

PARALLEL GUIDE 1

The First One Thousand Eight Hundred Years—The Agenda Develops

Summary

Welcome to the first lessons of EfM Year Three. This summary lesson introduces the subject of Church History. The Bible was the primary basis of the study for the first two years of EfM. Now sources for the story of God’s interaction with the people of God become more diffused, scattered over nearly 2000 years of history. They finally merge with our own story, our personal biographies, for we are the continuation of the Church. This lesson introduces the subject matter of Church History through the beginning of the modern era, roughly 1800 CE. The next two centuries and our own are the subject matter of EfM Year Four.

Learning Objective

The objective of this lesson is to provide an overview of the year’s work and to introduce the subject matter.

Assignment to Deepen Your Understanding

With this lesson is a chronological chart to help you navigate through your study of history. Names, dates, and places are like points on a map. You cannot remember them all, so memorization is helpful but of limited use. You remember best those you visit, however, and you will have an opportunity to visit many of the events on this chart during the coming year. Before taking the trip, it is helpful to be familiar with the topography. One way to do this is to identify what you already know. Go through this chart quickly with a light-colored highlighter and mark those dates, events, or names that are known to you.

Preparing for Your Seminar

Identify some of the events, names, dates, or places which have special significance for you. Come prepared to share these with others in your seminar group. Together, you may want to compile a list of historical “markers” to which you will want to pay special attention during the year. This is where church history and your personal story will have some immediate link. As you study the history of the Church, look for other special places which illuminate our times and your life. Sometimes, understanding better how we came to a certain place in history can alter significantly the way we understand ourselves, the people with whom we live, and our relationship with God.

Chronological Chart

<i>Date</i>	<i>Emperors</i>	<i>Church Issues</i>	<i>Leaders</i>
80			
90	Domitian (81-96) Nerva (96-98)		
100	Trajan (98-117)	Apostolic Fathers	
110			
120	Hadrian (117-138)	Gnosticism	
130		Apologists	
140		Marcionism	
150	Antoninus Pius (138-161)	Montanism	
160			
170	Marcus Aurelius (161-180)		
180	Commodus (180-193)		
190		Dynamic Monarchianism	Irenaeus (Lyons) Theodotus the Leather Worker
200	Septimius Severus (193-211)	Modalistic Monarchianism	Tertullian Clement of Alexandria
210	Caracalla (211-217)		Praxeas Sabellius
220	[struggle for power] Alexander Severus (222-235)		
230		Hippolytan schism	Hippolytus of Rome Callixtus of Rome Origen
240	[struggle for power] Decius (249-251)	Novatian schism	Cornelius of Rome
250	Aemilianus (253-260)		Cyprian of Carthage Stephen of Rome
260	Valerian & Gallienus (260-268)		Dionysius of Rome Dionysius of Alexandria Paul of Samosata
270	Claudius II (268-270) Aurelian & Quintillus (270-275) [struggle for power]		
280	Diocletian (284-305)		
290			
300	Constantine I		
310	Constantine & Licinius (311-324)	Council of Arles/Arianism	Arius; Alexander of Alexandria

<i>Date</i>	<i>Emperors</i>	<i>Church Issues</i>	<i>Leaders</i>
320		Council of Nicea	Athanasius
330	Constantine II Constans, Constantius		
340			
350			
360	Julian, Jovian	Pneumatomachians Apollinarianism	Apollinaris Cappadocian Fathers
370	Theodosius I (d. 395)		Diodore of Tarsus Theodore of Mopsuestia Patrick in Ireland John Chrysostom Evagrius Pope Innocent I Augustine of Hippo Nestorius Cyril of Alexandria Pope Leo I
380		Council of Constantinople	
390			
400	Theodosius II (401-450)	Visigoths sack Rome	
420		Nestorianism Bishop of Rome achieves primacy in West	
430			
440		Council of Ephesus Eutychianism	Dioscorus of Alexandria Eutyches
450	Pulcheria and Marcian	Council of Chalcedon	
455		Attila enters Italy/Fall of Rome	
460			
466		Vandals sack Rome	
470	Zeno		
480		Henoticon	Boethius Benedict
	Clovis becomes King (481)		
490	Anastasius		
500			
510	Justin I		
520	Justinian I (527-565)		Benedict of Nursia Foundation of Hagia Sophia
530			
540			
550		“Three Chapters Controversy” Council of Constantinople II	
560			

