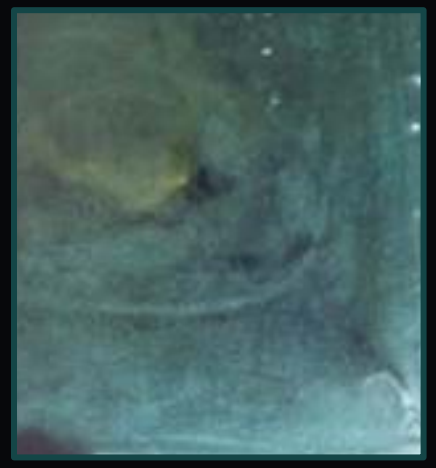
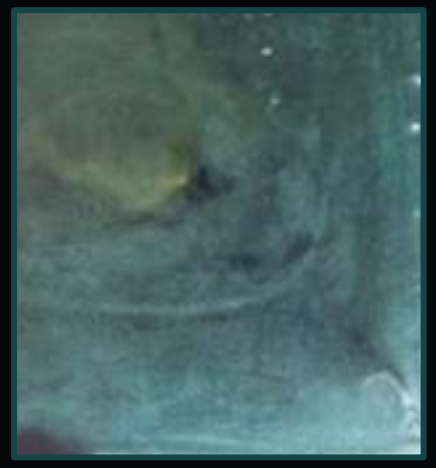
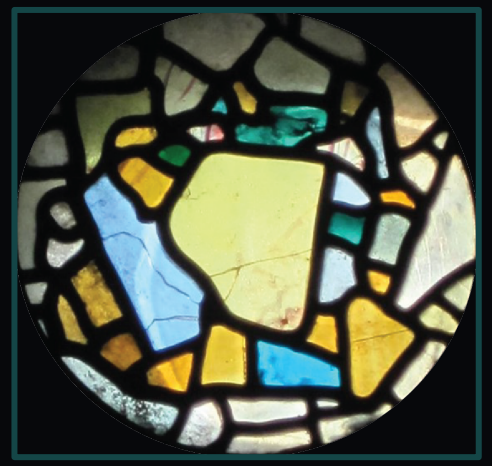






The History of the Church

From the First Century to Present Day

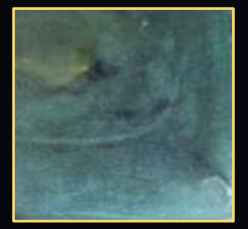



So What?

Why do we need to study historical theology?

There are many reasons to study church history. Here are four important ones:

- Understanding – Our local church is how it is today because of a long history of events over 2000 years.
- Transcendence –the body of Christ is much bigger than our tiny exposure to it. It spans space and time.
- Knowledge – We can confidently embrace and defend our faith when we know how the Lord brought it about.
- Peace of Mind – We can rest in the knowledge that God has always preserved His people and His church will triumph.











Five Major Divisions of Church History

- The Apostolic Period (33-100 AD)
- The Patristic Period (100-500 AD)
- The Medieval Period (500-1500 AD)
- The Reformation Period (1500-1650 AD)
- The Modern Period (1650 AD – Present)











Question:
During any of these periods, was the gospel lost? Was there ever a time in church history when God could not find a remnant of true faith upon the earth?

Let's explore the answer to this question as we survey 2000 years since the birth of the church…





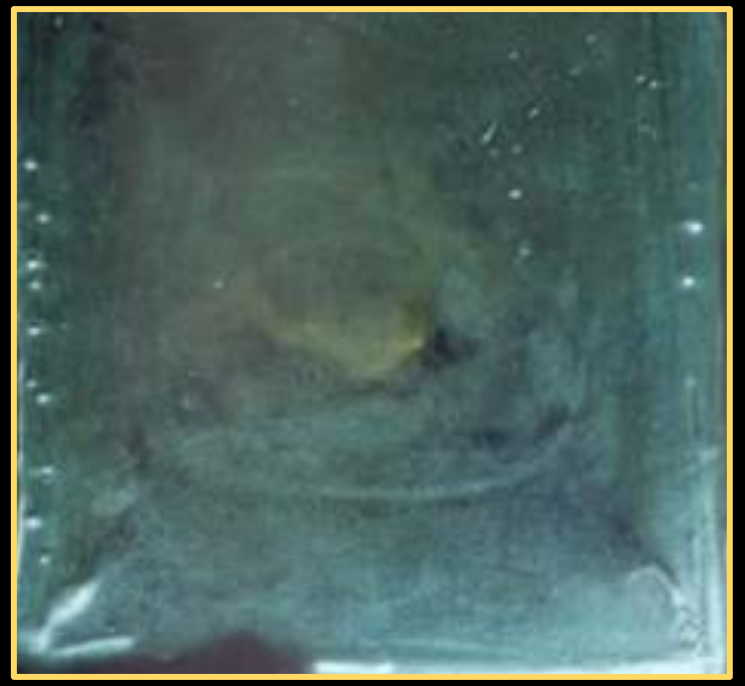






Apostolic Period

33 – 100 AD





Key Events of the Apostolic Age

- The church was born on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2).
- The writing of the New Testament was finished (96 AD).
- The Great Commission went forth.
- Jerusalem and the temple destroyed by the Rome (70 AD).
- Believers experienced persecution from the Jews.
- Many gentiles were added to the church and grew in leadership roles.

