

# **Global Church History**

**Dr. Sean Doyle**

Institute of Biblical Studies

June 15-28, 2017

9:00-11:00am

**Course Description:** This course will trace the global expansion of Christianity from its beginnings to the present era. Attention will be paid to the theological, cultural, sociological, and missiological dimensions of the worldwide Christian movement as it developed and spread throughout history. In addition to exploring European and American Christian history, the course will also investigate African, Asian, and Latin American varieties of Christianity, which are currently enjoying resurgence in the global south.

**Learning Outcomes:** After completing the course, participants should have:

- Extended and deepened their knowledge regarding significant historical and theological developments within the worldwide Christian tradition in multiple global contexts
- Learned to appreciate the diverse intellectual and spiritual expressions of Christian communities throughout various historical eras and locations
- Acquired the ability to trace the geographical spread of Christianity from its beginnings to its present worldwide distribution
- Attained an understanding of the distinctives of the major branches of Christianity (Orthodox, Catholic, Protestant, Pentecostal).
- Encountered major figures, movements, and theological debates within the global Christian Church and reflected upon their enduring significance
- Learned to apply insights gained from studying the origins, development, and expansion of Christianity to the present task of crossing cultures with the gospel
- Sharpened their critical thinking and reading skills

## **Required Textbooks:**

\* *Global Gospel: An Introduction to Christianity on Five Continents*, Douglas **Jacobsen**, Baker, 2015.

\* *The New Faces of Christianity: Believing the Bible in the Global South*, Philip **Jenkins**, Oxford, 2006.

**IBS Grading Scale:** 100-94 = A , 93-92 = A- , 91-90 = B+ , 89-84 = B , 83-82 = B- , 81-80 = C+ ,  
79-74 = C , 73-72 = C- , 71-65 = D , 64 and below = F

### **Requirements and Assessments:**

**Reading Report:** 25% of overall grade (due Wednesday, June 28, at the start of class)

Reading should be done thoroughly and thoughtfully with a sincere attempt to learn all you can. Students will submit a reading report, which is attached at the end of the syllabus, on both the Jacobsen and the Jenkins texts.

**Jenkins Response Questions:** 25% of overall grade (due Monday, June 26, at the start of class)

Students will submit a written response to the Jenkins textbook. In engaging the text, students will respond to the following questions:

- How do believers in non-Western contexts read their Bibles differently? Why might they have a different hermeneutical lens than Western readers when approaching Scripture?
- What theological truths are emphasized in the global south? What facets of the gospel and the atonement are most appreciated by majority-world Christians?
- What do the distinctive expressions of Christianity in the global south reveal about the style and emphases of Christianity in the Western world, and particularly in America?
- What challenged and/or surprised you most when learning about non-Western varieties of Christianity? What can Western Christians learn from their fellow believers in the global south?

The paper will be at least 3 pages, double-spaced, New Times Roman, 12 pt. font, one inch margins.

**Church Visit Experiential Learning Reflection:** 50% of overall grade (due Wednesday, June 28, at the start of class)

Each student will visit a church that represents an earlier or a non-Western branch of World Christianity. Examples: Armenian, Greek (or Russian, Ukrainian, Serbian, or Bulgarian) Orthodox, Ethiopian, Coptic, Syrian, Eastern-Rite Catholic churches. If you like, you could also visit a modern worship service of a church that is significantly culturally different than your own, such as an African Methodist Episcopal church, Primitive Baptist, or Holy Ghost Pentecostal church. This is not an exclusive list.

Do research online in advance to discover the history of the church you plan to visit, and perhaps how you should dress, behave, and speak to the people you will meet. Imagine that this is your target mission community—how should you make your first visit if your goal is to become an insider?

Each student will then write a reflection paper upon the history and the experience of worshipping with the community selected for the Church Visit exercise. In terms of the overall structure of the reflection, please indicate in the introduction of the paper the name and the address of the Church, the date of visit, and the reasons for choosing this Church. Then, in the first main section, spend some time discussing the history of this particular Church community. Possible questions to explore here might include:

- When was the denomination founded, by whom, and under what circumstances? Is it a division of a previous denomination?
- Are there any elements of the service that appear to arise from the Church's historical roots?
- What are the key theological distinctives and commitments of this community? (You may have observed these distinctives in the way the service was conducted).

In the next main section, please reflect upon your experience in this Church. Possible questions to explore here might include:

- What liturgical, homiletical (preaching), and/or worship practices, as well as perceived values of this community were different from those of your own Church community?
- What aspects of the Church do you think should be celebrated? Was there anything confusing and/or surprising about the service?
- How would this experience be helpful for you in your future cross-cultural interactions? What thoughts or realizations have you had about your own culture and/or Church?
- How did you respond when you encountered a perceived value or perspective that was different from your own?

Conclude by summarizing the most valuable insights you gained from this experiential learning exercise.

The paper will be at 6-7 pages, double-spaced, New Times Roman, 12 pt. font, one inch margins.

*About the Instructor:* Dr. Sean Doyle is currently Associate Professor of World History at Geneva College in Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania. He has taught courses in global Christianity, world religions, and world history at Geneva College the past ten years. Prior to that, he was on faculty at Methodist University in Fayetteville, North Carolina. He earned a Ph.D. in global Christianity from the University of Edinburgh, Scotland, and an M.A. in religion from Gordon-Conwell Seminary. He and his wife Joy love to travel; they lived in Rome, Italy, for two years. His research interests involve the history of Christianity in south Asia.

## READING ASSIGNMENT AND LECTURE SCHEDULE

Th	6/15	Europe I ( <i>Read:</i> Jacobsen Introduction, CH 1, p. 1-13; CH 5, p. 106-108; Jenkins CH 1)
F	6/16	Europe II ( <i>Read:</i> Jacobsen CH 2, p. 14-34; CH 5, p. 109-113; Jenkins CH 2)
M	6/19	Europe III ( <i>Read:</i> Jacobsen CH 2, bottom p. 34-39; CH 5, p. 114-145; Jenkins CH 3)
T	6/20	West and South Asia ( <i>Read:</i> Jacobsen CH 6, p. 146-top 164; Jenkins CH 4)
W	6/21	East Asia ( <i>Read:</i> Jacobsen CH 6, p. 164-187; Jenkins CH 5)
Th	6/22	Africa I ( <i>Read:</i> Jacobsen CH 3, p. 40-middle 54; Jenkins CH 6-7)
F	6/23	Africa II ( <i>Read:</i> Jacobsen CH 3, p. 54-72; Jenkins CH 8)
M	6/26	Latin America ( <i>Read:</i> Jacobsen CH 4, p. 73-105)  <u>Submit Jenkins Response Questions</u>
T	6/27	North America I ( <i>Read:</i> Jacobsen CH 7, p. 188-204)
W	6/28	North America II ( <i>Read:</i> Jacobsen CH 7, p. 205-223; Conclusion)  <u>Submit Reading Report and Church Visit Historical/Theological Reflection</u>

## READING REPORT (Global Church History)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Of the required reading (Jacobsen and Jenkins textbooks, how many pages did you complete? \_\_\_\_\_

To determine the percentage of reading completed, divide the number of pages you completed by the total number of required pages and convert to a percentage.