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<i>Date</i>	<i>Emperors</i>	<i>Church Issues</i>	<i>Leaders</i>
570			
580			Pope Gregory I Columba (Iona)
590		Gregory I (the Great) Augustine establishes Canterbury (597)	Columbanus
600			
610	Heraclitus		Mohammed (571-632)
620			
630		Age of Arab Conquest (635-715) Synod of Whitby (663)	Hilda
640		Monotheletism	
	Constans II		
650			
660	Constantine IV		
670			Venerable Bede
680		Council of Constantinople III	
	Justinian II		
690			
700			Pope Gregory III
710		Arabs besiege Constantinople (717)	
	Leo III (Isaurian)		
720	Charles Martel		
		Iconoclasm	
730		Battle of Tours (733)	
740	Constantine V Pippin the Short (751-768)		
750			
760			
770	Leo IV		
780	Constantine VI		
		Council of Nicea II	
790			
	Irene		Pope Leo III
800	Charlemagne (780-814)		
810			
820		Muslims capture Crete and Sicily (826-878)	
830			
840		Viking invasions of France	
850		Raids by Vikings, Magyars, Slavs which continued to 925	

<i>Date</i>	<i>Emperors</i>	<i>Church Issues</i>	<i>Leaders</i>
860		Vikings conquer Russia	
870			
880 to 912		Rise of Russian states	
900			
910		Founding of abbey of Cluny Arab caliphate in Spain Papacy in decline	
920			
930	Otto crowned emperor (936-973)		
940			
950			
960			
970			
980	Louis V, last Carolingian ruler (986-987) Hugh Capet elected king (987) Capetian dynasty (987-1328)		
990			
1000-1150		Romanesque art and architecture	
1010			
1020			
1030		Normans in Sicily and southern Italy (1036-1091)	
1040		Rise of Seljuk Turks	
1050-1200		Rise of universities Final schism between eastern and western churches (1054)	
1060		Norman conquest of England (1066)	
1070		Turks capture Jerusalem (1071) Lay investiture controversy (1036-1091)	Pope Gregory VII
1080		Carthusian Order established (1084) Capture of Toledo (1085) Abelard	Abbot Suger of St. Denis
1090		First Crusade (1096) Citeaux established (1098) Crusaders take Jerusalem (1099) Beginning of Gothic architecture	Bernard of Clairvaux
1100			
1120			
1130			Averroes
1140		Second Crusade (1147)	
1150	Frederick Barbarossa		
1160	Saladin		

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<i>Date</i>	<i>Emperors</i>	<i>Church Issues</i>	<i>Leaders</i>
1170			Dominic
1180			Francis of Assisi
1190		Third Crusade (1189) Age of Gothic architecture (1036-1091)	Pontificate of Innocent III
1200		Crusaders take Constantinople Albigensian Crusade (1208-1229)	
1210		Magna Carta (1215) Dominican Rule established (1216)	
1220-1290		Flourishing of scholasticism	Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274)
1230		Inquisition established (1233) Castile takes Cordova (1236)	
1240		Mongols conquer Russia (1237-1240)	
1250		Christian reconquest of Spain (1250)	
1260			Dante (1265-1321)
1270		Flourishing of Italian culture (1275-1375)	
1280			
1290		Crusaders driven from Holy Land (1291) Swiss Confederation created (1291)	Pope Boniface VIII (1294-1303)
1300		Beginning of Ottoman power Papacy in Avignon (1305-1378)	
1320			John Wycliffe
1330		Beginning of Hundred Years' War (1337)	
1340		The Black Death (1348-1350)	Geoffrey Chaucer
1360			John Gerson Pierre d'Ailly
1370			Giovanni Boccaccio Catherine of Siena
		The Great Schism (1378-1417)	Tomas de Torquemada
1380		The Conciliar Movement	Lorenzo Ghilberti
1390			Bruneleschi
1400		Council of Pisa (1409) Invention of movable-type printing by Gutenberg	
1410		Council of Constance (1414) Repression of Lollards (1414-1470)	