Key People of the Apostolic Age



- John
- Paul
- Timothy
- Titus
- James
- Peter
- Others carrying out the Great Commission as described in Acts and the epistles.

Key Places of the Apostolic Age

- Rome
- Antioch
- Alexandria
- Jerusalem
- Carthage
- Ephesus



Spotlight on Antioch



- Located in Syria, it is a key city during this time.
- Believers in Jesus were first called Christians here (Acts 11:26).
- It later became the center for the literal method of hermeneutics (Bible interpretation).

WORTH NOTING

Antioch is located on the Dead Sea fault line, resulting in many destructive earthquakes.

Spotlight on John

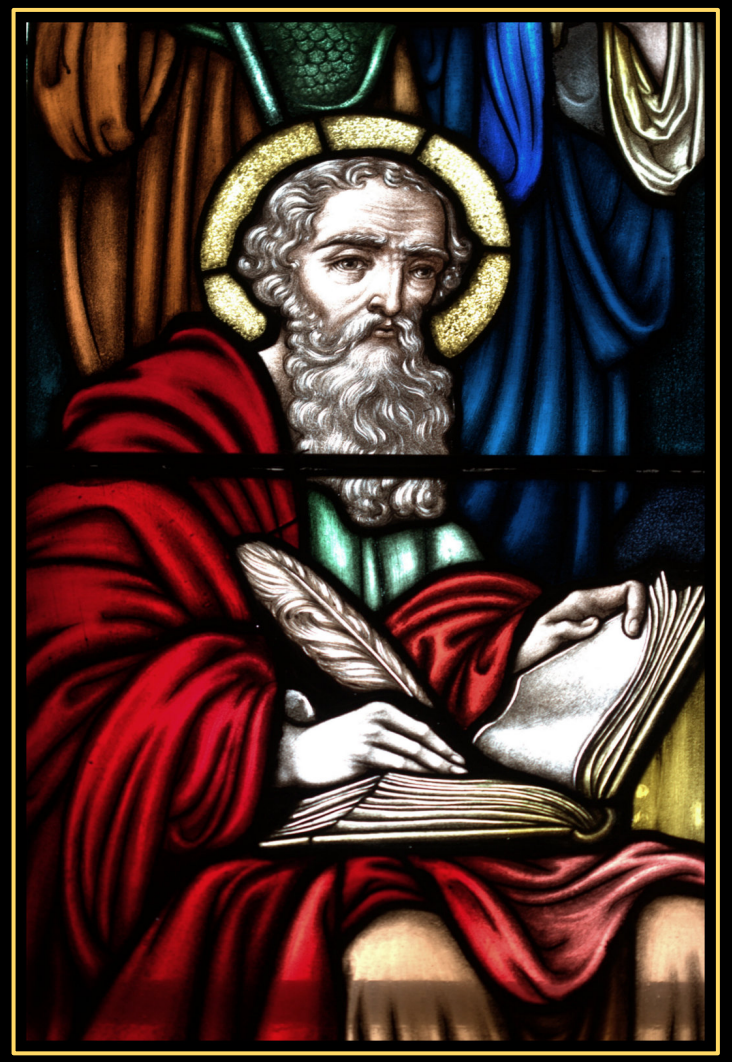
- Authored the Gospel of John, 1, 2 & 3 John and Revelation
- Discipled faithful pastor and martyr Polycarp of Smyrna
- Believed to be the only apostle who escaped martyrdom, living out his days in exile on the island of Patmos.



WORTH NOTING

John never identified himself in his gospel. Instead, he called himself the disciple "whom Jesus loved" five times. This displays his identity in Christ, a model for us.

Where is the remnant of true faith?



The Apostle John

- During this first century Apostolic Age, the apostles, divinely inspired and directed, are still living.
- God's Word is being completed under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.
- Churches are established and being led by apostles and other godly elders.
- According to Rev. 2-3, while many churches are battling enemies from within and without, true and genuine faith is readily apparent.

Patristic Period

100-500 AD



Key Movements of the Patristic Period



- First Century Apostolic Fathers
  - Gospel spreaders, church builders
- Second Century Apologists
  - Defenders of the faith from external attacks
- Third Century Polemicists
  - Fighters of heresy within the church
- Fourth Century Theologians
  - Serious students of the Scriptures

Key Apostolic Fathers (1st Century)



<u>Clement of Rome</u>

- Disciple of Peter & Paul
- Wrote to strengthen the church at Corinth

<u>Polycarp of Smyrna</u>

- Disciple of John
- Faithful pastor, martyr
- On the day he was martyred, he is famously quoted as saying, *"Eighty and six years have I served him, and he never did me any injury: how then can I blaspheme my King and my Savior?"*

Other Apostolic Fathers (1st Century)

- Hermas
- Ignatius of Antioch
- Papias
- Barnabas (document)
- 2 Clement (document)
- Didache (document)



WORTH NOTING

The Apostle's Creed was likely being formed at this time, although no one can be credited with writing it. It was modified several times until 724 AD.



Key Apologists (2nd Century)



Tertullian of Carthage

- "*The only reasonable thing to do is be a Christian*"
- First North African church father
- "Triple" believer's baptism

Justin Martyr of Rome

- Born in Shechem of Samaria
- Most important apologist of 2nd Century
- Defended the faith as relates to Greek philosophy/culture and the Old Testament

Key Polemicists (3rd Century)

Irenaeus

- Tutored by Polycarp
- Wrote *Against Heresies*
- Suffered great persecution culminating in martyrdom.

