

An Introduction to the Class

1. A study of church history is a fascinating, and at times contradictory undertaking.
 - a. The wisdom of God is seen in its structure (Eph. 3)
 - b. The foolishness of man is seen in his intentional and unintentional effort to destroy or make better the arrangement of God.
2. Why study church history?
 - a. To better appreciate the church established in the New Testament
 - b. To show the progressive nature of apostasy
 - c. To see from where all the differing beliefs not found in the New Testament sprang.
 - d. To learn how others solved or failed to solve the same problems we encounter today in trying to know our God.
 - e. “Those who know not history are doomed to repeat it.”
3. It is remarkable that from a small forsaken group of people a major world religion emerged. What is even more remarkable is that so many today don’t realize how much it has changed from the first century model given in Scripture. What is even more frightening is that so many don’t care.
4. We will be using the term “church history” accomodatively.
 - a. At some point in history the church stopped being what God designed and intended—therefore, at some point these people stopped being Christians.
 - b. The teacher will leave it up to God to determine at what point the church ceased to be what He designed and at what point it returned to the established pattern.
5. Major Divisions of Church History:
 - a. The Early Church—30- 100 AD—from the Day of Pentecost, 30-33 AD, to the death of John
 - b. The Ante-Nicene Church—100- 325 AD—the church during persecuted times. When the Catholic church began to take shape. This period lasted until shortly after the Edict of Milan in 313 AD.
 - c. The Nicene and Post-Nicene Church—325-600 AD.—the growth of the Catholic church as a force to be reckoned with. From the reign of Constantine until the accent of Pope Gregory I.
 - d. The Medieval Church—600- 1300 AD—the powerful age of the Catholic Church
 - e. The Reformation Period—1300-1790 AD—the waning of Catholic control and the rise of the reformers
 - f. The Restoration Movement—1790 AD- present—the efforts of those who came after the failings of the Reformation movement to go back to the Biblical pattern.

