

Course Number: HCH201

Course Title: Church History I

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Week #1 Review Question

1. Briefly explain why Church history is important

- From church history we learn how status quo, a way of believe and understanding of God and Holy Scriptures were challenged and how the understanding were then refined to where we are today. That on its own teaches that an understanding of God and His way and Word is not static and neither always correct through generations.
- From church history we learn that the faith that most of us receives freely and take for granted, others suffered for it to the point of gruesome death, therefore it teaches us the amount of sacrifices we need to lay down
- From church history through councils and individual persons in different era, we learn that understanding of the Bible is not static. Many views and opinions had been expressed throughout generations, correct or incorrect; heresy and either of them have followers and opposers. We also learn that the work of one person or generation most of the time serves as a foundation for the discovery of the full truth by the next person/people or generation.
- That certain reformations came through strong personal convictions that came through personal application to the truth of the Word of God. Such people had to undergo personal persecution by their own or general public of the day and they challenged the status quo on the basis of the Holy Scripture which became very expensive on a personal level
- Most of the fundamental truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ that are being persuaded today, particularly in the Pentecostal and Charismatic circles, were contentious in the Catholic Church and they come as far back as the first century.
- More importantly, throughout all history of the church, The Bible, which is the Word of God is central to all these and believers in every generation and everywhere in the World, must continue all their work in reference to the Word of God. They are to judge all by reason of the Word of God as Apostle Peter said it is not for personal interpretation. The Word of God is the source of all persecution and that heresy is a direct attack on the Word of God

2. Name three (3) important events in the history of the church and briefly explain why you think that they are significant turning points.

The most important events have to do a lot with a clear abrupt cut from the norm (status quo) bringing about a complete opposite direction for the church and my three (3) important events are:

- a) Edict of Milan in 313
- b) Council of Nicea in 325
- c) Martin Luther's 95 Thesis in 1517

These events represents in my view major turning point for the church and from this points on, the church took a new direction

- a) The Edict of Milan

This comes against the background of unrelenting and persistence persecution against the church. During this time, Constantine defeats Maxentius at the battle of Milvian Bridge and becomes the Emperor of the West and he seem to be more favourable or accommodative to Christianity either because he converted to Christianity himself or for political reasons. Whilst Licinius was Emperor of the East and Constantine was of the West, they agreed to give Christianity equal rights.

This edicts caused the cessation of wide persecution of the church on a larger scale which also ushered a new era in the church. The Christian faith now affect and influence society and that influence come through the emperor, e.g. edict ordering soldiers to worship the Supreme God on the first day of the week. The church was then elevated to a higher status

- b) Council of Nicea in 325

The deity of Christ was in great question at this time, largely caused by heresy of the day spread by a man called Arius. Arius argued that "Christ was the first created being and not truly God". This is no issue today, in fact, the reality of this is that this truth has slipped from the church that we have lost its meaning. Man like Athanasius spoke and oppose it very strongly at a great cost to his life. What was to ensue was a long protracted battle lasting for fifty years and this divided the church and a conference was then called to discuss this matter. In this protracted debate, the orthodox created a creed that clearly states with full clarity the deity of Christ and thereby dispelling the Arian heresy. The Council declared that Jesus was begotten and not made and that he is of the same substance as the Father.

c) Martin Luther's 95 Thesis in 1517

This looked like it was the age and generation of conscious and light and at this time the status quo was questioned. At the beginning of that century, theologians were questioning some of the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church. The New Testament was first published which put the Word of God into the hands of people where church traditions such as, the practice of indulgence, and that salvation by works were first put into scrutiny.

One of the church fathers, Augustine (340 – 430) he dramatically came to the Lord after a prolonged struggle with the sin. In his conversion, he saw the hand of the Lord's grace and he came to the conclusion that the authority of the church is not vested in man or church leaders but in the Bible and that man cannot achieve salvation by their own good work but salvation is bestowed on people by the benevolence of God's grace. Through the availability of the New Testament, theologians such as Martin Luther discovered that what the Roman Catholic Church was teaching wasn't in line with the teaching of the Bible. This was earlier discovered by people such as John Huss; John Wycliffe and Thomas Bradwardine  
Martin Luther listed 95 thesis which were Roman Catholic Church practices which were in direct contradiction with the Word of God. Moving from indulgence to justification by faith, this laterally altered the life of Luther from being a monk and celibacy to a father and a husband and basically ignite a move that will later be called the reformation. The reformation went really beyond the immediate protestant but went on to be the basis of the Pentecostal and charismatic movement of our day, justification by faith through grace.

3) What immediate difference do you see in the Church history between the third and sixth centuries?

The third (3<sup>rd</sup>) century was a century of great persecutions fuelled by Emperors who will use religion to keep control of their subject and will set up idol for all to worship of which the Jews and Christians flatly refused and were consequently persecuted.

The sixth (6<sup>th</sup>) is characterised by missionary work.

4) In what Century did Cyprian die?

Third (3<sup>rd</sup>) Century

5) In what year was the Edict of Milan?

6) In what year did Pope Leo crown Charlemagne?

800

7) In what year did the first crusade take place?

1096 – 1099

8) According to Justo Gonzalez, what were the mystery religion and what problem did they create?

Syncretism and emperor worship are the mystery religion. In Syncretism, the imperial powers tried to create a religious uniformity by mixing elements from different religions and wanted people across religious spectrum to adopt and practice. The Roman Emperor wanted all people under his subjection from all regions and religious background to believe that though they call their gods in different names, it was basically the same god.

To the Jews and Christians this created the problem in that, them knowing the true God they were serving and that other nations worship idols and not the true God, puts them in loggerhead with the powers in that they did not compromise to worship or join the rest but remain true to the true God and they then become the target of persecution and possible removal from the society