Origen

- Father of allegorical hermeneutics
- Zealous exegete, theologian, writer, martyr

Clement of Alexandria

- Mixed theology and Greek philosophy
- Held fast to the deity of Christ



Origen



WORTH NOTING

As a child, his father was martyred. He planned to be martyred with him but his mother hid all his clothes, saving his life. As a young man, Origen castrated himself, inspired by a misapplication of Matt. 19:12. He later regretted his decision.

Key Theologians (4th Century)



Augustine

Arius – Father of the Arian heresy

Athenasius – Fought against Arianism

Ambrose – Taught Augustine

Augustine – Greatest of all ancient theologians

Jerome – Translated the Latin Vulgate

Theodore – Brilliant exegete; literal hermeneutic

John Chrysostom – "*Golden-mouthed*" preacher, literal hermeneutic

Key Regional Groupings



<u>The West</u>

(Rome, Carthage)

- Clement of Rome
- Tertullian
- Irenaeus
- Jerome
- Ambrose
- Augustine

<u>The East</u>

(Constantinople, Alexandria, Asia Minor, Holy Land, Antioch)

- Polycarp
- Justin Martyr
- Clement of Alexandria
- Origen
- Athanasius
- Theodore
- John Chrysostom

Key Heresies



- *Gnosticism* – rejected material creation, salvation results from knowledge of divinity within self
- *Arianism* – Son of God created by the Father, neither eternal nor equal with God
- *Pelagianism/Semi-Pelagianism* – denied original sin and predestination
- *Eutychianism* – denied the humanity of Christ, as subsumed by His divinity, resulting in one nature
- *Nestorianism* – denied the reality of the incarnation

Key Councils & Creeds



- Council of Nicea (Turkey), 325 – defeated Arianism, produced the Nicene Creed, clarified Christological doctrines

- Council of Chalcedon (Turkey), 451 – condemned Nestorianism, condemned Eutychianism, clarified Christological doctrines, divided the western and eastern churches (at left)



Council of Chalcedon

Spotlight on Constantine

- 272 - 337 AD
- Emperor of Rome 306-337
- Self-described conversion to Christianity in 311
- Issued Edit of Milan in 313, declaring empire-wide tolerance for Christianity
- Called for Council of Nicaea, 325
- Unified the empire
- Merged church and state





WORTH NOTING

Constantine's mother, Helen, was a Christian who devoted much of her life acquiring "holy relics" and marking holy sites in Bible lands, such as the place of Jesus' birth in Bethlehem. Historians have debated the accuracy of her shrines ever since.

Where is the remnant of true faith?



While errant practices such as infant baptism, apostolic succession and the union of church and state originated during this period, there were many who held a high view of the Scriptures, taught salvation by grace alone, and risked their lives fighting heresy and proclaiming gospel truth. Here are just a few of those men:

- Clement of Rome (taught by apostles Peter and Paul)
- Polycarp (taught by the apostle John)
- Athanasius
- Patrick of Ireland
- Augustine

Medieval Period

500-1500 AD



Key Divisions of the Medieval Period
(aka the Middle Ages)





Gregory I

- "Dark Ages" 500-1000 AD
- Scholastic Age 800-1300 AD
- Pre-Reformation Age 1300-1500 AD

Spotlight on Middle Ages Christianity



- The RCC is the only authorized church in the West
- Separatists exist in secrecy, targets of persecution
- The Bible (Latin Vulgate) is not accessible to the common man, only Roman Catholic clergy
- Bishops give rise to popes, also called vicars of Christ; popes declared infallible *ex cathedra*
- Church tradition becomes equal to the Scriptures
- Unbiblical doctrines and practices are implemented such as purgatory, infant baptism, transubstantiation, praying to "saints," the use of relics, baptismal regeneration, ascetism, simony and clerical celibacy
- The RCC declares itself a higher authority than any given state
- Mendicant orders spring up: The Franciscans, the Dominicans and others

Key Events of the Dark Ages



- Fall of Roman Empire in 476 results in many small serfdoms and the feudal system.
- The rise of the Roman Catholic Church (RCC) and the papacy result in a nearly universal departure from the NT church model.
- Medieval Christianity is challenged by the rise and rapid spread of Islam.
- Pope Leo III exerted power over the Roman state by crowning Charlemagne in 800 AD, resulting in the church-state alliance called the Holy Roman Empire.



Kingdoms of the Dark Ages

Key Events of the Scholastic Age





The Crusades

- Catholic scholars such as Thomas Aquinas and Anselm of Canterbury take a fresh look at theology, philosophy and logic, founding schools in the process
- The East/West Schism of 1054: Pope Leo IX excommunicated the patriarch of Constantinople, Michael Cerularius.
- The "golden age" of the papacy (1000-1300 AD) sees popes lay hold of unprecedented power.
- The Roman Catholic Crusades: A series of military campaigns against the Islamic encroachment of Christian holy sites and Roman and Byzantine territories are carried out from 1096 to 1291 .

