latin American nations. Freedom of conscience was a big part of that ideal. No one would be forced to affirm anything they did not believe.

5. Eventually near the beginning of the eighteenth century, all American churches became independent, and the American Constitution guaranteed the separation of church and state [unique in the world at the time].

6. Baptists and Methodists grew the most on the expanding frontier, followed by other denominations. The Second Great Awakening, similar to the first, also gave birth to “revivals”, becoming customary among churches in the 19th and into the 20th centuries.

7. Probably the greatest challenge to the Christian churches in the 19th century was slavery, which eventually led to the Civil War and resulted in schisms in many denominations (effects still felt today).

8. The growth of the Wesleyan tradition [Methodist] resulted in several “holiness” churches, groups that emphasized sanctification. Some—but not all—also developed charismatic traits. In 1906 in Los Angeles, the modern Pentecostal Movement began.

9. New theological movements sprang up—Dispensationalism (since mid-1800s), Fundamentalism (early 20th century), etc., as well as new religions with elements derived from Christianity—Mormons, Jehovah’s Witnesses, Christian Science.

10. Rationalism was still on the move, leading many (e.g. in Germany) to believe that only a strictly rational faith was compatible to the modern world. Thus was the origin of “liberalism” in the 19th century (e.g., denial of miracles, resurrection, etc.)

11. The extreme conservative reaction to Liberalism was the Fundamentalist Movement in the early years of the 20th century, with emphasis on beliefs such as a strong affirmation of the inspiration and authority of the Bible, the virgin birth of Jesus, belief in the miracles of Scripture, etc. It spread across various denominations and eventually gave birth to what became known as the Evangelical Movement by the 1950s and 1960s.

12. The Catholic Church took the opposite approach from most Christian denominations, especially in the latter part of the 19th century. Practically anything that could be seen as modern—democracy, freedom of conscience, public schools—was considered heretical. It

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1 Modernity, as used here, refers to a period of history marked by a questioning or rejection of tradition; emphasis on individualism, freedom, and equality. Especially emphasized are inevitable social, scientific, and technological progress and human perfectability.
was during this period that the Pope was declared infallible as he spoke Catholic doctrine (about 1870).

13. One of the most important elements in the history of Christianity during the 19th century was its missionary expansion (esp. Protestants) literally into all the world.

14. By the early 1900s—the high point of Modernity—it was believed that humankind was approaching a glorious time of abundance and joy. Every problem would be solved by means of reason or technology. *It began to come apart with the advent of World War I.*

15. The **Ecumenical Movement** in 20th century history of Christianity has affected in some way or another virtually every religious body.
   - Ferguson says, “*The ecumenical movement may well be the most significant development in church history since the Protestant Reformation.*”
   - It forced churches to deal with various doctrinal differences and seek common authority (hopefully in the Bible).
   - In a sense, it must be considered a giant unity movement in Christianity, although many of the historic religious traditions have remained intact.
   - At the same time, the leaders are talking to each other, and the conversation even involves the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox churches. But certain conservative religious bodies are not involved.

16. **Significant dates** in the ecumenical movement:
   - 1908—Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America formed (later to be called the National Council in 1950
   - 1910—World Missionary Conference at Edinburg, Scotland. [*This conference is usually cited as the true beginning of the ecumenical movement—driven by missions.*]
   - 1925—“Life and Work” Conference in Stockholm, Sweden, emphasizing how churches can cooperate to address social problems.
   - 1927—“Faith and Order” Conference at Lausanne, Switzerland, which addressed fundamental doctrinal divisions among the churches.
   - 1948—World Council of Churches established at Amsterdam, mainly as a result of the work of the two conferences that began in the 1920s. Several conferences have ensued since that time.

17. Among Catholics, the convening of Vatican II in 1962 and its results forever changed the Catholic Church in a significant way and contemporized it. Major emphases: increased ecumenical efforts; use of languages of the people in the Mass instead of Latin; various adjustments in the liturgical calendar; priests now facing the congregation in the Mass instead of the altar; modernization of certain liturgical music, etc.

18. Two broad movements have profoundly affected the face of Christianity, both in America and globally:
   - The modern **Charismatic movement** started in California in the early 1900s and has literally spread throughout many denominations.
   - The **Evangelical movement**, although having a history going back to the late 1700s in England, re-emerged in the last half of the 20th century in America, with its

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2 I am indebted to Dr. Everett Ferguson’s paperback in the *Way of Life* series, published in 1967, for a quick review of this material [Church History: Reformation and Modern], 73, 83. For a fuller discussion of the RM, consult authors such as Bill Humble, Doug Foster, Leonard Allen, and Richard Hughes—all with ACU ties.
emphasis on the need for personal conversion, evangelism, and a high view of the authority and inspiration of the Bible.

19. Christianity today is being marked by significant tension between the Northern Hemisphere, where it has been historically strong, and the Southern Hemisphere, where it is growing rapidly.

**Special Section on the History of the Stone-Campbell Restoration Movement in America**

1. The American Restoration Movement (more accurately known as the Stone-Campbell Restoration Movement) came about in the late 1700s and early 1800s largely because of disenchanted ministers in the Methodist, Baptist, and Presbyterian churches in America.