<i>Date</i>	<i>Emperors</i>	<i>Church Issues</i>	<i>Leaders</i>
1420		Execution of John Huss (1415)	
1430		Hussite Wars (1420-1434)	
1440			
1450		Conclusion of Hundred Years' War (1337-1453)	
		Fall of Constantinople to Turks (1453)	
1460			Erasmus
1470			Michelangelo
			Buonarroti (d. 1564)
1480			Martin Luther
			(b. 1483)
1490	Maximilian I (1493-1519)		
			Pico della
		Columbus to America (1492)	Mirandola (d. 1494)
1500			John Calvin
			(b. 1509)
1510		Zwingli comes to Zurich	Sandro Botticelli
		Luther's 95 Theses (1518)	
	Charles V (1519-1558)		
		Cortez discovers Mexico	
			Teresa of Avila
1520		Luther condemned	
		<i>Exsurge Domine</i>	Cardinal Ximenes
		Peasants' Revolt	Pope Adrian VI
		Diet of Worms (1521)	Thomas Wolsey
		German Bible (1522)	
		Religious War in Switzerland (1524)	
		Diet of Speyer (1526)	
1530		Augsburg Confession	Zwingli dies (1731)
		Jesuits founded (1534)	Pope Paul III
		Calvin's Institutes published (1536)	Thomas Cromwell
		Anne Boleyn beheaded (1536)	
		<i>The Bishop's Book</i> (1537)	
		First English Bible (1537)	
1540		Council of Trent (1545)	
		First English Prayer Book (1549)	Thomas Cranmer
1550			Michael Servetus
	Ferdinand	Forty-Two Articles (1552)	Pope Julius III
	Elizabeth I (1158-1603)		
1560	Maximilian II	Pope Pius V	

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<i>Date</i>	<i>Emperors</i>	<i>Church Issues</i>	<i>Leaders</i>
1570		Elizabeth excommunicated	Richard Hooker
1580		Defeat of Spanish Armada	(1554-1600)
		Independence of Holland (1581)	
1590		Edict of Nantes (1598)	
1600	James I	First Hampton Court Conference (1604)	John Milton
		First permanent English settlement in America (1607)	George Herbert
			John Cosin
1610		Authorized English Bible (1611)	René Descartes
1620		Plymouth Colony	
1630		Charles I beheaded	
1640		Civil War in England (1642-1648)	Oliver Cromwell
1650			
1660	Charles II (Restoration)		
1670			Isaac Newton
1680			
1690	William and Mary		
1700			J. S. Bach
1710			G. F. Handel
1720			John Wesley
	Charles Wesley		
1730			
1740		The Methodist Church	
1750			
1760			
1770		American Independence (1776)	
1780		French Revolution (1789)	
		First American Bishop in the Episcopal Church (1784)	Samuel Seabury
1790			
1800	Napoleon		

THE FIRST ONE THOUSAND EIGHT HUNDRED YEARS— THE AGENDA DEVELOPS

This chapter is an introduction to EfM Year Three. We now pass from a study of the Old and New Testaments to a study of the history of the Church. Why? What is the value of the past? Is it not enough to learn to think theologically, as the twentieth-century Swiss theologian Karl Barth put it, with the Bible in one hand and the newspaper in the other? Church members may know something about the development of the Bible and the foundation in Holy Scriptures, but to study church history is to come into a different world of ideas. It seems as if there are so many confusing whirls and scrolls! In church history, both the form and the content of what we learn may seem unfamiliar, so this is a new exploration.

The fourfold pattern of tradition, action, position, and culture which we have used for theological reflection applies to the vast expanse of Christian history. As *tradition*, church history is the collection of the corporate memory of the people of God. It is also a record of the church's *action*, namely, those episodes and events that form the distinctive pattern of the church's life. In each epoch, the church has been part of a *culture*. It has drawn on the symbols, laws, social practices, values, and philosophies of the societies in which it has been set. In many respects it has also participated in creating the culture of these societies. Thus our history is part of the tradition and the culture that informs what we believe and shapes our activities.

Theological Reflection

The Old and New Testaments constitute the unique and indispensable witness to the perception of God which most Christians have held. However, most Christians seem to want to make a quite uncritical leap from the Bible to the modern world. They do not notice in the process something that is so obvious that it becomes invisible. The Bible is the church's book. This means that the church holds and reveres the Bible as the word of God. It uses that Bible in its worship, reflects on it, preaches its texts, reflects on its teachings, interprets these teachings in the light of modern conditions, and tries to live by these teachings in the contemporary world.

We must speak not only of the Bible but also of the context in which the Bible is received, revered, and interpreted. That context is the church's own history. In fact, even though we may assume that the Bible is sufficient in itself, the context in which it is interpreted is so influential that it can control the very way in which the Bible is understood. When we define the context more carefully we refer to it as the "hermeneutical" context, the context of interpretation.