Spotlight on Islam



- Founded by Mohammed in 610 AD in Arabia
- Posed a profound threat to the Christianized world
- "Holy" cities are Mecca, Medina and Jerusalem
- The five pillars of Islam are required for the faithful: a creed, prayer five times daily, a pilgrimage to Mecca, alms giving and fasting during Ramadan
- Holy war (*jihad*) is an important sixth component
- A militant religion, Islam spread quickly throughout Arabia, the Mediterranean regions and beyond
- Salvation is achieved through strict observance of the Koran



Key Events of the Pre-reformation Age





John Wycliffe



"The Life of Jan Huss"

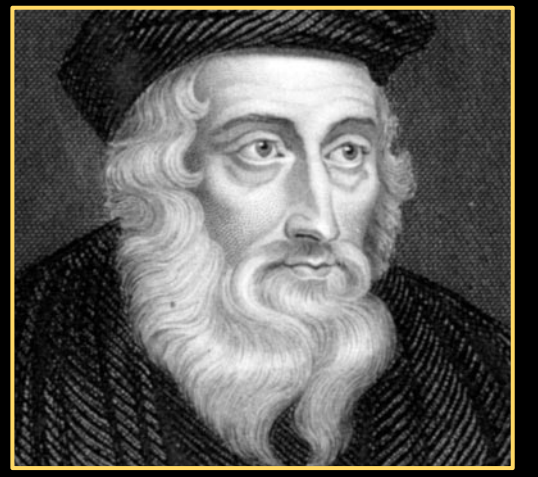
- The bubonic plague ("Black Death" or "Black Plague") sweeps through Europe from 1346 to 1353 AD, killing 75-200 million people
- Catholic priests John Wycliffe of England and Jan Huss of Czechoslovakia begin to challenge the RCC's errors and abuses
- Their followers, the Lollards and the Hussites, experience terrible persecution
- Johannes Gutenberg invents the movable-type printing press in 1440, which has an incalculable impact on the reformers ability to spread their life-giving message

Spotlight on the Pre-reformers

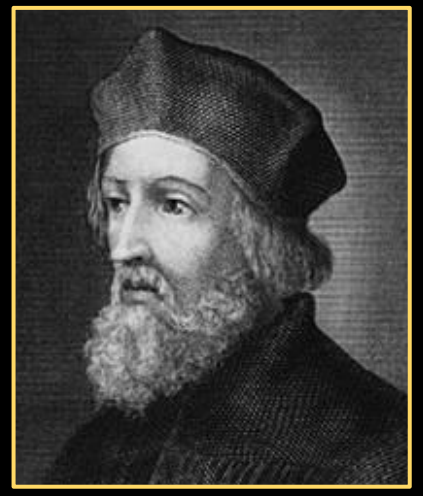


John Wycliffe

- Called the "Morningstar of the Reformation"
- Priest, theologian, scholar; he translated the Scriptures from the Latin Vulgate to middle English
- Died in 1384 of natural causes at age 56; in 1415 he was declared a heretic, his body exhumed and burned, his ashes cast into the Swift River and carried into global ocean currents



Wycliffe



Huss

Jan Huss

- Surname sounds like "goose"
- Priest, theologian, philosopher; his reforms were widely embraced in Bavaria and Moravia
- Had important ties to Wycliffe through his students
- His teachings influenced Martin Luther
- Burned at the stake as a heretic in 1415

Where is the Remnant of True Faith?



6-7th Cen.	8-9th Cen.	10-11th Cen.	12-13th Cen.	14-15th Cen.
Donatists*				
Paulicians*	Paulicians*			
		Bogomils*		
			Albigensians*	
			Arnoldists	
			Henricians	
			Petrobrusians	
			Waldensians	Waldensians
				Hussites
				Lollards
				Friends of God*

*Information on these groups' beliefs is limited due to harsh persecution, secrecy, and a lack of extant documents. These separatists may have had some errant beliefs alongside biblical ones.

Where is the Remnant of True Faith?



What characteristics do these groups have in common?

1. They hold a high view of Scripture.
2. They oppose the RCC's departure from the New Testament church model, such as the worship of the "saints."
3. They oppose RCC corruption and the church-state alliance.
4. They seek a simpler, humbler Christian lifestyle than the RCC tradition.
5. They are heavily persecuted by the RCC, often relocating and hiding their communities.

Reformation Period

1500-1650 AD



Six Key Events of the Reformation



Martin Luther

1. RCC abuses and theological heresies reach a breaking point.
2. Martin Luther nails his 95 Theses on church door in Wittenberg in 1517 to bring needed reforms to the RCC.
3. Reformers Luther, Zwingli and Calvin break from the RCC, each contributing to the Protestant movement in different ways in Germany and Switzerland.



Six Key Events of the Reformation



4. The Anabaptist movement gains popularity despite severe persecution from the RCC and Protestants.

5. Whole cities of Christians abandon the RCC and choose a church model that reflects the NT more closely.

6. Protestant and Anabaptist movements spread all over Europe and the New World.



Scottish Reformer John Knox

The Five Key Doctrines of the Reformation Advanced by Martin Luther





"Luther's Rose"

1. Scripture Alone (*Sola Scriptura*) – There is only one authority for the believer; it is not Scripture plus the magisterium (Catholic dogma).

2. By Grace Alone (*Sola Gratia*) – Salvation cannot come through grace plus a believer's good works (i.e., the sacraments).

3. Through Faith Alone (*Sola Fide*) – Salvation cannot come through the faith plus a believer's good works.

See 2 Pet 1:21, 2 Tim 3:16, Mark 7:7, I Cor 4:6, Eph 2:8-9, Titus 3:5, Rom 3:24.