2. **James O’Kelly**, a Methodist pastor in North Carolina and Virginia, objected to the appointment of Methodist bishops in 1792. He and **Rice Haggard** wanted to be called only “Christians.”

3. **Abner Jones**, previously a Baptist, pulled away and organized a “Christian Church” in Vermont in 1801. Two years later, **Elias Smith**, taught baptism by immersion for forgiveness of sins and established a “church of Christ” in New Hampshire. Both were reacting against Calvinist doctrines and wanted to be non-creedal.

4. **Barton W. Stone**, an ordained Presbyterian pastor in Kentucky, who had been present at the Cane Ridge Revival in the early 1800s, reacted against the Calvinistic doctrine of salvation and the creeds, left the Presbyterian church, declared the Bible as the only creed of faith, adopted a congregational form of government, and called his group of followers simply “Christians.”

5. **Thomas Campbell**, a dissatisfied Presbyterian minister who had come to America from Ireland in 1807, soon withdrew from the church on the grounds of certain doctrinal issues, including creeds.
   a. His son, **Alexander**, also a Presbyterian pastor, had taken a more independent stand himself.
   b. After he read *The Declaration and Address*, a document written by his father laying out a plan for Christian unity, Campbell dedicated the rest of his life toward a realization of the goal of Christian unity.

6. Campbell had met Stone and by the late 1830s, their movements, along with others who had joined them, were united in what would be called the **“Stone-Campbell Restoration Movement.”**

7. The advent of the missionary society and instrumental music, combined with significant influences of the Civil War, eventually led to a split in the movement. The middle ground fell away, and by the beginning of the 20th century, the unity movement had two distinct streams: the Christian Churches (or Disciples) and what we now know as churches of Christ. By the 1950s, the Conservative or Independent Christian Churches and Disciples of Christ were clearly two distinct religious groups.

8. Today, the heirs of the Restoration Movement traditionally fall into three main classifications (although they are more complex than that)—the ‘Disciples’ are the liberal or progressive wing supporting the International Convention (and they consider themselves a denomination); the independent “Christian Churches” are conservative in theology but use the instrument and favor voluntary conventions of churches; while
the ‘Churches of Christ’ favor congregational independence and unaccompanied vocal music in worship. Today, there are ongoing conversations between the Independent Christian Churches and Churches of Christ, and even occasional cooperation among missionary and welfare ministries.

9. A fourth branch of the Stone-Campbell tradition coming out of mainline Churches of Christ is the **International Churches of Christ**. The rift with mainline Churches of Christ was evident by 1980 and was formerly recognized in 1993.
   a. Currently, there are about 650 churches spread across 155 nations, with a membership well over 100,000.
   b. They overtly identify with the Stone-Campbell Restoration Movement and openly state that they had their beginnings in the fellowship of Churches of Christ.
   c. ICOC underwent a re-structuring process in the early 2000s, which was designed to avoid the extremes of their past (overly centralized control and disconnected autonomy). Their early leaders were Chuck Lucas and Kip McKean, (who later was rejected by the ICOC as their leader). The movement was initially dubbed the “Crossroads Movement.”
   d. In the spring of 2004, conversations were held between leaders of ICOC and mainline Churches of Christ at the ACU Lectureships. Apologies for mutual disregard and the failure of both groups to recognize the other as Christians flowed in the meeting. They left with a resolved to help one another and recognize one another as a legitimate expression of the body of Christ.
   e. Perhaps ICOC’s most impressive outreach globally is **HOPE Worldwide** (HOPEww), a charitable foundation started as the benevolent arm of the ICOC. It serves as the primary beneficiary of the church’s charitable donations for the poor, serving 2.5 million needy people each year, with an annual budget of $40 million. Ministries include: support of 148,000 orphans in 8 African countries; hurricane relief; famine and poverty relief in 80 countries; medical missions in Central America; staffing and operating two hospitals in Cambodia and one in Bolivia.
   f. [For further information, check the web; the Wikipedia article, “International Churches of Christ” is an excellent summary.]

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3 Recently, some of the more progressive Churches of Christ are including an instrumental service, along with an a cappella service.
Session Five: Global Christianity

By the Numbers

1. Between 1900 and 2000, the numbers of Christians in Africa grew from 10 million to more than 360 million (from 10% of the population to 46%--and still growing).

2. Two-thirds of Roman Catholics live in the Global South; by 2025 the number will rise to 75%.
   a. 1.2 billion Catholics in the world.
   b. 40% in Latin America; Africa has seen the greatest growth in recent years.

3. Africans and Asians represent some 30% of all Christians, and the proportion is steadily rising.

4. By 2025, Africa and Latin America will vie for the title of the most Christian continent.

5. One-half of the world’s population is under the age of 24, and almost 90% of them live in the Global South.

6. The statistical center of gravity of global Christianity is moving steadily southward.
7. Mandarin Chinese is the most frequently spoken language in the world, followed by English, Spanish, and Arabic.
8. It is projected that by 2050, China will likely have more professing Christians than the U.S.