Tradition is quite misunderstood if it is regarded merely as a legacy or body of teachings transmitted from the past. When it is so understood, it is usually regarded as more like ballast to a ship than like sails. Tradition properly understood is living tradition. It is a self-conscious process of handing on the faith and life of Christian people from the beginning to the present. It finds expression in such things as creeds,

confessions, hymns, and ceremonies, and even in such mundane things as family stories told by a parent or grandparent.

The interpretive context has its own history. As soon as we try to understand it, we are involved in the study of church history. Church history explains why people of different traditions within Christianity worship, believe, and live in particular ways. To understand our own history as Episcopalians, Roman Catholics, or Protestants, or even non-Christian Westerners, we need to follow the lines by which we are connected through our own family history to the Bible. Uncritical jumps from the closure of the New Testament into the twenty-first century falsify the picture!

Because the process of learning church history involves so many new personalities, ideas, and movements, this chapter defines our starting point and presents this year's program. It expands the time table we provide in the parallel guide for this chapter. In Year Three we deal with the period from the close of the New Testament to the beginning of the nineteenth century, an imprecise but useful point by which to denote the modern era of industry and technology.

Under- standing the Context

As early as the fourth century, a recognizably Christian culture had evolved, and, despite modern secularism, it remains a force today. A history is always limited in its scope. The best that can be done in writing history is to trace the main historical lines that connect Christian churches today to the early church and to relate them to the period of the foundation or consolidation. Only the most obvious landmarks can be selected in a survey such as this, and these must be placed in their political and economic contexts.

For us whose heritage is European, the history of the church may be divided into four large eras: the early church; the Middle Ages; the Reformation; and the modern period. The literature on the various subjects is voluminous. The reading suggestions offer additional resources to those who desire to learn more than we can present in this survey.

It is a tribute to the persistence and effectiveness of the early Christian apostles and evangelists that, within five centuries, almost the whole of the empire, from Ireland in the west to Asia Minor in the east, was under Christian influence. The section on the early church ends with a survey of church-state relations from the close of the New Testament to the time of Emperor Justinian (reigned 527-565).

The supreme achievement of the Greek Christian tradition in its early form is to be found in the writings of Clement of Alexandria, Origen, and Athanasius. The streams of thought issuing from these three writers come together in what is often called "Alexandrian" theology.

We note that Orthodoxy (the Eastern Church), has a history that continues vigorously from this period. This focus provides a bridge to the second section, the study of the Middle Ages, and a third section, the Reformation in the sixteenth century. This then brings us to the nineteenth century where we introduce the modern era, which is presented in Year Four.

When we study church history, we find a past of great complexity and diversity. We can deal with it in one of two ways. We can try to examine it objectively. If so, then we should properly apply to it all the forms of research and investigation appropriate to any scientifically conducted study. Church history needs this discipline. There is no excuse for slipshod work in dealing with the sources of the church's faith and life.

The other way of dealing with church history is to remember it. As those who have worked through the Old Testament materials will recall, "remembering" for Israel was much more than a mental act. When Jews remembered what God had done, they incorporated themselves into the actions that they were remembering. Memory for them was not simply intellectual, but also dynamic. To remember was to become present again in the events of the past. Those events were regarded as having such power that they include us in them. Still in the *seder* of the Passover, for example, when Jewish families are gathered for the meal commemorating the deliverance from Egypt, a question is asked: "Why is this night different from all other nights?" The answer is given: "This is the night when God took us by the hand and led us out of Egypt." Notice the word "us." We in the twenty-first century were not participants in the Exodus. Yes, we were, the Jew responds. When we remember the Exodus, we become part of it again.

It is in this sense that we also remember church history. In the chapters that follow, we "remember" the great teachers of the past—Athanasius, Thomas Aquinas, Teresa of Avila, Martin Luther, Catherine of Siena, and many others. We are not simply recollecting what they said or did. As we remember them dynamically, we enter into their struggles and church today is not different from the experience of other sinful yet faithful figures of the past. We have our challenges, conflicts, opportunities and joys. We can learn from them and presumably gain some wisdom in the process. They are present with us, or, better, we are present with them. With them we are part of the process of handing on the apostles' teaching and fellowship, the breaking of bread, and prayers.