The Five Key Doctrines of the Reformation



4. Through Christ Alone (*Sola Christus*) – The believer can and must approach Christ directly, not through a priest as mediator.

5. To God's Glory Alone (*Soli Deo Gloria*) – God's glory must not be shared with popes, dead saints or Mary.

See I Tim 2:5, Heb 7:23-25, Jude 25, Isa 5-11.



WORTH NOTING

The Five Solas were dangerous doctrines to espouse. In 1521 Luther was kidnapped for his own protection by his loyal followers and hidden in Wartburg Castle for 300 days, where he translated the Bible into German. They disguised him as a squire the few times he went into the village in Wartburg.

Spotlight on 16th Century Reformers



- Martin Luther – Wittenberg, Germany: Catholic-priest-turned-Protestant-pastor, Luther went from agonizing over his unworthiness before God to a joyful sinner saved by grace. He and his ex-Catholic nun wife, Katharina von Bora, opened their home to all, living boldly and risking everything for the *five solas*. Luther is the dynamite that blew up the dark and impassable landscape.



- John Calvin - Geneva, Switzerland: Master theologian and preacher, Calvin systematized protestant theology in his *Calvin's Institutes*. His development of the doctrine of grace has led to what today is called Calvinism or reformed theology. Calvin is the construction crew that built the highway where the landscape was cleared by the dynamite.

Spotlight on 16th Century Reformers



- Ulrich Zwingli – Switzerland: A Catholic priest who broke with Rome in 1519, he advanced the doctrines of election, God's sovereignty and the Lord's Supper as a remembrance. He strove for spiritual and political renewal in his sphere in Zurich.



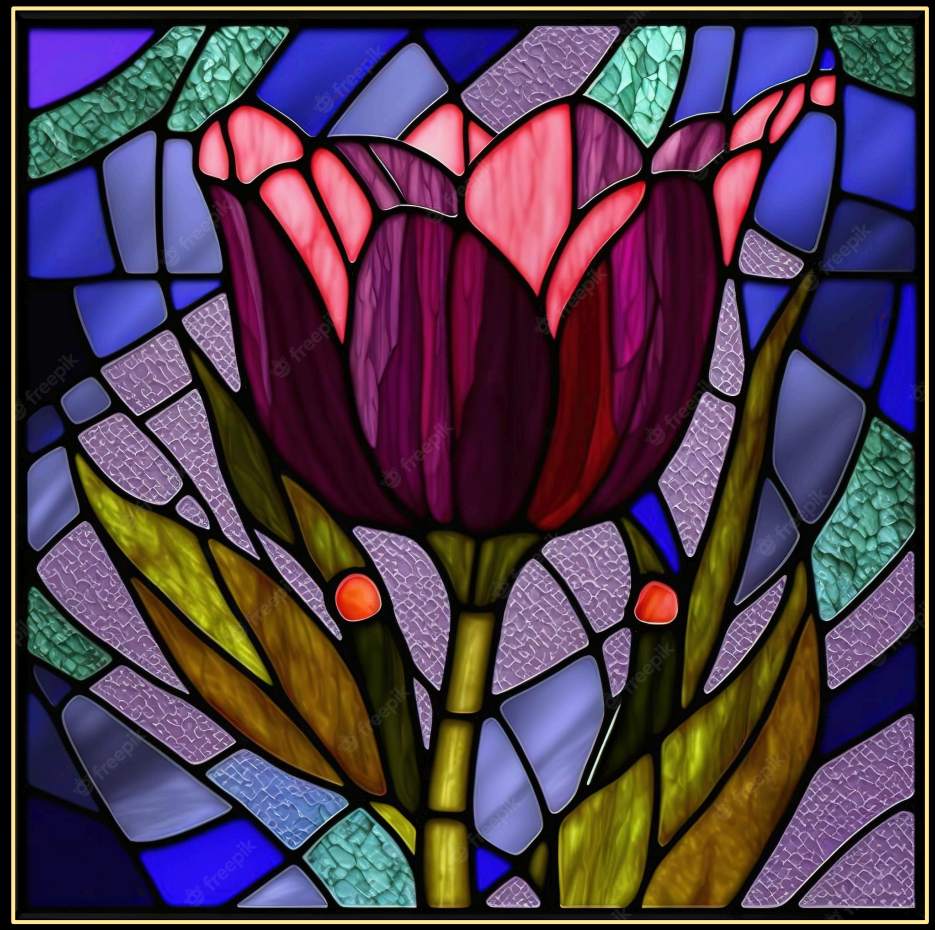
The great Reformation Wall of Geneva, featuring the fathers of Calvinism: John Calvin, John Knox, William Farel and Theodore Beza

- John Knox – Scotland: Led the Scottish Reformation and founded the Presbyterian Church of Scotland. He spent many years running from his adversaries, landing in places like Geneva and Frankfurt, where he continued his studies and ministry.

Spotlight on Calvinism (Doctrines of Grace)



- Total Depravity of Man
  Eph 2:1-5
- Unconditional Election
  Eph 1:4-6
- Limited Atonement
  John 17:9
- Irresistible Grace
  John 6:37
- Perseverance of the Saints
  Eph 1:3-14



TULIP – A helpful acronym to remember the doctrines of grace that reflect Calvin's works.