9. **By 2050, the growth of Christianity is expected to reach 3 billion, of whom only around one fifth or fewer will be non-Hispanic whites.**

10. In the 1950s, the Seventh Day Adventist Church had around 1 million members, mainly in the U.S. Today, the church claims some 14 million members, of whom only 1 million are in America.

11. Between 1900 and 1970, the Christian population of **Nigeria** went from 1% to more than 44%, with the overwhelming majority of them coming out of animism or some sort of ethnic religion with a high degree of intolerance.
   a. Ethno-religion has proved to be a crisis in Nigeria recently.
   b. It has produced violence and complex problems that span church and state relations.

12. **Pentecostalism** and related charismatic movements represent one of the fastest-growing segments of global Christianity. [Dr. Everett Ferguson, eminent professor of church history emeritus at ACU, says that *the rapid growth of Pentecostalism is probably the most significant event in 20th century Christian history.*]
   a. **At least a quarter of the world’s 2 billion Christians are thought to be members** of these lively, highly personal faiths, which emphasize such spiritually renewing “gifts of the Holy Spirit” as speaking in tongues, divine healing and prophesying.
   b. Even more than other Christians, Pentecostals and other renewalists believe that God, acting through the Holy Spirit, continues to play a direct, active role in everyday life. [cf. Pew Research: Religion & Public Life Project]
   c. It is poised to have an **even greater influence in the 21st century.**
   d. Nowhere is this more evident than in the Global South, where Pentecostalism is reshaping the social, political and economic landscape of many countries in Latin America, Africa and Asia.[Pew Research]

13. The “Jesus” film/video (1979) has been translated into 900 languages, and more than 200 million people (many in Africa and Asia) have made “decisions for Christ,” it is reported by the producers.

[See below for interesting article from the Pew Forum for Religion and Public Life on the spread of global Christianity.]

A comprehensive demographic study of more than 200 countries finds that there are 2.18 billion Christians of all ages around the world, representing nearly a third of the estimated 2010 global population of 6.9 billion. Christians are also geographically widespread – so far-flung, in fact, that no single continent or region can indisputably claim to be the center of global Christianity.

A century ago, this was not the case. In 1910, about two-thirds of the world’s Christians lived in Europe, where the bulk of Christians had been for a millennium, according to historical estimates by the Center for the Study of Global Christianity. Today, only about a quarter of all Christians live in Europe (26%). A plurality – more than a third – now are in the Americas (37%). About one in every four Christians lives in sub-Saharan Africa (24%), and about one-in-eight is found in Asia and the Pacific (13%).

The number of Christians around the world has nearly quadrupled in the last 100 years, from about 600 million in 1910 to more than 2 billion in 2010. But the world’s overall population also has risen rapidly, from an estimated 1.8 billion in 1910 to 6.9 billion in 2010. As a result, Christians make up about the same portion of the world’s population today (32%) as they did a century ago (35%).
This apparent stability, however, masks a momentous shift. Although Europe and the Americas still are home to a majority of the world’s Christians (63%), that share is much lower than it was in 1910 (93%). And the proportion of Europeans and Americans who are Christian has dropped from 95% in 1910 to 76% in 2010 in Europe as a whole, and from 96% to 86% in the Americas as a whole.

At the same time, Christianity has grown enormously in sub-Saharan Africa and the Asia-Pacific region, where there were relatively few Christians at the beginning of the 20th century. The share of the population that is Christian in sub-Saharan Africa climbed from 9% in 1910 to 63% in 2010, while in the Asia-Pacific region it rose from 3% to 7%. Christianity today – unlike a century ago – is truly a global faith. (See world maps weighted by Christian population in 1910 and 2010.)

[These are some of the key findings of Global Christianity: A Report on the Size and Distribution of the World’s Christian Population, a new study by the Pew Research Center’s Forum on Religion & Public Life.—Web site is: http://www.pewforum.org/2011/12/19/global-christianity-exec/]
For Further Reading


[Anything by Leonard is worth a good read; one of our best thinkers.]

Ferguson, Everett. *Church History, Vol. 1: From Christ to the Pre-Reformation,* 2nd ed. Zondervan, 2013. [This significant work is a 500+ page account written by ACU’s premier early Christianity scholar, now emeritus. It is the first of a two-volume series outlining the history of Christianity.]


Gonzalez, Justo L. *A History of Christian Thought in One Volume.* Abingdon Press, 2014. [NOTE: Gonzalez is a prolific and respected writer in the area of Christian history. He has a 2-vol. series and this one-volume book here cited—that is in addition to his 90-page booklet that was assigned for the course, *Church History: An Essential Guide.*]


[Hughes is one of the preeminent church historians in America. He was formerly on the faculty at ACU and Pepperdine and now teaches as a visiting professor at Lipscomb. His M.A. is from ACU.]

Woodbridge, John D. and Frank A. James III. *Church History, Vol 2: From Pre-Reformation to the Present Day.* Zondervan, 2013. [This volume is the companion volume to Dr. Ferguson’s book mentioned previously, although not quite the same level of scholarship, but still a fine history (biased opinion)—RM]