As we make the move from the world of the Bible to the twenty-first century, how can we make sense of the way in which our predecessors handed on their faith? How are we related to them? And how do we make sense of what they taught and believed?

First we have to translate or transpose the *substance* of what the teachers of the church have said in the terms of our own day. We cannot simply repeat what they taught, whether in unaltered creeds or formulae. Those early teachers did the same thing. They transposed the Christian message or the witness of the Bible out of Jewish ways of thinking into Greek, that is, into Hellenized, ways of thinking. Others at a later time transposed the Hellenized way of thinking into a Latin way of thinking.

Luther did something of the same thing in the sixteenth century. Other theologians have attempted the same transposition in terms of liberation theology, or feminist theology, or Black theology. Sometimes the attempts succeed, sometimes they fail. They succeed when they hand on the heart and essence of Christianity. The question

**A New
Context**

**Summary
and
Prospect**

then is: How do we judge whether the transposition has done this faithfully? What authority or authorities do we appeal to in order to test it.

Up to now we have been looking at the ‘foundation-myth’ of the Christian religion. The sacred scriptures, the books of the Holy Bible, possess an authority for Christians beyond that of other writings. The church accepted these books as accounts of the story of salvation. In the events of the life of Israel and the life of Jesus, the church saw the decisive moments of salvation-history. The life, death, and Resurrection of Jesus were the climax of God’s work begun in the call of Abraham.

In the remaining two years of this program we learn how the church responded to these events. These responses have an additional authority, the weight of which varies from denomination to denomination. For Roman Catholics, they form the Tradition, meaning the historical additions to the biblical tradition, and they are given authority equal to that of scripture. For most Protestants, the Bible is the authoritative document and, for some, it is the Bible alone. Historical responses, indeed, comprise a tradition, but not one that is authoritative. For Anglicans, scripture and tradition—in the sense of the ‘living tradition’ we noted at the beginning of this chapter—form two ‘legs’ of a ‘three legged stool’ as the test of any translation or transposition of the Christian gospel. The ‘third leg’ is ‘reason’. Scripture and tradition, evaluated and interpreted by reason, provide the basis for the authoritative test.

In Years One and Two we had the primary source at hand—the Bible. It would be impossible to obtain all the documents needed for a study of the church’s two-thousand-year life. Yet, some contact with the primary sources is important. Nothing serves so well to establish an acquaintance with a figure from the past as reading his or her own writings. Comments about people never tell as much about them as their own words do.

There are several multi-volume anthologies of Christian documents on the market, but their cost is prohibitive for most people. We have therefore asked you to purchase and use the one-volume anthology edited by Henry Bettenson, *Documents of the Christian Church (DCC)* (Oxford University Press). Several editions of this collection exist so you must refer to the Table of Contents to locate particular items. Unfortunately the page numbers are not consistent in the various editions.

The denominations as we know them today did not just happen—they were shaped by their pasts. An important goal in the study of the history of the Christian church is to acquire understanding of how we got where we are. Sometimes things that loom very large and important when seen up close take on a different size and value if we stand farther off. We can see a wider horizon, and some details we may have overlooked before stand out clearly when the larger tapestry becomes visible. As we move from point to point through time, try to acquire the habit of asking “How does what happened *then* help me understand what is happening *now*?”

A goal closely related to this is to acquire a critical ability to test the authority of the past. No one should overlook the wisdom of past generations—should we

constantly repeat their mistakes or reject their discoveries? The ‘foundation-myth’ stands before us today as it did in the past; we have to make our own responses to it. No generation has made *our* response. Which ones can we claim as they stand, and which ones must we alter?

A third goal is to enrich the repertoire of models by which we interpret our own acts of ministry. Each model acts like a discipline or path to follow. They expand and deepen as you proceed. Each speaks to an aspect of life—the life of the mind (theology), the life of the spirit (liturgics and ascetics), and the life of action (ethics). Practice drawing on them as they unfold; use them deliberately as you reflect on your acts of ministry.

Finally we add a note about the difficulties we encounter with a broad historical survey such as this. Dividing history into periods is a tricky business. Each historical period is an artificial construct. The boundaries that separate one period from another are fixed only in the mind of the historian. The criteria for designating them as well as what to report and what emphasis to place on various events vary according to each scholar’s interpretation. The criteria we have used, however, are fairly obvious. Each period we have defined has a particular overarching set of concerns, usually strongly influenced by circumstances in the world in which the church existed.