Spotlight on Anabaptists



- The movement begins in Zurich, Switzerland, with the students of Zwingli in 1523, rising out of the Reformation.
- The key figures include Conrad Grebel, Felix Manz, George Blaurock, Michael Sattler.
- Zwingli breaks with Grebel, Manz and Blaurock over infant baptism, with Zwingli ultimately defending the practice.
- Anabaptists also hold to symbolic Lord's supper and other NT church practices.
- Anabaptists are heavily persecuted from all sides, being martyred by burning, drowning, the sword, and many horrific tortures.
- The baptistic movement, with its many denominational expressions, is very much alive today.



The martyrdom of an Anabaptist

Key 16th Century Losses for Roman Catholicism





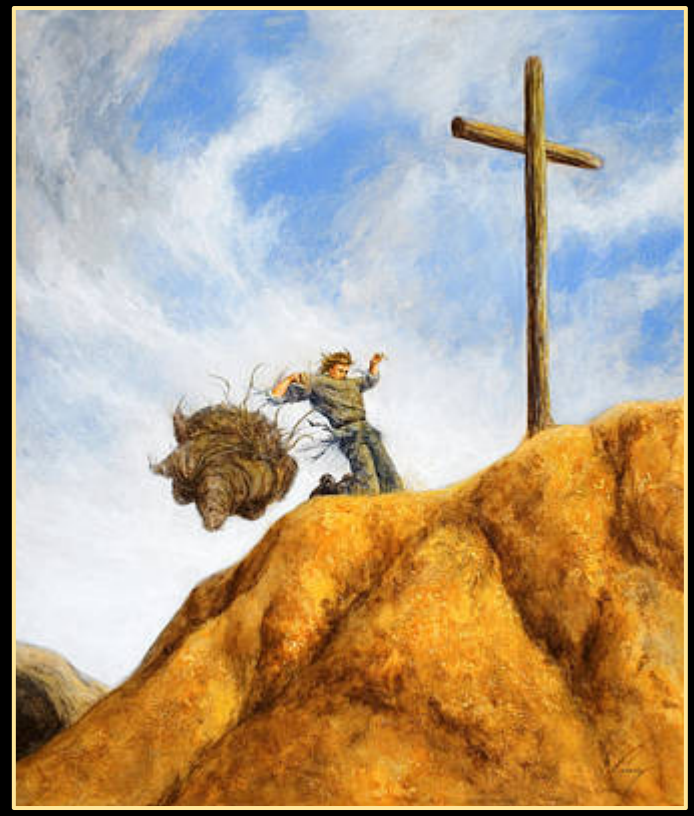
Embattled Pope Leo X

- Masses of individuals, cities and regions pivot to Lutheranism in Germany and its neighbors, and later, Scandinavia and beyond.
- Swiss Christians abandon the RCC for Protestant congregations led by Calvin, Zwingli and others.
- The Anabaptist movement gains momentum all over Europe.
- In England, King Henry VIII breaks with Rome and forms the Anglican state church.
- Scotland reformer John Knox successfully leads that country's exodus from the RCC.

Spotlight on English Puritans & Separatists



- Separatists favor local democratic church autonomy.
- Puritans initially attempt to reform the Anglican church from within.
- Both endure persecution.
- John Foxe writes *Acts and Monuments.*
- John Bunyan writes *Pilgrims Progress.*
- Puritans are mocked in theaters by Shakespearean works and others.
- Puritans hold to Calvinism, strict moral codes, and a high view of preaching toward a conversion experience.



Pilgrim's Progress is one of the best-selling book in history. It has been in print since 1678. Here Pilgrim is losing his burden at the cross.

Spotlight on American Puritans



- English puritans, also called pilgrims, journeyed to the New World seeking religious freedom.
- They bring puritan principles and a strong work ethic.
- They land in Plymouth, Massachusetts in 1620.



The Mayflower

- Notable early American puritans include Roger Williams, William Bradford, William Brewster, John Carver.
- These strong, brave settlers established a new country known for religious devotion, freedom, and God's favor.

Where is the Remnant of True Faith?





Michael Sattler, Anabaptist pastor, martyr, hero of the faith

- Access to the truth of God's Word explodes. The Lollards, the Hussites and other groups come out of hiding. Gospel believers openly break with Rome and are now known as Lutherans, Protestants, Calvinists, Anabaptists, Puritans, Separatists, etc.
- Although most of the reformers did not take their reforms far enough, and in some cases, persecuted Anabaptists, their positive contributions to biblical truth are immeasurable.
- From 1500-1650 AD, true faith was alive and well in Europe and beyond.

Post tenebras lux: "After Darkness, Light"





The Protestant Reformation ushers in a revival of biblical truth, rescuing millions from ignorance, lostness, and the bondage of sin and endless, useless works. This revival sweeps the known world and continues strong today. *Post tenebras lux* can be found on the Reformation Wall in Geneva.

Modern Period

1650 - Present



Key Religious Movements of the Modern Age



- Scientific Revolution 1650-1800
- Revolutionary Period 1750-1850
- Post Modern Period 1975-1999
- Post Christian Period 2000-2009
- Post Secular Period 2010-Present



Astronomy in the 17th Century

Key Events of the late 17th and 18th Centuries



- Galileo Galilei (1564-1642) made important advances in astronomy, including his heliocentric view of our solar system, resulting in tremendous opposition from the RCC.
- Enlightenment philosophers and scientists such as Locke, Newton, Bacon and Descartes challenged the religious and social status quo, giving rise to revolutions and liberal thinking.
- Gospel fervor is rekindled in a vast movement known as the First Great Awakening (1700-1750).



John Wesley
open air preaching

Spotlight on the First Great Awakening



George Whitefield

WORTH NOTING

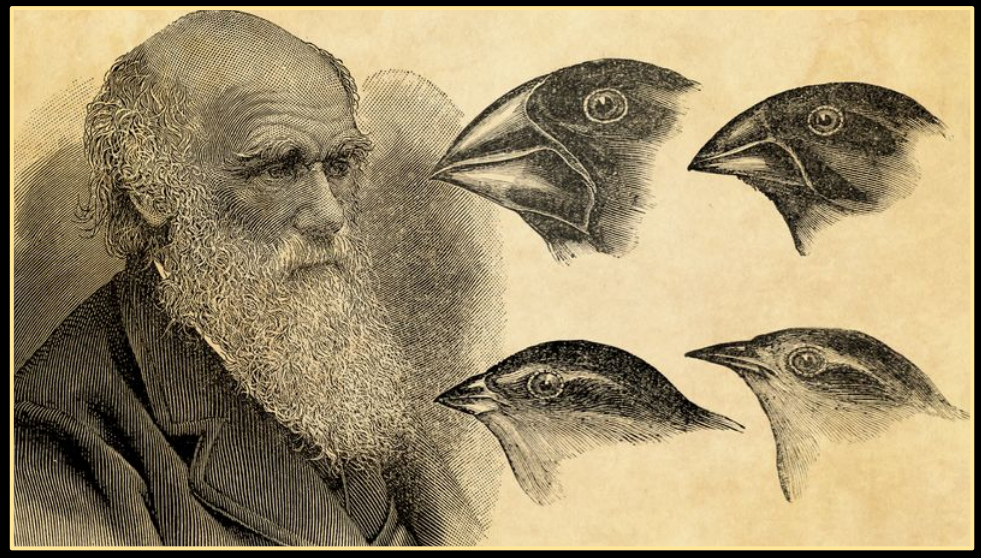
Historian Douglas Sweeney calls cross-eyed Whitefield "a worldwide gospel sensation." Whitefield preached over 7500 sermons in America. His audiences numbered in the tens of thousands.

- Initially impacts England and America.
- The movement is characterized by open air preaching.
- Brothers John and Charles Wesley found the Methodist denomination.
- Revivalist George Whitefield becomes the most famous American in history.
- Revivalist and theological genius Jonathan Edwards is regarded as the most important evangelical in the New World.

Key Events of the 19th Century



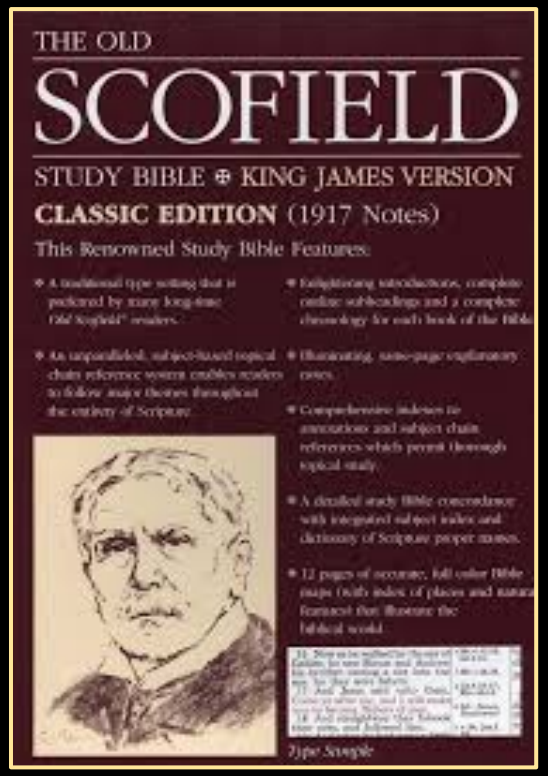
- Revivalist Charles Finney, along with many others, ushers in the Second Great Awakening (1800-1840).
- Charles Darwin writes *The Origin of Species,* undermining confidence in a literal historical reading of Genesis.
- The higher criticism movement begins to erode faith in the Bible's veracity.
- Chicago evangelist D.L. Moody founds Moody Bible Institute, leads Bible conferences and revivals in England and America.



Charles Darwin and his finches

Key Events of the 20th and 21st Centuries





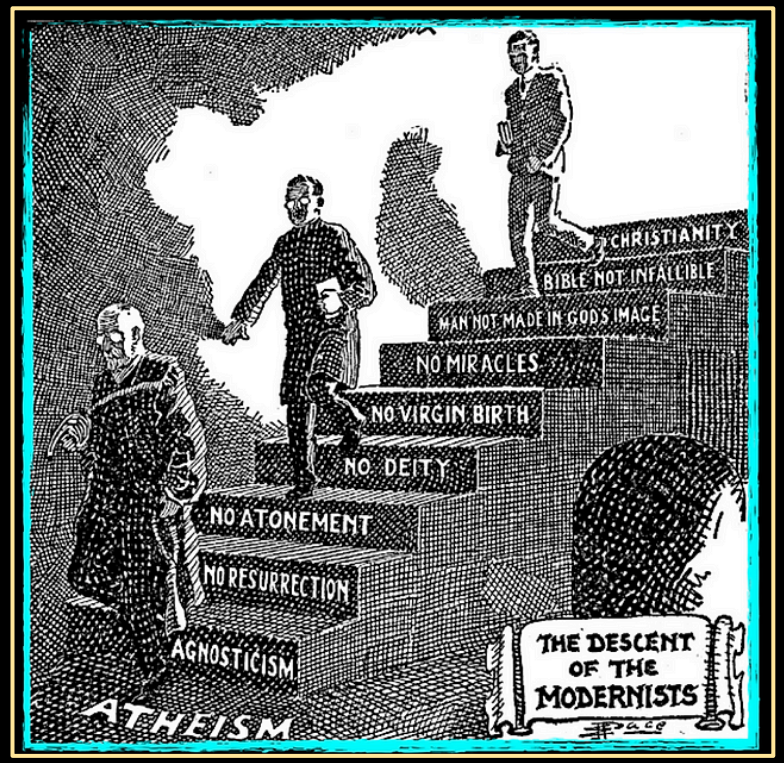
Fundamentalist C.I. Scofield assembles the first study Bible, *The Scofield Reference Bible* in 1907

- Christian fundamentalism
- The evangelistic ministry of Billy Graham
- The rise of the social gospel
- The growth of liberalism
- Neo-evangelicalism
- The influence of Martin Luther King

Spotlight on Christian Fundamentalism



- The Niagara Bible Conference, held in 1895, addressed the growing liberal attacks against biblical Christianity.
- Out of this came the Five Fundamentals of the Faith: Biblical inerrancy, the deity of Christ, the Virgin birth, Christ's substitutionary atonement, and His bodily resurrection and physical return.
- In 1920, Curtis Lee Laws first coined the term "fundamentalist."
- The Scopes Trial marked the peak and decline of fundamentalism.
- Fundamentalists were known for biblical inerrancy and a separation from the world.



1922 Cartoon by E. J. Pace

Spotlight on the "Scopes Monkey Trial"



Scopes Trial, Dayton, TN, 1925

WORTH NOTING

Jude 1:18 says, "They said to you, "In the last time there will be scoffers, following their own ungodly passions." This trial is an example of such mocking by those who are lost.

- The ACLU defends teacher John T. Scopes against charges of illegally teaching evolution.
- The prosecutor is William Jennings Bryan and attorney Clarence Darrow provides the defense for Scopes.
- While Bryan wins the case for Tennessee, fundamentalism suffers defeat in the public eye.
- Bryan poorly defends his faith and the press mock him and his biblical views.
- Bryan, 65, dies five days later of a stroke.

Spotlight on Evangelicalism and Fundamentalism



Modern church history can be very confusing. Simply put, to be evangelical is to be about the gospel. To be a Christian fundamentalist is to hold to a high view of Scripture and guard associations with those who compromise the faith. A neo-evangelical is characterized by dialogue, tolerance, social responsibility, and an openness to liberal ideas. The modern conservative evangelical retains the positives from fundamentalism and neo-evangelicalism while losing both vitriol and compromise. A social gospel focuses not on eternal life and redemption from sin but on the here and now, elevating oppressed groups in society. Christian liberals and post-evangelical evangelicals hold to a low view of Scripture and, while still claiming the Christian label, have embraced political, theological and social views not found in a literal, historical reading of the Bible.

Evangelicalism

Fundamentalism

Post-Evangelical

Evangelicalism

Conservative

Evangelicalism

Social Gospel

Liberalism

Neo-

Evangelicalis

m

Where is the Remnant of True Faith?



- Although materialism, naturalism, atheism and all manner of false teaching have metastasized over the past 400 years, in many ways the true gospel of Jesus Christ has never been more proclaimed and more accessible to people around the world.
- As countless faithful Christian leaders proclaim God's Word, hundreds of millions of people worship the Christ of Scripture in their local churches today.



Billy Graham preaches the gospel at the Los Angeles Coliseum, 1963.

Review:
Five Major Divisions of Church History

- The Apostolic Period (33-100 AD)
- The Patristic Period (100-500 AD)
- The Medieval Period (500-1500 AD)
- The Reformation Period (1500-1650 AD)
- The Modern Period (1650 AD-Present)











What is the next chapter for the church?

1. God is sovereign and will faithfully protect His church.

"...on this rock I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."
Matt 16: 18b-19 ESV







2. God will use today's believers to guide His church forward.

"How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching?"
Rom 10:14 ESV







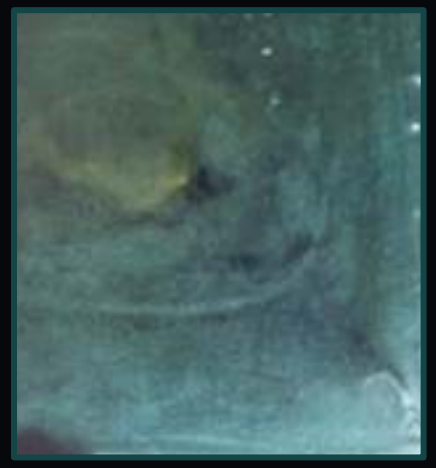
3. In part, that depends on you. Are you going to be one of His faithful disciples, ready to follow Him in His service, wherever He leads?

"Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, 'Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?' and I said, 'Here am I. Send me.'"
Isa 6:8 ESV













The History of the Church

From the First Century to Present Day